



An Roinn Breisoideachais agus Ardoideachais,
Taighde, Nuálaíochta agus Eolaíochta
Department of Further and Higher Education,
Research, Innovation and Science

Statement of Strategy 2021–2023





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Foreword

Minister Simon Harris

I welcome the publication of this Statement of Strategy, setting out the vision and direction of the Department of Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science for the first time. I am excited to be leading this newly established Department. I know that our work can have a transformative impact on the lives of individuals, on the vibrancy of our communities and the health of our economy.



We have an ambitious agenda to deliver on key Programme for Government commitments. This Statement of Strategy sets out how we aim to achieve our goals over the coming years, where this Department will play a pivotal role in the country's recovery from the COVID-19 crisis and in preparing for the future world of work. Our leadership and support can ensure that people are equipped with the skills needed to adapt to living and working sustainably in an increasingly global, digital and automated world.

The Government recognises that the higher and further education sector can be an engine for economic growth and an instrument to promote diversity and enhance social cohesion. It is imperative that we create opportunities and support people to engage in education and training at every stage of their lives - to learn, upskill, reskill and grow. The Strategy sets out the path for Ireland to become a leading knowledge economy, with recognition internationally in the areas of higher education, research, and innovation. Investment in research will be a critical driver of innovation providing the foundation for Ireland's future economic growth and societal wellbeing.

I look forward to delivering this ambitious agenda, together with Minister of State, Niall Collins, with colleagues here in the Department and across Government, and with our agencies, institutions and wider stakeholders.

The people we serve will be central to all that we do. I am confident that we will deliver on this Strategy together to achieve the best for our society, for our country and for our future.

Simon Harris

Minister for Further and Higher Education,
Research, Innovation and Science

Foreword

Minister of State Niall Collins

As Minister of State for Further Education and Skills, I welcome the first Statement of Strategy for the Department of Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science. It provides a milestone in the recognition of the Government's commitment to the ongoing development of higher and further education and skills.



COVID-19 has had a serious impact on the employment status of many people in the country, and this Strategy sets out a path towards further education and training to help people re-skill and to best position themselves for our post-COVID-19 economy.

The Department's Strategy recognises the need to spread the opportunities for further education and training across the country, and it commits the Department to working closely with the Regional Skills Fora, and the developing technological university sector, providing opportunities on a regional basis.

I recently marked the milestone of the 1000th female apprentice. The broadening of apprenticeship opportunities will be a key component in the manner in which the Department focuses on opening up further education and training opportunities for all, providing a diverse and flexible range of pathways to support lifelong learning.

I look forward to working with our many stakeholders to deliver a further and higher education system that is jobs focussed, but which also recognises the individual needs of each learner. This will support the economy as it recovers from the current crisis and help us build and grow vibrant and inclusive communities across Ireland.

Niall Collins
Minister of State for Further and Higher Education,
Research, Innovation and Science

Introduction

Secretary General Jim Breslin

This Statement of Strategy is submitted to the Minister for Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science under Section 5(1) of the Public Service Management Act, 1997. This is the first Statement of Strategy from the Department of Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science, and it sets out both the vision for the new Department, and more importantly, the plan to bring this vision to fruition.



Higher and further education, research and innovation will be key to the country's recovery from the COVID-19 crisis. The creation of a new Department, with an ambitious programme of work, is an enormous opportunity to lead this vital work. There are added challenges in setting up a new organisation in the face of a global pandemic but work is well advanced in the Department to ensure that we have in place a cohesive Department, with the leadership skills and capability to allow us to deliver on the Government's vision for the further and higher education sector.

The Strategy was informed by a consultation process with a wide range of stakeholders, with close to 130 responses received. These responses were extremely useful in informing the finalisation of this high level Strategy Statement and the detail in these responses will continue to be referred to during the process of implementing the Strategy. I would like to thank all those who engaged and helped with the process of determining the future direction of the further and higher education, and research sector. Thank you in particular to the staff of the Department for their commitment and enthusiasm to seize this opportunity to address a new agenda together.

Jim Breslin
Secretary General

Our Mission

Develop Ireland's further and higher education and research systems to support people in reaching their full potential and to create value, prosperity, resilience and a cohesive, sustainable and vibrant society.

Our Strategic Goals



#talent – develop talent and skill

Collaborate with educational institutions, employers and others to identify the talents and skills required, and provide education and training, growing potential and helping people engage in and contribute to our economy and society.



#innovation – promote research, knowledge, and innovation

Lead a whole-of-Government approach to agree the strategy, institutional framework, and investment needed to advance basic and applied research and innovation, grounded in collaboration between enterprise, educational institutions, and wider society, in Ireland and beyond.



#inclusion – support learning for all

Provide supports and opportunities for learning to all, recognising the needs of vulnerable learners and the most marginalised, and assist people in access to and progression through higher and further education and training, so as to grow prosperity across communities and build social cohesion.



#international – succeed on world stage

Position Ireland globally as a leading knowledge economy with a skills and innovation focus and as a leader in higher education and research, deepening collaboration on an all-island and East-West basis, within the EU and beyond, attracting talent from around the world to Ireland's international education system and equipping Ireland to compete on the world stage.



#governance – good governance to enhance quality

Promote the modernisation of the sector, implementing a sustainable funding model and enhancing governance, in order to drive quality and secure excellence in performance.



#capacity – Department “fit-for-purpose”

Ensure critical Departmental resources and expertise needed to enable delivery of our Mission and Goals are in place, supporting our staff to further enhance individual and collective capacity and underpinning excellence in performance.

Our Values

- Serve the public interest by keeping openness, transparency, and accountability at the heart of what we do
- Uphold integrity, equality, independence and professionalism
- Commit to a culture of continuous learning and professional development, respect and inclusive leadership
- Embrace responsiveness, innovation, and social responsibility in how we work
- Treat our colleagues and those to whom we provide services equitably, in keeping with our Public Sector Human Rights and Equality obligations
- Ensure efficiency in processes and value for money in investment



Our Strategic Context

The strategic context in which the Department operates is shaped by a number of key factors:

- The priorities of the Minister for Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science, the Minister of State for Further Education and Life-long Learning, and relevant commitments in the Programme for Government;
- The need to seize the opportunity provided by the establishment of this new Department to build capacity and provide leadership for the further and higher education and research system, recognising their criticality to underpin recovery and secure economic and social sustainability;
- The challenges arising from the COVID-19 pandemic in terms of impacts on our student and learner population, on our institutions and on our research and innovation ecosystem, and in terms of highlighting trends that will shape the further development of the tertiary education system;
- The need to respond, through a continued and intensive focus on upskilling and reskilling, to the pandemic's impact on the economy and employment levels, with a disproportionate effect on certain sectors, and the accelerated pace of digitalisation and workplace change;
- The need to enhance our level of ambition for research and innovation, and to refresh our building stock, in the context of an evolving world of learning and working;
- The recognition that demographic pressures, the changing needs of the labour market, and an increase in life-long and continuous learning, will all place significant demands on our further and higher education sectors, leading to increasing resource implications and the need to agree a sustainable future funding model;
- The need to mitigate educational disadvantage and provide necessary supports in order to address the imbalance, where certain groupings are under-represented in our student and learner population;
- The need to play our part in Ireland's achievement of large-scale emission reductions, given the step-up in ambition in the Programme for Government, with associated commitments and targets on climate action, and the transition to a low-carbon economy;
- The imperative to enhance our competitiveness, extend our international reach and uphold Ireland's position as a leading knowledge economy;
- The importance of a public, stimulated and informed by independent voices across a range of disciplines, critical thinkers, engaged with science and research, and equipped to debate and evaluate issues that will increasingly arise with new knowledge, societal change, and technological advances; and
- The need to modernise and enhance our approach to governance, securing continued autonomy with accountability for performance in the context of significant public investment.

#talent – develop talent and skill

Goal 1: Individual Talent

Ensure support and provide education and training to open up diverse and progressive pathways for everyone, enabling personal growth, developing our learners' talent, promoting lifelong learning and empowering learners to become active members of society, engaging in employment, contributing to prosperity and driving vibrant and diverse communities.

Goal 2: Human Capital

Identify priorities in light of the transformed economic and labour market landscape arising from COVID-19, and provide agile programmes consistent with those priorities, with an immediate focus to ensure individuals are equipped with knowledge and skills to access sustainable, quality employment.

Goal 3: Diverse Pathways

Promote the complementary roles of further and higher education and champion closer alignment and integration, facilitating enhanced information for school-leavers and for all seeking learning opportunities, providing a wider choice at transition points and enabling progression pathways across and between different institutions.

Goal 4: Expert Analysis

Ensure that the understanding of future skills needs and the response of the further and higher education system continue to be informed by evidence and expertise.

Goal 5: Engagement

Lead engagement across education, training, research, enterprise and Government, including under the aegis of the National Skills Council, to ensure a clear strategic direction for skills and human capital development.



#innovation – promote research, knowledge and innovation

Goal 1: Strategic Policy Framework

Provide leadership and ensure policy coherence, by developing and implementing an ambitious new research and innovation strategic policy framework for Ireland, based upon whole-of-Government and wider engagement.

Goal 2: Connected Research System

Support a highly collaborative research system – closely connected with enterprise, public policy and practice, community and voluntary, innovation districts, national, regional and local interests; driving knowledge-creation, innovation and human capital; and contributing significantly in addressing major societal challenges.

Goal 3: Regional Clusters

Position further and higher education institutions, including the new technological universities, as key anchors for sustainable regions, deepening collaboration with industry and enterprise, developing clusters of technology and expertise, and opening up business opportunities regionally and nationally.

Goal 4: Contribute expertise on National Priorities including Climate Action

Lead our sectoral contribution to Ireland's Climate Action Plan and other national challenges, including by harnessing Ireland's research and scientific expertise to engage and inform the public and provide evidence-based input to policy development and evaluation.

Goal 5: Future World of Work

Support researchers, experts, and enterprise in the development of innovative modes of engagement, new skills and new technologies, to enable people in Ireland to grow and adapt to living and working sustainably in an increasingly global, digital and automated world.



#inclusion – support learning for all

Goal 1: Effective Policy Framework

Undertake a strategic review of our policy framework with a view to better facilitate access, progression and success for a wider and more diverse learner population at all levels, including a review of the SUSI scheme to consider eligibility, and development of the next National Access Plan.

Goal 2: Support Learners

Facilitate the provision of supports with a particular focus on vulnerable learners, under-represented groups and the most marginalised, to enable people to engage and stay with learning, consistently addressing a wide range of needs and recognising the importance of mental health and wellbeing.

Goal 3: Literacy, numeracy and digital skills

In support of the significant base of adults who struggle with digital skills, reading everyday text, or using numbers for daily tasks like adding up a bill, promote literacy, numeracy and digital competency, releasing untapped potential, opening up life opportunities and contributing to social cohesion.

Goal 4: Champion Equality

Provide leadership, advocate equality and respect for all, support inclusive learning, working and research environments, promote female leadership in academia and research, eliminate harassment and promote the principle of consent.

Goal 5: Welcome Diversity

Since diversity lies at the core of vibrant communities and strong economies, ensure that our institutions are beacons of inclusion welcoming all, with a focus on groupings that are under-represented at present.



#international – succeed on world stage

Goal 1: Leading Knowledge Economy

Position Ireland as a leading knowledge economy focussed on excellence in innovation, research and post-secondary education outcomes, aligning Ireland's strategies with the European Research Area, collaborating closely with higher education and research partners internationally.

Goal 2: Enhanced North/South Co-operation

Expand collaboration on an all-island basis between institutions and wider stakeholders across the further and higher education, research and innovation sectors, working closely with the Shared Island Unit in the Department of the Taoiseach and also supporting the work of the North-South Ministerial Council.

Goal 3: International ambition

Develop an updated Strategic framework for international education and research, which supports the role of the higher education and research system in strengthening global linkages for Ireland, within the EU, with the UK and with new and existing partners across the globe.

Goal 4: Advancing with EU Partners

Engage and influence the European Commission and EU partners and work with them to support the recovery of the European economy, achieve the European Education Area, and promote the green and digital transitions, while also supporting the implementation of the European Pillar on Social Rights.

Goal 5: EU and UK Relationship

Following on from the UK withdrawal from the EU, work to promote continuing linkages and deeper connections between Irish and UK education and research institutions, cognisant of mutual benefits, and of the interests of Irish people wishing to study in the UK, and of UK students located here, supporting continuity in the context of the Common Travel Area and working with other EU Member States to build the Future Relationship between the EU and the UK.



#governance – good governance to enhance quality

Goal 1: Modernisation

Mobilise engagement in a programme of continuing modernisation and reform of our further and higher education sector, in order to promote quality in teaching, learning and research, exploit new technologies and secure excellence in system performance and integration.

Goal 2: Sustainable Funding

Ensure that there is a sustainable funding model in place and operating well so that further and higher education can effectively meet high standards of quality and performance and achieve critical outcomes for our economy and society.

Goal 3: Agency Governance

Work in partnership with our agencies to provide leadership for the sector, respecting distinct and complementary roles, also fulfilling the Department's responsibilities under the Code of Practice, providing assurance that our agencies meet the highest standards of corporate governance.

Goal 4: Reform and Legislation

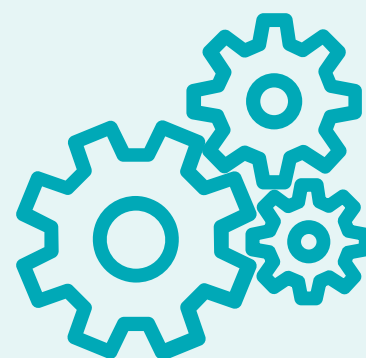
In a context of increasingly rapid change, consider the existing institutional and governance framework under our aegis, and engage with stakeholders to improve effectiveness, including introducing proposals to modernise the Higher Education Authority legislation and the governance of higher education.

Goal 5: Capital Planning

Effectively utilise capital funding for research and further and higher education through the National Development Plan and Project Ireland 2040 to support quality and modernisation and improved national outcomes in research, innovation and learning.

Goal 6: Evaluation

Develop evaluation frameworks and techniques to inform planning and investment so as to achieve priority national outcomes.



#capacity – Department “fit-for-purpose”

Goal 1: Serving the political system and the democratic process

Serve the political system and maintain a positive profile through professional service and engagement with Ministers and Government, and with the Oireachtas and its accountability structures.

Goal 2: Valuing our Staff

Ensure a safe, respectful, inclusive and collaborative working environment, where each individual's contribution is valued and team work is important, where our staff is supported in learning new skills and working innovatively, with opportunities to build experience, and with appreciation for excellence in performance.

Goal 3: Building our Skills

Strengthen policy making, legislation development, corporate governance, project management and evaluation functions within the Department, and establish key corporate services as a critical spine supporting the core work of the Department.

Goal 4: Effective Delivery

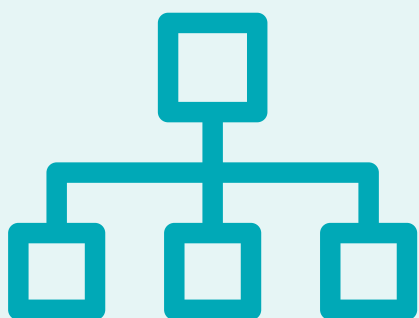
Enable the development of an agreed organisational design, enhance existing and introduce new systems as needed, and mobilise teams, in order to ensure capacity for effective delivery of our goals.

Goal 5: Cross-Governmental Collaboration

Sustain and develop close relationships with the Department of Education, the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment, the Department of Social Protection, also building strong and productive connections with other Departments, including the Department of the Taoiseach, the Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration & Youth, the Department of Public Expenditure, the Department of the Environment, Climate and Communications, the Department of Rural & Community Development, the Department of Tourism, Culture, Arts, Gaeltacht, Sport & Media and the Department of Foreign Affairs.

Goal 6: Engaging with Stakeholders

Build on and strengthen existing links with Bodies under the Aegis of the Department and the wider public sector, with enterprise, community, innovation and research interests, with representatives of education providers, students and staff and with the general public, and in networks beyond our borders, to deepen our international reach.



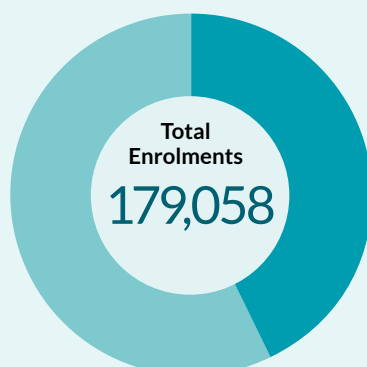
PROFILE OF IRELAND'S LEARNERS



FURTHER EDUCATION & TRAINING

● Full-time
76,995

● Part-time
102,063



7,407

Learners with
SUSI grant

13,098

Learners with
a disability

1,527

Travellers

107,793

Female

71,265

Male

104,977

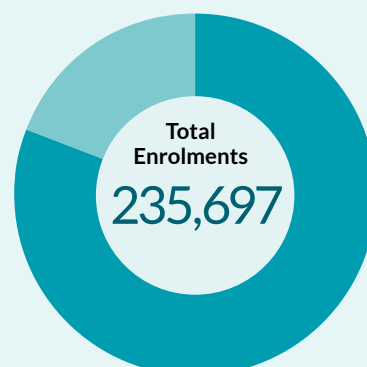
Lifelong Learning
enrolments



HIGHER EDUCATION

● Full-time
189,904

● Part-time
45,793



63,984

Learners with
SUSI grant

14,358

Learners with
a disability

110

Travellers

126,573

Female

108,953

Male

171

Other



APPRENTICESHIP POPULATION

17,829

RESEARCH & EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS

27

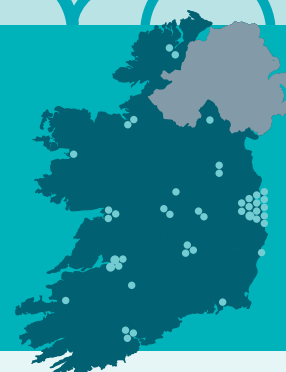
Higher Education
Institutions

16

Education and
Training Boards

16

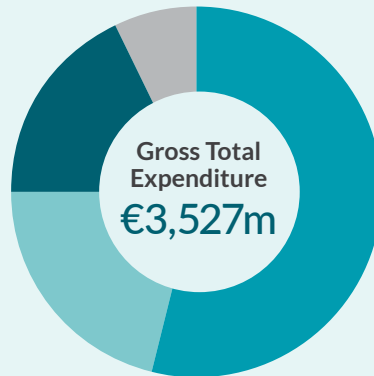
SFI Research Centres



PLANNED EXPENDITURE 2021

TOTAL EXPENDITURE 2021

- Higher Education
- Skills Development
- Research, Innovation & Science
- National Training Fund



Department of Further & Higher Education,
Research, Innovation & Science Exchequer Spend

€2,786m Total

€626m Skills Development

€741m National Training Fund

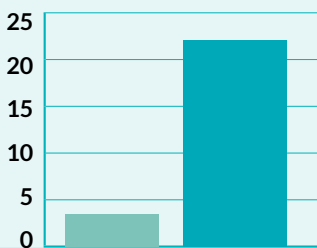
Higher Education

Research, Innovation & Science

DEPARTMENT EXPENDITURE PER FTE

- Spend per FTE
(Department of Further & Higher Education, Research, Innovation & Science)
- Average Spend per FTE
(all government departments)

Expenditure by FTE (€m)



4th

of 18 Government Departments
Current Expenditure

7th

of 18 Government Departments
Capital Expenditure

INVESTING IN RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT



€3,812m

Gross Expenditure on R&D



€2,778m

Business Expenditure on R&D



€876m

Higher Education Expenditure on R&D



€159m

Government Expenditure on R&D



INNOVATION AND DIGITAL ECONOMY

7th in EU

Global Innovation Index

15th Overall

Global Innovation Index

9th in EU

European Innovation Scoreboard

6th in EU

Digital Economy & Society Index



WORLD LEADING SCIENCE

1st

Immunology

2nd

Agricultural Sciences

5th

Neuroscience

5th

Material Sciences

9th

Molecular Biology & Genetics

9th

Microbiology

12th

Global scientific ranking

Appendix I

Bodies under the Aegis of the Department



Grangegorman Development Agency (GGDA)



Higher Education Authority (HEA)



Irish Research Council (IRC)



Léargas



Quality and Qualifications Ireland (QQI)



Science Foundation Ireland (SFI)



Skillnets Ltd/Skillnet Ireland



SOLAS

Appendix II

Strategic Action Plan

To support the implementation of the Programme for Government, “Our Shared Future”, and this 3 year Strategy Statement we will use an action planning framework to identify key priorities for the immediate period ahead. This is the first iteration of our Strategic Action Plan. It will be updated on a rolling basis as work is completed and new opportunities or challenges arise.

#talent – develop talent and skills

1. Response to COVID-19

Lead COVID-19 response for the Tertiary Education System Steering Group to enable the Higher and Further Education & Training sector to respond to the exigencies of a changing public health situation.

Manage ongoing engagement and actions across Government and particularly with the Department of the Taoiseach and the Department of Health, to ensure concerted action, clear communications and guidance in relation to public health management for our sector.

Organise and support the work of the further and higher education sectors through the COVID-19 Structure, Working Groups, Engagements, Schedule, Communications and Data.

Lead and enable actions in response to priority issues and challenges by the Department, sectors, stakeholders and agencies.

Identify and respond to funding and other support requirements.

2. Manage Transitions in 2021

Engage closely with stakeholders across the sector and across Government, especially with colleagues in the Department of Education and relevant Bodies under the Aegis of the Department and representative bodies, to manage matters in relation to Leaving Certificate, CAO and transitions to further and higher education for school-leavers in 2021, including the position regarding access to places in the academic year commencing September 2021.

3. Skills Agenda and National Recovery

Provide strategic and evidence-based input to the preparation of the new National Economic Plan, to ensure that the Plan appropriately reflects the Department’s priorities, including as regards the skills agenda and the need for upskilling and reskilling in the context of significant labour market changes and the green and digital transitions.

4. Supporting Jobseekers

Work with the Department of Social Protection through the inter-Departmental High Level Group, to implement the education and training elements of a new Pathways to Work Strategy.

5. Skills Policy Framework

Continue to support national and regional skills policy architecture comprising the National Skills Council, the Regional Skills Fora and the National Training Fund Advisory Group.

6. Promoting Regional Skills Fora

Roll out the Regional Skills Fora promotional campaign and establish an advertising campaign on training and employment support opportunities as provision increases.

7. Apprenticeship

Following consultation, develop and publish the Action Plan on Apprenticeship 2021–2025.

8. Safepass and Mandatory Construction Safety Training

Develop legislation to underpin a new licensing scheme to replace the Construction and Quarrying Skills Certification Schemes.

9. Closer Alignment

Articulate a policy, demonstrating how a firmer alignment between Further and Higher Education working closely within the national skills policy framework, can contribute to development of human capital and promotion of lifelong learning.

#innovation – promote research, knowledge and innovation

10. National research and innovation strategy

Agree an approach to the development of a new national research and innovation strategy to be launched in 2021, addressing stakeholder engagement and the policy development process. The strategy will build upon the incorporation of key research and innovation priorities in the National Economic Plan and the National Development Plan.

11. Building public engagement on science and research as part of overall Department outreach

Develop an approach to public engagement on research issues in the context of the Department's strategic approach to public and stakeholder engagement.

12. Advance key strategic priorities through implementation of new research funding measures secured as part of Budget 2021 including supporting collaboration in national research programmes

Implement the range of measures to drive key research agendas, including enhanced collaboration between research funders, capacity building in TUs, and wider engagement.

13. Climate Action

Following engagement with the sector and aligned with work on the National Development Plan, develop a comprehensive input by the Department to the whole-of-Government Climate Action Plan, championing a leading voice for experts in our sector, promoting innovation and development of new technologies, greener campuses, and ensuring provision of a workforce skilled in sustainable techniques and technologies.

#inclusion – support learning for all

14. Policy Review

Begin to put in place a new policy framework for access including undertaking a review of the Student Grant Scheme administered by SUSI focussed on eligibility, adjacency and supports for post-graduates and benchmarking Ireland internationally.

15. Adult Literacy, Numeracy and Digital Skills Strategy

Support an Inter-Departmental Group chaired by Minister Harris to oversee the development and publication of a new 10-year Strategy to transform Adult Literacy, Numeracy and Digital Skill Levels in Ireland.

16. National Access Plan

Begin scoping work on the next National Access Plan, to be developed during 2021.

17. Equality & Respect

Develop policy on a Consent Framework including ensuring that each higher education institution prepares an individual action plan; also consider data emerging from a new Gender Equality survey being developed by the Higher Education Authority.

18. Support Flexible Offerings and LifeLong Learning

Increasing levels of inclusion through the provision of high quality, more accessible and flexible education and training programmes and supports suited to the identified needs of individuals, with the aim of enabling every citizen to participate fully in society.

Appendix II

Strategic Action Plan continued

#international – succeed on world stage

19. Grow International Reach

Promote Ireland as a leader in Higher Education and Research, working collaboratively across the sector nationally, and developing partnerships with Research and Higher Education systems internationally.

20. International Strategy

Publish independent review of the international education strategy, identify areas of closer coherence in international policy and engagement; work across Government with colleagues including the Department of Justice to further enhance regulatory and policy coherence and to develop a necessary foundation for a new strategic plan for international co-operation in education and research.

21. Advance North/South Co-operation

In line with “New Decade, New Approach” and in conjunction with the Shared Island Unit in the Department of the Taoiseach prioritise development of key North-South projects including (i) all-island research centres; (ii) capacity building in North-South research collaboration; (iii) development of Ulster University Magee Campus in the context of overall developments in the north-west (iv) projects under the Peace+ Programme and (v) inclusion of students from Northern Ireland in Erasmus+.

22. Deepen Relationship with UK

Progress work required in the context of the UK’s recent withdrawal from the EU including ensuring continued recognition of professional qualifications with the UK and concluding an Education Memorandum of Understanding with the UK as part of the Common Travel Area. Also advance appropriate secondary legislation as required under the Brexit Omnibus Act.

23. European Funding

Ensure Government priorities are advanced through engagement with European funding programmes, in particular the new mission-driven research and innovation framework programme Horizon Europe, and the European Social Fund Plus, aimed to strengthen the Union’s social dimension and invest in people, upskilling them in the context of a rapidly changing labour market.

#governance – good governance to enhance quality

24. Governance Reform

Following consultation with the sector, submit to Government for approval a General Scheme to reform governance of the Higher Education Authority and Higher Education Institutions in Ireland.

25. Funding Reform

Submit the review by the Directorate-General for Structural Reform Support on Increasing the Sustainability of Higher and Further Education Provision in Ireland to Government.

26. Technological Universities

Engage with stakeholders to help consortia to make progress in the establishment of Technological Universities and initiate legislative approval process for Technological University designation in respect of applications from consortia in the Midlands and Mid-West, in Connaught-Ulster and in the South East.

27. Quality in Higher Education

Publish a paper to launch a consultation regarding quality in our higher education system.

28. Performance Measurement

Support the Higher Education Authority to deliver a revised system performance framework for Higher Education which reflects national goals.

29. Sectoral Bargaining under “Building Momentum”

Undertake negotiations under the new Public Service Agreement 2021–2022 in order to support the delivery of the Government’s key national reform plans/initiatives in the Further and Higher Education sector.

30. Capital Planning

Support a sustainable knowledge economy, and address demographic and climate challenges, through ongoing targeted investments in higher and further education infrastructure and the research system, also finalising agreement on future investment through the review of the National Development Plan.

31. Enhance Policy Coherence

Provide strategic direction for our sector, including strengthening horizontal linkages between constituent elements and institutions, across a broad landscape and policy portfolio, and harnessing resources within the education and research institutions to help define and innovatively address significant public policy and societal challenges.



#capacity – Department

“fit-for-purpose”

32. Staff Development and Assignment

Invest in learning and career development to enable all staff to grow and develop, identify additional resources required and fill priority staffing requirements.

33. Engagement with Stakeholders

Review the current approach for structured and unstructured engagement with stakeholders across further and higher education, research, innovation and science, and with enterprise, the community and other sectors and the wider public.

34. Organisation Design

Undertake an independent review of the Department’s structure in terms of capacity and alignment with strategy, and ensure an organisational design fit-for-purpose.

35. Shared Service Arrangements

Work with the Department of Education to agree and document shared services and other supports to facilitate the work of both Departments.

36. Corporate Headquarters

Identify and arrange location of certain functions in a HQ building.

