

IT Sligo Response to QQI White Paper on Review of Higher Education Institutions

October 2015

IT Sligo welcomes the publication of the QQI White Paper on Review of Higher Education Institutions. The institute has been involved in the submission from Council of Registrars in the IOTI response on a sectorial basis.

General Comments

We welcome the inclusive approach to the formation of this document, from the “Review of Reviews” to the publishing of the White Paper. We also welcome the holistic approach to quality for the sector. The approach of using a single review model that is flexible enough to deal with a diverse Higher Education sector is correct one for Ireland. Compliance must be a feature to allow public confidence in the sector but Enhancement will allow the sector to develop to its potential.

However we feel that there are still key components of the overall system that require to be finalised. The Annual Report template has still to be issued and this will feature as a cornerstone of the new system. The draft Quality Assurance Guidelines are also due to be published. These two documents would have given a more complete picture.

We also see benchmarking and quality performance metrics as being integral to the system but that the IOT sector is at a disadvantage in not having dedicated Institutional Research Officers.

Comments on Sections

1. Introduction and Scope

Clarification on what types of directions the cyclical reviews will lead to?

2.1 Clarity, Depth and Quality Performance Focus

The standards, against which review findings are compared, are each institution’s own mission and strategy and selected quality indicators and benchmarks...pg. 5.

Will these selected quality indicators and benchmarks be agreed beforehand with the institution?

2.2 Economy and Efficiency

This use of existing reports etc. should be widened to include HEA Compact Agreements and Institute HEA Profile Data

Appendix 2

As IT Sligo was in the first institutions to go through the last review we are in agreement with being in the first group to go through the proposed review system. We note that our Connacht Ulster Alliance Technological University partners, Letterkenny Institute of Technology are also in this group. We note there will be opportunities for the two institutions to work closely on this and to align initiatives such as staff training etc.