

IUA Review [06/4] for IUA Meetings in NUIM on 16th October, 2006.

	Section	Page No.
1.	Research	4.
1.1.	Strategy for Science Technology and Innovation 2006-2013	4.
1.2.	European Research Policy	4.
1.2.1.	<i>Researchers Charter and Code of Conduct for Recruitment</i>	4.
1.2.2.	<i>Universities and Researchers</i>	5.
1.3.	Irish Researcher Mobility Office and Web Portal	5.
1.3.1.	<i>Research Job Opportunities</i>	5.
1.3.2.	<i>Survey to Monitor and Assess Trends in the Population of Mobile Researchers Entering and Leaving Ireland</i>	5.
1.4.	Science Foundation Ireland [SFI]	5.
1.4.1.	<i>Director General</i>	5.
1.4.2.	<i>SFI Claims and Payments Process</i>	6.
1.4.3.	<i>SIF Overhead Investment Plan</i>	6.
1.5.	EU Sixth Framework Programme	6.
1.5.1.	<i>FP6 Drawdown</i>	6.
1.5.2.	<i>Human Resources & Mobility Programme – Marie Curie</i>	6.
1.6.	EU Seventh Framework Programme	6.
1.6.1.	<i>FP7 Launch in Ireland</i>	6.
1.6.2.	<i>National Support Structure for FP7</i>	6.
1.6.3.	<i>Rules for Participation in FP7</i>	6.
1.6.4.	<i>“People” Programme – FP7</i>	7.
1.6.5.	<i>“Ideas” Programme – FP7 – European Research Council</i>	7.
1.7.	Co-ordination of Research Audits	7.
1.8.	Irish Research Council for the Humanities and Social Sciences	7.
1.9.	Expertiseireland.com	8.
2.	University Reform	8.
2.1.	IUA Co-operation Accord	8.
2.2.	Strategic Innovation Fund [SIF]	9.
2.2.1.	<i>SIF – University Sector Collaboration Proposal</i>	9.
2.2.2.	<i>SIF Process</i>	9.
2.3.	National Development Plan	9.

3.	Funding	9.
3.1.	Current Funding 2005/2006	9.
3.2.	Capital Funding	9.
3.2.1.	<i>Revised Capital Appraisal Guidelines</i>	9.
3.2.2.	<i>Research Infrastructure Review</i>	10.
3.2.3.	<i>Alternative Sources of Finance for Capital Funding</i>	10.
3.3.	Pension Issues	10.
3.4.	Nursing – Transfer of Midwifery & Children’s Nursing Education to Third Level	10.
3.5.	Taxation Issues	11.
4.	HEA	11.
4.1.	Cost of Access Programmes	11.
4.2.	National Research Infrastructure Review	11.
4.3.	IA/HERO Meeting – Washington	11.
4.4.	Entry mechanisms to Medical Education	11.
4.5.	Data Collection	12.
4.6.	Code of Practice for the Governance of Third Level Institutions	12.
4.7.	Consolidated Financial Statements	12.
5.	Remuneration Process	13.
5.1.	Review Body on higher Remuneration in the Public Sector	13.
5.1.1.	<i>Professors</i>	13.
5.1.2.	<i>University Heads and Senior Officers</i>	13.
5.2.	Benchmarking	13.
6.	Communications / Events	13.
6.1.	Marketing the University Sector and IUA Services	13.
6.1.1.	<i>Launch of IUA Newsletter</i>	13.
6.1.2.	<i>IUA Advertisement for HEA Yearbook 2007</i>	14.
6.1.3.	<i>IUA Advertisement for CEO Position</i>	14.
6.1.4.	<i>Website Development</i>	14.
6.1.5.	<i>Meeting with UL</i>	14.
6.2.	Press and Publicity	14.
6.3.	International Affairs	15.
6.3.1.	<i>Translation of IUA International Brochure</i>	15.
6.3.2.	<i>Joint Display Equipment for NACAC</i>	15.
6.3.3.	<i>International “4th Level” Advertisement for the Seven Universities</i>	15.
6.4.	Events	15.
6.4.1.	<i>IUA Forum on Marie Curie FP7 Programme: July 2006</i>	15.

6.4.2.	<i>IUA Humanities and Social Sciences Conference: October 2006</i>	16.
6.4.3.	<i>Launch of FP7: November 2006</i>	16.
6.5.	Publications	16.
6.5.1.	<i>SIF Proposal</i>	16.
6.5.2.	<i>Marie Curie Success Brochures</i>	16.
7.	Quality Assurance	17.
7.1.	IUQB	17.
7.1.1.	<i>Board Matters</i>	17.
7.1.2.	<i>IUQB Meetings</i>	17.
7.1.3.	<i>IUQB Budgets 2006 and 2007</i>	17.
7.1.4.	<i>EUA Review of Quality Assurance in Irish Universities</i>	17.
7.1.5.	<i>IUQB Presentation to UL</i>	18.
7.1.6.	<i>IUQB Internationally</i>	18.
7.1.7.	<i>IUQB Publications</i>	19.
7.2.	Irish Higher Education Quality Network [IHEQN]	19.
8.	National Framework of Qualifications	19.
8.1.	Placement of Awards within the Framework	19.
8.2.	Alignment of Irish NFQ with the “Bologna” Qualifications Framework	19.
9.	EUA	20.
9.1.	EUA Events	20.
9.1.1.	<i>Transatlantic Dialogue on Doctoral Education: EUA Meeting with US Council of Graduate Schools, 3-5 September 2006, Salzburg, Austria</i>	20.
9.1.2.	<i>Forthcoming EUA Events 2006-2007</i>	21.
9.2.	Bologna Handbook	21.
9.3.	Research Strategy Development in European Universities – EUA Report	21.
10.	International	22.
10.1.	International Students	22.
10.2.	International Developments	22.
10.2.1.	<i>Australia</i>	22.
10.2.2.	<i>United States</i>	23.
10.2.3.	<i>China</i>	24.

IUA Review [06/4] for IUA Meetings in NUIM on 16th October, 2006.

1. Research

1.1. Strategy for Science Technology and Innovation 2006-2013

The SSTI was launched by Government on 18th June.

1.2. European Research Policy

1.2.1. *Researchers Charter and Code of Conduct for Recruitment*

The European Charter for Researchers and the Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers are a set of guidelines adopted by the European Commission in March 2005 as part of the EU's policy to increase the attractiveness of research careers. The Charter recommendations aim to provide equal rights and obligations for individual researchers throughout Europe by specifying the roles, responsibilities and entitlements of researchers, as well as those of funders and/or employers of researchers. The guidelines of the Charter and Code address all European research organisations and universities, both public and private, and are to be implemented on a voluntary basis.

The IUA engaged extensively and intensively in the development of the Charter and Code through consultation with national stakeholders in the universities, government agencies and other representative organisations (IBEC etc), playing a lead role in the discussion of the Charter and its implementation at the UK Presidency conference (8-9 September 2005).

In order to examine how the Charter and Code relate to existing practices and current national legislation in Ireland, the IUA conducted a comprehensive gap analysis exercise to identify areas of overlap and potential difficulties for the implementation of the recommendation in Irish universities. The gap analysis involved a detailed examination of the individual sections of the Charter and Code, comparing and contrasting these with a wide range of existing legislation and policies.

On the basis of the findings of this gap analysis, the IUA has concluded that the overall principles of the Charter and Code are consistent with current practice in Ireland. No major conflicts were established with only some minor points requiring further clarification, mostly with regard to their definition or wording. The University Heads signed up to the Charter on 13th September, 2006 as part of the Co-operation Accord which states as follows:

“We recognise the value of the European Charter for Researchers and Code of Conduct for their Recruitment and support and endorse the principles set down in them and wish to build on them”

1.2.2. Universities and Researchers

In a new departure there has been a major restructuring of DG Research in preparation for FP7. Part of this change has been the introduction of a new sector “*Universities and Researchers*” that will focus on policy initiatives in these areas. This is a welcome innovation as, in the past, the Commission has never recognised formally the central role of universities in the European research effort. The full details of restructuring are at http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/research/index_en.html

1.3. Irish Researcher Mobility Office and Web Portal

1.3.1 Research Job Opportunities

The Research Job Opportunities function on the researchcareersireland.com portal was launched at the end of June. This now means that there is a centralized national website which allows research job advertising for all research active organizations, academia and industry. Universities are uploading and advertising their research job opportunities free of charge both nationally and in Europe on **Europa** - the portal site of the European Union (<http://europa.eu.int/>) via the centralized national website.

1.3.2 Survey to Monitor and Assess Trends in the Population of Mobile Researchers Entering and Leaving Ireland

The IUA and the Researcher Mobility Office Ireland are seeking to gain a deeper understanding of the key issues that researchers face when relocating or returning to Ireland. A survey was developed as a pilot study for a subsequent full-scale project to monitor and assess trends in the population of mobile researchers entering and leaving Ireland. Prior to 2004, statistics and trends on mobility for Ireland did not exist and it was therefore difficult to provide targeted information for particular sub-groups of researchers, relocating to or from Ireland.

This pilot study represents the first step in the development of a high-level database of sub-groups of mobile researchers for the dissemination of targeted information relating to mobility between Ireland and the identified countries of choice of mobile researchers, both incoming and outgoing. It is also the first phase of development for a centralised system to record mobility experiences of the network’s client base with a view to identifying the main obstacles to mobility and tailoring the information and resources available through the helpdesk and portal to address any difficulties and thus optimise services for mobile researchers.

1.4. Science Foundation Ireland

1.4.1. Director General

Prof. Mark Keane has been appointed as Director General on a temporary basis.

1.4.2. SFI Claims and Payments Process

SFI wrote to university Presidents/Provost in June advising universities of a number of changes to the grant claims process and related payment cycle. Universities agreed to respond to this matter on a sectoral basis and following a meeting with SFI and university representatives the IUA made a submission to SFI on behalf of the universities.

1.4.3. SFI Overhead Investment Plan

SFI have recently written to universities informing them of an ‘overpayment’ of research overheads arising from the transition from the old overhead funding basis to the OIP. This issue is currently being considered by Chief Finance Officers and Vice-Presidents/Deans of Research.

1.5. EU Sixth Framework Programme

1.5.1. FP6 Drawdown

The total to-date of **Ireland’s Provisional Drawdown** from Framework Programme 6 is **€197,552,365**, with 68.5% of the total Irish figure attributable to the HE sector. The majority of Calls are now closed, with evaluation results pending.

1.5.2. Human Resources & Mobility Programme – Marie Curie

The Marie Curie Programme continues to be the most successful part of the Framework Programme for Ireland in relative terms, and the Irish draw-down from the programme is now over €55m representing ~30% of the total. The recent results from the Transfer of Knowledge Programme indicate that Ireland has taken €10.2 million of the budget -over 20% of the entire budget from this programme.

1.6. EU Seventh Framework Programme

1.6.1. FP7 Launch in Ireland

The official launch of FP7 is due to take place in Dublin on the 15th November, 2006, with participation by invite-only.

1.6.2. National Support Structure for FP7

Dr Imelda Lambkin has been appointed as the new Director for the National Support Structure for FP7. The new core unit she will manage will be located in Enterprise Ireland. The IUA has been nominated by the Department of Education and Science as the Delegate and National Contact Point for the People (Marie Curie) Programme in FP7.

1.6.3. Rules for Participation in FP7

The IUA is involved in ongoing consultation on the Rules for Participation in FP7. The issue currently under negotiation is the level of overheads which the EC will adopt as a “flat rate”. IUA Executive is working closely with DETE and Pdraig O’Conaill, Attaché at the Perm Rep

to the EU, who has been representing the universities' significant concerns in the ongoing negotiations on this issue.

1.6.4. "People" Programme – FP7

The IUA has engaged in a National Consultation process on the structure and content of the People (Marie Curie) Programme in FP7, involving contractors, researchers, Research Officers and Finance Officers. A separate consultation was held with the Merrion Group on the proposed co-funding arrangements under the programme. The proposal is for co-funding of regional, national or international programmes in the field of research training and career development, for Multi-annual programme(s) to fund individual research/career training fellowships for "experienced" researchers. In light of leverage of alternative funding for research being seen by Government as an essential part of the SSTI, this co-funding scheme will be important. The IUA will represent Irish interests at an EU level as the People programme content is negotiated.

1.6.5. "Ideas" Programme – FP7 – European Research Council

SFI will act as national delegate and contact point along with the two Research Councils for the European Research Council in FP7.

1.7. Co-ordination of Research Audits

Following the meeting the Standing Committee of Research Funding Bodies in relation to the co-ordination of research audits, as reported in the June IUA Review, the IUA submitted a formal proposal to the Standing Committee in relation to this matter. A response to the proposal is awaited.

1.8. Irish Research Council for the Humanities and Social Sciences

The VP/Deans of Research will meet with the IRCHSS Chair and Director on 10th October, 2006 to discuss a number of key issues relating to funding. The universities are focusing on the following issues:

- *For PhD scholarships the level of the stipend and lack of PhD fees. The stipend remains at €12,700 with no bench fee or fees while IRCSET has raised stipend to €16,000 + bench fee & fees. Also PhD students funded under thematic grants can include fees*
- *Salaries for postdoctoral researchers must correspond to IUA Researcher Salary Scales. Currently the minimum IUA rate is €36,763 (€49,905 with full social costs) whereas IRCHSS pays only €31,745. In addition there are no bench fees paid. In contrast, IRCSET provides a salary of €33,000 (under review) plus social costs along with a bench fee of €5000 for postdoctoral researchers*
- *There will be funding available for only 2-3 grad schools – a massive effort by academics for very little return*
- *Staff replacement funding too low with introduction of fixed term workers act costs – this scheme is probably vulnerable if the 2007 budget is tight*

- *Need more transparency in the peer review process. Currently feedback is not automatic and based only on one expert opinion. Ranking is carried out by assessment panel who are not necessarily experts. No overall data and statistics provided*
- *Question as to whether graduate school costs will be built into future grants (i.e. €1300 cost for generic skills and €500 for international mobility as foreseen in SSTI)*
- *No overheads for thematic grants*

The IUA is working with the Council to run a conference on Humanities and Social Sciences in 21st Century Ireland - Delivering the Knowledge Society, 23rd/24th October, see Section 6.4.2. for details.

1.9. Expertiseireland.com

Waterford Institute of Technology has begun contributing expert profiles to the expertiseireland.com portal, bringing the total number of profiles to 5064. The breakdown is as follows:

University of Dublin, Trinity College	741
University College Dublin	658
Dublin Institute of Technology	656
University of Ulster	612
Dublin City University	463
University College Cork	473
Queen's University Belfast	409
National University of Ireland, Galway	444
University of Limerick	283
National University of Ireland, Maynooth	260
Athlone Institute of Technology	28
Waterford Institute of Technology	11
Institute of Technology, Tallaght	4

2. University Reform

2.1. IUA Co-operation Accord

The IUA Council drafted proposals for an agreement on sectoral co-operation at its Council meeting on 9th June, 2006. Revised drafts were prepared and circulated. During the media “silly season” in August, media coverage generated controversy over elements of earlier drafts relating to inter-university recruitment of staff. The IUA Co-operation Accord was agreed and signed on behalf of the seven universities at a Council meeting on 13th September, 2006.

2.2. Strategic Innovation Fund [SIF]

2.2.1. SIF – University Sector Collaboration Proposal

Following further meetings of the IUA SIF group chaired by Professor Jim Browne, NUIG, at which recommendations from different university groups for SIF sectoral projects were reviewed, proposals for an IUA collaborative submission to SIF were submitted to the IUA Council and agreed by the Council at its meeting on 13th September, 2006. The IUA proposal is structured under three sections – Creating a World Class 4th Level Ireland, Reform and Innovation at 3rd Level and Enabling Initiatives which are aligned with corresponding sections of the IUA Strategy as set out in the pre-Budget submission to Government “*Reform of 3rd Level and Creation of 4th Level Ireland, November 2005*”.

2.2.2. SIF Process

The SIF International Review Panel convened by the HEA met during the week of 2nd to 6th October, 2006 to evaluate the proposals submitted under SIF. The HEA is working to have the results of the First Call announces as soon as possible.

2.3. National Development Plan

Following informal discussions with the DES in relation to capital provision for university infrastructure to be made in the NDP 2007-2013, IUA President sent a letter to the Ministers for Education and Science, and copied to the Minister for Finance, reiterating the case made in a meeting with her and Minister Cowen in November 2005 for a quantum leap in capital investment. The letters sought an early meeting with both Ministers.

Papers to support the case for increased investment in universities are being finalised by Professor Colm Harmon, Geary Institute, and Dr. Tom Higgins, Consultant

3. Funding

3.1. Current Funding 2005/2006

The University Chief Finance Officers Group made a submission to the HEA in respect of the required increase in tuition fees for 2006/07 noting that the increase required to cover the cost of known unavoidable cost increases was in the region of 8.4%. The Department of Education and Science subsequently approved an increase in the undergraduate tuition fee of up to 6.5% for the academic year 2006/07 and an increase in the charge for registration, examinations and student services from €775 to €800.

3.2. Capital Funding

3.2.1. Revised Capital Appraisal Guidelines

Further to the revised Department of Finance capital appraisal guidelines notified recently to universities the Department of Education and Science engaged Indecon Consultants to prepare a

comprehensive set of guidelines together with a cost benefit analysis template for capital projects in the third level sector. Universities were invited to make a submission in respect of this matter and it was agreed to respond on a sectoral basis. A working group was established and the group also wrote to the HEA in respect of this matter.

3.2.2. *Research Infrastructure Review*

The HEA in association with Forfás is undertaking a review of research infrastructure in the higher education sector and of the development needs for research infrastructure. The review will create a frame of reference to inform future decisions on research investment as part of the SSTI and will set out a top level ‘roadmap’ for investment in research infrastructure. Universities were asked to complete a consultation questionnaire and were invited to make submissions. It is envisaged that the review would be finalised and a report published by the end of November 2006. [For information on forthcoming Forum, see Section 4.2].

3.2.3. *Alternative Sources of Finance for Capital Funding*

The extensive capital funding requirements of universities will not be met by Exchequer funding alone. The IUA continues to actively seek potential alternative sources of funding for university capital projects. Recently the IUA has been approached by both the FairFund Foundation and by Merrion Capital with proposals for alternative funding sources. The IUA will review these proposals on behalf of the universities.

3.3. *Pension Issues*

As reported previously the Department of Education and Science and the Department of Finance have proposed that the new model superannuation schemes would operate on a pay-as-you-go basis. The HEA Pensions Working Group has continued to progress matters in that regard. The DES and Department of Finance are keen that universities would finalise model schemes and submit these for approval as soon as possible.

There remain a number of outstanding operational issues to be resolved as outlined in the letter issued to the HEA and it is proposed that these would be considered and addressed on a sectoral basis through the IUA Pensions Working Group.

3.4. *Nursing – Transfer of Midwifery and Children’s Nursing Education to Third Level*

The transfer agreement in respect of nurse tutors transferring to the third level sector was finalised and agreed and the undergraduate programmes and post-registration children’s nursing programmes have now successfully transferred to universities. There remain a small number of relatively minor issues to resolve and the IUA working group is pursuing these matters with the HSE and Department of Health and Children. The HSE propose to establish a small working group to undertake a review of post-registration midwifery programmes. The HSE will be seeking two IUA representatives to act on the group. The target completion date for the review is January 2007.

3.5. Taxation Issues

Following on-going consultations with the Revenue Commissioners in relation to a number of payroll related taxation issues the Revenue issued rulings in respect of these issues. The rulings create a number of issues for universities and the IUA will be pursuing these further with the Revenue.

4. HEA

4.1. Cost of Access Programmes

The HEA invited tenders/proposals to be submitted by 20th September, 2006 [para.3.2.2.] for a consulting service concerned with a survey of Costs of Access Programmes. The review relates to the premium of 0.33 of an FTE adopted (from the UK) under the HEA grant allocation model in respect of each student enrolled who is a member of a group currently under-represented in higher education. The purpose of the review is to ascertain the nature and level of costs associated with such students in an Irish context. The review is to be completed by end November, 2006.

4.2. National Research Infrastructure Review

The HEA/Forfás have been conducting a national review of research infrastructure and are hosting a “*High Level Forum on the National Research Infrastructure Review*” on 23rd October in Dublin. This Forum is designed as an opportunity for stakeholders to further engage with the review process which is being conducted by an international committee. Discussions at the Forum will be structured around the ten thematic areas of the review. Participation is by invitation only and one place is reserved for each organisation.

4.3. IA/HERO Meeting, Washington

The Irish American Higher Education Research Organisation [IA/HERO] was established in 2004 by the School of Public Policy at George Mason University [GMU] in Virginia, USA, and the HEA. The purpose of IA/HERO is to examine and to respond to the challenges facing higher education in the US and Ireland through a contrasting programme of research, publications and conferences. The Second General Meeting was held in Washington from 13th–16th September, 2006 and the IUA was represented by Dr. Iggy Ó Muirheartaigh.

4.4. Entry Mechanisms to Medical Education

A submission to the HEA Expert Group on Entry mechanisms to Medicine was agreed by IUA Registrars’ Group and forwarded on 9th August, 2006. The document was originally developed by the Irish Universities Medical Consortium (IUMC), which includes the Head of the Medical School and the Registrar/Senior Lecturer for the four public universities with medical schools (National University of Ireland Galway, Trinity College Dublin, University College Cork and University College Dublin). The IUMC document was considered, modified and approved by

the IUA Registrars' Group and the Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland were consulted through the National University of Ireland.

While this submission represents the agreed position of the universities and their medical schools, the IUA pointed out to the Expert Group that the mechanism by which students are selected for admission to a university is, by law, matter for the Academic Council of that university, and is a decision arrived at independently and autonomously by each university and that the very limited time available to complete this sectoral submission meant that the proposals had yet to be put to the Academic Councils of the individual universities.

4.5. Data Collection

Following discussions held with the HEA before the summer regarding data collection regarding socio-economic, disability and access conditions for all students, it was agreed that for further work was necessary in order to define which data was necessary and how this should be gathered. Small pilot exercises using the proposed HEA template were undertaken at several Institutes of Technology during student registration in September 2006, and HEA representatives visited NUI Maynooth in order to see how such a scheme might work. IUA nominated 5 members to a joint working group with the HEA to progress these issues:

David Redmond, Registrar, NUI Maynooth
Patrick Clancy, UCD, expert
Aine Galvin, UCD Head of Access

Kevin Griffin, DCU Head of Registry
Lewis Purser, IUA Assistant Director

A first meeting was held on 25th September, 2006 and a follow-up letter was received from the HEA dated 2nd October, 2006 which lists the action points agreed. The group will meet next on 31st October, 2006.

4.6. Code of Practice for the Governance of Third Level Institutions

As reported previously a HEA working group under the chairmanship of Mr. Dermot Quigley has been set up to develop a joint HEA/IUA Framework for the Governance of Universities. An IUA working group comprising representatives of Secretary's and Finance Officers has been liaising with the HEA working group in respect of this matter. The group raised a number of issues of concern with the draft code prepared by the HEA working group. A number of the concerns raised have been reflected in the latest draft. However, there remains a small number of unresolved issues. The IUA working group has prepared a revised draft for consideration by the HEA working group and a meeting has been arranged for 10 October 2006 to consider the remaining outstanding issues.

4.7. Consolidated Financial Statements

Good progress has been made in relation to the finalisation of university consolidated financial statements and the IUA has been liaising with the HEA in relation to this matter. It is

anticipated that all universities will shortly be in a position to publish consolidated financial statements on university websites.

5. Remuneration Process

5.1. Review Body on Higher Remuneration in the Public Sector

5.1.1. Professors

The IUA, with the assistance of Mr. Séan O'Driscoll, Athrú Consulting, completed a submission on the review of Professors' remuneration and forwarded it to the Review Body on Higher Education on 25th August, 2006. The Review Body has selected seven professor posts on which Hay Consulting will conduct a job sizing exercise on behalf of the Review Body.

5.1.2. University Heads and Senior Officers

The Review Body selected a number of posts of University Head, Registrar, Chief Financial Officer and Secretary for evaluation by Hay Consultants. Oral hearings on the review of salaries for University Heads and Senior Officers will be held by the Review body on 1st December, 2006.

5.2. Benchmarking

A submission relating to the review of University Lecturer grades was prepared by the IUA with the assistance of Mr. Séan O'Driscoll, Athrú consulting, and forwarded to the Public Service Benchmarking Body on 18th July, 2006. The Benchmarking Body has selected a number of academic posts in each of the universities to be evaluated by Hay Consultants. The Benchmarking Body will hold oral hearings on the review of the salaries of these grades on Wednesday, 22nd November, 2006. The IUA is in contact with HEA and DES to ensure that the necessary preparation is made for the hearing and that the universities are adequately represented.

6. Communications / Events

6.1. Marketing the University Sector and IUA Services

6.1.1. Launch of IUA Newsletter

The first edition of IUA News was distributed by email on Monday 18th of September to over 1000 recipients. The inaugural issue carried a welcome from the IUA President, Dr Iggy O'Muircheartaigh and its feature story was the Co-Operation accord agreed by the 7 presidents. We hope to distribute the second edition at the beginning of November. Favourable comments have been received from a variety of organisations.

6.1.2. IUA Advertisement for HEA Yearbook 2007

An IUA advertisement was designed for inclusion in the 2007 HEA Yearbook. This advertisement will be positioned on the inside front cover opposite the NUI advert. The advertisement contains general information on the IUA as well as the Researchers Mobility Office, expertisereiland.com and the Irish Marie Curie Office.

6.1.3. IUA Advertisement for CEO Position

A recruitment advertisement was designed to advertise the position of Chief Executive of the IUA. This advertisement was then sent to the Irish Times, Irish Independent, Irish Examiner and the Times Higher Education Supplement. Plans for the announcement of the new CEO are being devised.

6.1.4. Website Development

As well as ongoing amendments and additions, 2 new sections have been added to the IUA website; **International Affairs** and **Fourth Level Ireland**. Both sections can be accessed from the home page and it planned that the Fourth Level Ireland pages will be developed further so that it eventually becomes a website in its own right with the URL of www.4thlevelireland.ie. Links to both the postgraduate & international sections of the 7 university websites are easily accessed.

6.1.5. Meeting with UL

The IUA communications Manager, Lia O’Sullivan, has commenced on a series of meetings with the communications teams of each of the universities. Information will be gathered on a range of topics to be discussed at a joint communications meeting where the new CEO of IUA will be introduced.

Communications projects requiring cross university involvement being discussed include:

- Fourth Level Ireland
- Branding of Access Programmes
- Marketing the Universities Internationally

6.2. Press and Publicity

July 06: An article entitled “**Web Portal for Mobile Researchers**” featuring the Researchers’ Mobility Office and a new recruitment feature of the office website www.researchcareersireland.com were carried in the July issue of Technology Ireland.

August 06: A press release entitled “**Online Access to 5000 Irish Experts**” was issued on 27th July and was picked up in the following publications as well as being carried on many university websites;

Public Sector Times – August 06 edition
Inside Government – Aug/Sept 06 edition
Research Europe – September 06 edition

Sept 06: A major article “**Marie Curie Succeeds for Ireland**”, written by Conor O’Carroll, on the Success of the Marie Curie Programme in FP6 through the work of the IUA was featured in the September edition of Technology Ireland.

6.3. International Affairs

6.3.1. Translation of IUA International Brochure

The joint international brochure produced by the IUA has been translated into Chinese and is in the process of being printed. The finished brochure will be distributed through the Enterprise Ireland network and through University representatives in China. The success of this translation will be monitored and other translations (Hindi, Japanese etc) will be considered in the future.

6.3.2. Joint Display Equipment for NACAC

The IUA have produced an event Display Stand for the seven universities. It was taken by one of the international officers to Pittsburgh for the NACAC exhibition October 5-7 and is available for us in all upcoming international events. International Officers will share the responsibility for its transport and it will be stored centrally by the IUA for easy access by all universities.

6.3.3. International “4th Level” Advertisement for the Seven Universities

A free full page advertisement offer to NUI Galway by the World Grad School Tour was used to promote all seven universities with the IUA taking care of advertisement design and production. The advertisement is being placed in the Top Grad School Guide with approx 40,000 copies being printed and distributed free of charge, at all the World Grad School fairs in Europe, China, Asia Pacific and Middle East this year and South America (Sept 2007). The focus of the advertisement is on Fourth Level Ireland and is being pitched at post-graduate students.

6.4. Events

6.4.1. IUA Forum on Marie Curie FP7 Programme: July 06

National Groupings were established and briefed on the upcoming FP7 programme for Marie Curie Funding. The forum took place in the IUA in late July and involved the expert input of the Deans of Research, Research Officers, researchers, Finance, Legal and representatives from funding bodies.

6.4.2. *IUA Humanities and Social Sciences Conference: October 2006*

This IUA Conference entitled **The Humanities and Social Sciences in 21st Century Ireland - Delivering the Knowledge Society** will be held in association with the IRCHSS. It will address the challenges and opportunities facing the Humanities and Social Sciences in Ireland today. The aim of the conference is to put HSS in the spotlight, raise awareness of key issues, educate and make a connection with high level civil servants, politicians and other stakeholders.

The conference will explore the capacity of Humanities and Social Sciences to develop the thinkers with the analytical, conceptual and communication skills needed for a well-balanced society, to advance and transfer knowledge and to reflect and inform the broader debate on Ireland's present and future.

The conference will be held in the Royal College of Physicians, Kildare Street, Dublin 2 on the afternoon of Monday October 23rd and for a full day on Tuesday Oct 24th. Over 500 invitations have been issued to universities, IOT's, government and other agencies. Contributions will come from a select panel of international and Irish speakers.

6.4.3. *Launch of FP7: November 2006*

FP7 will be formally launched to an Irish audience on the 15th November at the Crowne Plaza Hotel in Santry Dublin and will be attended by between 400-500 delegates. Marie Curie success in Ireland will be featured and exhibition space has been reserved for display stands from expertiseireland.com, the Researcher's Mobility Office and a joint University stand.

6.5. Publications

6.5.1. *SIF Proposal*

The communications office was responsible for the presentation of the recent SIF submission to the HEA. A SIF folder was designed featuring statements of support from the seven University Presidents for the proposal. The previous IUA submission, "*Reform of 3rd Level & Creation of 4th Level Ireland*", was reproduced as a more presentable and professional document.

6.5.2. *Marie Curie Success Brochures*

Three high quality publications on Marie Curie will be produced over the next two months. The first will be a Marie Curie Promotional Leaflet focusing on the Success of **Social Sciences** and encouraging applications for FP7. This brochure will be produced in time for distribution at the IUA HSS Conference on 23rd and 24th October, 2006. The second will be a more comprehensive "*Marie Curie Success for Ireland*" brochure will have a more "coffee table" style and will look back over the last five years and count the many funding successes achieved. It is planned to have this brochure ready for distribution at the Launch of FP7 on 15th November, 2006. The third publication will be an **Industry** focused leaflet

These brochures will not only give researchers the opportunity to showcase their own advances in research and achievements to date, they will also reinforce the IUA's ability to influence Marie Curie Policy and Development and ensure that its work is recognised in Political, Industrial and Academic sectors.

7. Quality Assurance

7.1. IUQB

7.1.1. Board Matters

Professor Roger Downer, former President of the University of Limerick resigned from the Board in April 2006 and was replaced in October as an IUA nominee on the Board by Professor Don Barry, Vice President Academic of the University of Limerick. Mr Colm Harmogue replaced Mr Tony McDonnell as President of the Union of Students in Ireland in July 2006 and as a member of the Board of Directors of IUQB in October 2006.

7.1.2. IUQB Meetings

A meeting of the IUQB Board took place on Monday, 26 June 2006. The next meeting of the IUQB Board is scheduled for Monday, 23 October 2006.

7.1.3. IUQB Budgets 2006 and 2007

In 2005, the IUQB budget for 2006 was determined at €802,674. University subscriptions amounted to a total of €418,500 (invoices issued May 2006 and received in full by September 2006). A submission for the balance of funds (totalling €384,174) was submitted to the HEA under the Strategic Initiatives Scheme 2006 in June 2006. In August 2006, IUQB was informed by the HEA that it had been allocated a total of €258,000 under this programme. The letter from the HEA indicated, inter alia, that the HEA would be in contact again in relation to funding arrangements for 2007 and future years.

A proposal on the 2007 Budget will be put to the IUQB Board at its next meeting on 23 October 2006. Due to the increased compliance workload on the office post incorporation, increased management of the sectoral projects and commitments at international level, the proposal will contain a request for an increase in IUQB staff from 4 (3.8 WTE) to 6 (5.8 WTE) persons.

7.1.4. EUA Review of Quality Assurance in Irish Universities

The second six monthly follow-up report to the HEA requested in response to the EUA Quality Review of Irish Universities (2004-2005) was sent to the HEA following the IUQB Board meeting on 26 June 2006. The report updated the HEA on further progress with the implementation of the recommendations contained in the EUA Sectoral Report at sectoral and individual university level, based on reports from the seven universities. The report may be viewed online at:

[http://www.iuqb.ie/2nd%20Month%20Report%20to%20HEA%20re%20Follow-up%20to%20EUA%20Sectoral%20Reports%20-%20plus%20appendices%20\(26%20June%202006\).pdf](http://www.iuqb.ie/2nd%20Month%20Report%20to%20HEA%20re%20Follow-up%20to%20EUA%20Sectoral%20Reports%20-%20plus%20appendices%20(26%20June%202006).pdf)

7.1.5. IUQB Presentation to HEA

The Chief Executive of IUQB made presentations in relation to the above report and other IUQB activities to the Executive team of the HEA on 19 September 2006 and to the Authority itself on 26 September 2006.

In order to fulfil the requirements as an external quality assurance agency under Part 3 of the *European Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area* (the Bergen standards), IUQB must submit itself to a 5-yearly review of its operations. Respecting the principle of subsidiarity, such reviews should normally take place at national level. The management of any such review must be outside of the agency itself and the external panel must be selected independently of the agency. At the 2 meetings described above, IUQB requested that the HEA undertake the task of selecting the external panel to conduct the review.

It is a requirement of becoming a member of the European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ENQA) that an agency must have undertaken or have commenced the process of undergoing an evaluation of its operations to verify their compliance with the Bergen standards described above.

7.1.6. IUQB Internationally

The Chief Executive and Programme manager are both members of the pool of evaluators for the EUA Institutional Evaluation Programme and will be involved in international teams involved in the system reviews of universities in Slovakia and Portugal.

IUQB (through the Programme Manager) is collaborating with the EU Commission funded So.Re.Com thematic network (co-ordinated by the University of Rome “La Sapienza”) to produce “European Doctoral Programme Management Best Practice Guidelines is involved in the SoReCom thematic network

The CEO made or has been invited to make presentations at: UK Council for Graduate Education Summer Conference in Florence in July 2006, the Bologna Promoters Conference in Munich in November 2006 and the European Quality Assurance Forum in Munich in November 2006.

7.1.7. IUQB Publications

IUQB published the first edition of its newsletter *IUQB News* in August 2006. 8,500 copies of the newsletter were distributed to the universities and other interested bodies in Ireland and overseas. The newsletter may be viewed online at:

http://www.iuqb.ie/IUQB_News_Issue%201_August_2006.pdf

IUQB was involved in a project in relation to the *International Postgraduate Students Mirror*: A survey of postgraduate research students in Finland, Ireland, Sweden and the Catalan region of Spain. The Irish survey was co-ordinated by IUQB and the University of Limerick. The publication may be viewed at:

http://www.hsv.se/international_mirror

Due to increased demand, IUQB is republishing the *National Guidelines of Good Practice in the Organisation of PhD Programmes in Irish Universities* in October 2006.

7.2. The Irish Higher Education Quality Network (IHEQN),

The Irish Higher Education Quality Network (IHEQN), which brings together all actors in quality assurance in Irish HE, will host its first conference on 17 October 2006, to explore the links between Quality Assurance and Professional Accreditation / Recognition. Experts on European directives, national regulatory developments, quality assurance and programme accreditation will aim to set the context for delegates of the changing environments in which professional bodies and academic institutions are currently operating. This includes case studies presented of collaborative practice between professional body accreditation and higher education quality assurance reviews will provide subject for debate and discussion on issues surrounding the closer alignment of these processes.

8. National Framework of Qualifications

8.1. Placement of Awards within the Framework

Following the December 2005 IUA / NQAI agreement on the process for placing minor, special purpose and supplemental university awards on the National Framework of Qualifications (NFQ), a second follow-up meeting was held on 31 August 2006 between IUA and NQAI regarding this process. Given that DES funding for student support, free fees, tax relief, etc will become conditional on the awards in question being formally included in the NFQ, it is vital that each university respect the agreed IUA/NQAI process and formally inform the NQAI of their proposed placing on the NFQ of their higher certificates, postgraduate diplomas, and other minor, special purpose and supplemental awards. It is proposed that the universities consult with each other before informing the NQAI, and that this should take place before the end of 2006. It is likewise proposed that the IUA and NQAI should establish an informal working group for ongoing exchange of information between universities and the National Qualifications Authority.

8.2. Alignment of Irish NFQ with the “Bologna” Qualifications Framework

Ireland was invited to undertake a pilot project of the self-certification of the compatibility of the Irish National Framework of Qualifications with the Framework for Qualifications of the European Higher Education Area.

A working group, including an IUA representative, prepared a document setting out an draft Irish response in relation to the criteria and the procedures established in the report of the Bologna Framework Working group which was adopted by European Ministers for higher education in Bergen in May 2005. This draft was published in June 2006 and presented to and discussed by a group of Irish stakeholders, including representatives of all the universities, at a workshop on 3 October 2006. The document is currently being finalised on the basis of these discussions, and will be forwarded to the intergovernmental Bologna Follow-Up Group.

9. EUA

9.1. EUA Events

9.1.1. *Transatlantic Dialogue on Doctoral Education: EUA meeting with US Council of Graduate Schools, 3rd-5th September, 2006, Salzburg, Austria*

This workshop, entitled “*Doctoral Education in a Global Context: Competition and Co-operation*”, brought together over forty participants from leading institutions in the US and Europe invited by EUA and the Council of Graduate Schools [CGS] – the principal association of research intensive universities in the US and EUA’s partner on this topic. The three-day event engaged participants from 19 countries in an international dialogue about the role of doctoral education in the production of global talent and national research capacity, and in strengthening economic competitiveness.

Recognising doctoral education as key to responding to the challenges of the knowledge society in North America and Europe, participants exchanged information about shared priorities such as: providing adequate financing crucial to student success, better preparing students for careers inside and outside academia, emphasising teamwork, and enhancing the “generic skills” of PhD students to ensure their success in all aspects of their future careers as researchers and scholars.

An opportunity for mutual learning between European and US colleagues and to highlight both similar and dissimilar issues, the meeting identified major challenges faced by institutions on both sides of the Atlantic. For both EUA and CGS the meeting is the beginning of a long-term global dialogue about doctoral education that will take place on the basis of a report to be issued by early December, 2006.

The workshop forms one of the first activities in the framework of EUA’s international agenda, adopted by the EUA Council in March 2006, and as both the main partner and competitor for

European universities working with US institutions on the subject of doctoral education was given high priority. It can also be seen in the context of EUA's continuing work on doctoral education began with the "Doctoral Programmes Project" (2004-2005) which examined existing programmes in terms of their structure, functioning and quality. Ten basic principles for doctoral programmes developed during this project have been acknowledged as key to the ongoing work on doctoral education in the Bologna Process and EUA has received a mandate to develop those principles further and present a report for the 2007 London Bologna Ministers' meeting. EUA members will be able to contribute to the debate on these issues by attending the Bologna Seminar on Doctorates which will take place at the Université De Nice, 7th-9th December, 2006. Registration for this event will open later in October. In addition, a follow-up project with a focus on doctoral careers "From Innovative Doctoral Training to Enhanced Career Opportunities" [DOC-Careers] is now underway.

9.1.2. Forthcoming EUA Events 2006-2007

EUA is organising a large range of events in the coming 12 months.

9.2. Bologna Handbook

The Bologna Handbook "*Making Bologna Work*", published by EUA in co-operation with Raabe academic publishers in Berlin, launched in August 2006. The Handbook is a practically-orientated and flexible tool designed to support higher education professionals in implementing all aspects of the Bologna Process in their institutions. Focused on the concrete implementation of the different elements of the Bologna reforms within institutions, the Handbook is a valuable resource for anyone involved in strategic development, planning, curricular reform, internationalisation, or management and administration of higher education institutions.

The Handbook comprises a series of specially commissioned articles written by leading practitioners and experts in higher education and research policies. Designed to be 'hands-on', the Handbook addresses the whys, whats, and hows for each element of the Process and includes case studies and examples of good practice in relation to each of the topics covered. It takes the form of a loose-leaf folder which allows for easy updating and the addition of complementary information. The first 'basic' edition, followed up with quarterly supplements devoted to implementation and the main Bologna challenges being faced within institutions across Europe. Information, including a complete list of contents with abstract and how to order a copy is available on the EUA website – www.eua.be.

9.3. Research Strategy Development in European Universities – A EUA Report

This report grew out of EUA's study Trends IV: European Universities Implementing Bologna (2005) which highlighted how few institutions have developed institutional research strategies. Based on site visits to ten institutions where interviews were conducted with a wide range of different university actors, this study was undertaken in order to examine in detail strategy

development from its definition through to the implementation phase and the factors which affect this process.

The report focuses specifically on the internal and external issues which drive the development of research strategies and the elements which are addressed and included in these strategies, such as promoting excellence, building partnerships with industry, recruiting top scientists and the scope and quality of research training. The processes and methods used and the national and regional context in which the institutional strategy is developed are also examined.

The report's findings reflect the complex situation which exists in Europe's universities and demonstrates the importance of strategy development for an institution's innovation potential. EUA hopes that universities can learn from the experiences of the institutions which participated in the study and that the key issues highlighted in this report will make a valuable contribution to strategy development in institutions across Europe.

10. International

10.1. International Students

The 2006 report on International HE students in Ireland was released by the International Education Board Ireland in July 2006. This report shows an overall 10% increase in international students coming to Ireland, with a 15% increase in students from Europe. The universities continue to dominate, and are responsible for 65% of all international students, although this dominance continues to fall by 1-2% per year. Short-term students (US Junior Year Abroad and EU Erasmus) continue to represent the largest category of international students, followed closely by students in Bachelor programmes. However, strong recent growth can be seen in the numbers studying at postgraduate level, now at 29% of all full-time international students. The full IEBI report can be downloaded from the website www.educationireland.ie, click on "publications".

A letter was sent by the Chair of the IUA Internationalisation Group on 28 July 2006 to responsible officers in the Garda National Immigration Bureau and the Irish Naturalisation & Immigration Service requesting clarification regarding fees being charged to international students by these services, issues related to the length of validity of documents issued by these services, and issues related to work permits for non-EU students. A response from GNIB was received on 4 September, 2006.

10.2. International Developments

10.2.1. Australia

Australia's National Protocols for Higher Education Approval Processes were passed on 7th July, 2006. The Protocols outline national standards for approving both domestic and overseas higher education institutions in Australia, and set out detailed criteria for obtaining 'university'

title. The revised framework paves the way for a new class of specialist universities, and introduces streamlined approval mechanisms that could attract more (foreign and domestic) private providers to the country. The stated rationale is to maximise diversity and accountability in Australia's university sector.

10.2.2. United States

In 2006, US Secretary of Education, Margaret Spellings, formed a bipartisan Commission on the Future of Higher Education to launch a robust national dialogue on the need to strengthen higher education to remain competitive on the 21st century. The Commission's final report published on 19th September, 2006 - "*A Text of Leadership: Charting the Future of Higher Education*" – found that "US higher education needs to improve in dramatic ways", changing from "a system primarily based on reputation to one based on performance". On 26th September, 2006 Secretary Spellings announced an Action Plan designed to improve higher education's performance and US ability to measure that performance. The proposals are intended to make higher education more accessible, affordable and accountable to students, parents, business leaders and taxpayers. Some of the key findings of the Commissioner's Report to be addressed in the Action Plan include:-

- *Accessibility*: "Access to American higher education is unduly limited by ... inadequate preparation, lack of information about college opportunities, and persistent financial barriers".
- *Affordability*: "Too many students are either discouraged from attending college by rising costs, or take on worrisome debt burdens in order to do so".
- *Accountability*: "Because data systems are so limited and inadequate, it is hard for policymakers to obtain reliable information on students' progress through the educational pipeline".
- Action Four under the plan will provide matching funds to colleges, universities, and states that collect and publicly report student learning outcomes.
- Action Five under the plan will convene members of the accrediting community this November to move toward measures that place more emphasis on learning to answer questions such as – How are they learning? How much and to what effect?

The Commission completed a comprehensive examination of a whole host of other issues from adult learning to innovation to information and technology and the Secretary of State will convene a summit next spring to discuss the full state of recommendations.

10.2.3. China

The Observatory on Borderless Education report, “*Sino-Foreign Joint Education Ventures: A National, Regional and Institutional Analysis*” through an analysis of Chinese enrolment data, government policy, and economic regionalism, provides a history of the evolution of higher education in China and attempts to establish parameters for future developments in joint Sino-Foreign higher education provision.