

## IUA Review [11/1] for IUA Meetings in University College Cork on Monday, 24<sup>th</sup> January, 2011

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## **IUA Review [11/1] for IUA Meetings in University College Cork on Monday, 24<sup>th</sup> January, 2011**

### **1. Research**

#### **1.1. Research Policy and Funding Overview**

The **Higher Education Strategy** report recognizes that, in addition to its providing a foundation for teaching, research and its exploitation, has a specific place in economic development. The continued prioritization of research and commercialization in the National Recovery Plan is consistent with this and the research prioritization exercise recommended in the report is now underway. In addition, the universities have been proactive in the advancement of the Innovation Taskforce's report in areas such as the protection and commercialization of intellectual property.

In the budget for 2011 despite cutbacks in many sectors the prospects for research are positive. The SFI/EI R&D budget is up 9 percent from €293 to €320 million. The PRTLTI allocation is up 35% from €41 million to €55 million.

#### **1.2. European Policy and Funding Overview**

The planning for FP8 has begun at European and national level. The first draft outline from the Commission is expected soon. There is no doubt that it will be influenced by the Innovation Union policy that was launched last October. This has a strong focus on partnerships between academia and industry (Innovation Partnerships). DETI has established a Steering Group to develop Ireland's input (COC is a member). A first response was prepared in November and submitted to the EC.

The EC has begun a doctoral mapping study to identify best practice in the organisation and implementation of PhD education and training. COC is chairing this European steering group and we intend to ensure that our experience through PRTLTI and 4<sup>th</sup> Level Ireland features prominently in the report. The results of this study will be used to shape the future funding of PhD's by the EC through the Framework and Erasmus programmes.

#### **1.3. Research Prioritisation**

Forfás / HEA are planning a major project on prioritisation of research areas. They will target areas where Ireland has built scale and focus on these over the next ten years for continued investment. It is expected to take a year to complete and will be done through the Steering Group and Research Funders Group (RFG). This group will work with the Steering Group (to meet every 4 to 6 weeks) over the next year, RFG will meet only when required. There should not be more than 20 areas and the bulk of funding will go to these.

The VPDOR group has been actively engaged with Forfás on this project. It has been agreed the InCites toll will be used to help identify national research strengths. A process is currently underway to classify research areas in advance of carrying out a national citation report.

#### **1.4. Researcher Integrity**

The Royal Irish Academy (RIA) has agreed in principle to act as a national body for ensuring integrity in research. The IUA and RIA are now working on the details to ensure a common approach across the seven universities.

#### **1.5. Fourth Level Ireland Network Group**

##### ***1.5.1. Inter-Institutional Collaborative Agreement For the purpose of enabling module delivery, student mobility and credit exchange in formally institutionally agreed, thematic collaborative graduate programmes***

At the IUA Council/Review meeting at DCU in 21 June, the IUA Registrars/Vice-Provost considered the draft *Inter-Institutional Collaborative Agreement for the purpose of enabling module delivery, student mobility and credit exchange in formally institutionally agreed, thematic collaborative graduate programmes across Universities in the Republic of Ireland*. The Registrars/Vice-Provost group sanctioned this as the basis upon which to proceed with inter-institutional structured doctoral programmes.

On 24 January, the Registrars/Vice Provost Group will formally sign the agreement bestowing it with *de jure* status as the principles upon which the development of formally institutionally approved collaborative graduate programmes in Ireland will proceed.

##### ***1.5.2. Graduate Education Forum***

On 22 November the IUA Graduate Education Forum took place at Newman House, Dublin. This event hosted by the university Deans of Graduate Studies addressed the considerable progress achieved in the reform of doctoral education; paying particular attention to the student experience of structured programmes and how this has enhanced their doctoral studies experience.

The event also addressed the challenges of facilitating collaboration with non-higher education employers and the role of doctoral graduates in Ireland's social, economic and political development.

Prof. Jean Chambaz, Chair of steering committee of the European University Association's (EUA) Council for Doctoral Education (CDE) outlined the European context of doctoral education developments and presented the recently published results of the exercise the CDE undertook to assess the implementation of the 2005 EUA 'Salzburg Principles' for doctoral education.

The event incorporated significant scope for discussion amongst its invited attendees of the primary issues addressed. These discussions will contribute to a forum report that the Deans of Graduate Studies will produce in the New Year.

The presentations associated with the event are available from  
<http://www.4thlevelireland.ie/press/GraduateEducationForumNov2010.html>

## **1.6. European / International Funding**

### **1.6.1. Seventh Framework Programme / IUA Marie Curie Office**

A meeting of the Research Officers was held in Brussels on 9-10 November. The meeting was organised jointly between the IUA and Enterprise Ireland. It consisted of a series of session with EC representatives focusing on aspects of FP7 (Marie Curie, ERC and EIT) and broad EU research policy. There was also a meeting with the Irish Permanent Representation.

In order to maximise participation and reduce travel the MC Office organised webinars to promote the IAPP and ITN Calls. This is a very effective medium with participants joining from videoconference suites in the seven universities and some IT's along with individuals from their own desk. The webinars were recorded for download and further use.

### **1.6.2 'People' (Marie Curie) Programme – Results**

The results for fellowships 2010 are given in the table below,

|     |   |   |    |
|-----|---|---|----|
|     |   |   |    |
| IOF | 1 | 4 | 20 |
| IIF | 5 | 0 | 21 |
| IEF | 8 | 3 | 46 |

### **1.6.3 'People' (Marie Curie) Programme – Upcoming Calls and Deadlines**

The next calls for the Marie Curie actions according to the draft work Programme for 2011, which will be finalised in July 2010, are as follows:

| <b>Marie Curie Action</b>                                    | <b>Deadline</b>   |
|--|-------------------|
| Industry-Academia Partnerships and Pathways (IAPP)           | December 9, 2010  |
| Initial Training Networks (ITN)                              | February 10, 2011 |
| International Research Staff Exchange Scheme (IRSES)         | February 17, 2011 |
| CoFunding of Regional, National and International Programmes | February 17, 2011 |

An information day organised for the IAPP and ITN programmes was held on 29<sup>th</sup> September in the Royal Irish Academy (RIA).

### **1.6.4. The 50,000<sup>th</sup> Marie Curie Fellow**

The EC organised a major conference to celebrate this event entitled Marie Curie Actions for an Innovative Europe on 9/10 December 2010. Of the 25 Fellows that received awards 4 were from Irish institutions (UCD, DMRC and WIT). COC was a panel member for the main discussion session on the future of Marie Curie Actions along with the director of CERN and other key participants.

## **1.7. EURAXESS Ireland (Irish Researcher Mobility Office) and Web Portal**

### **1.7.1. Statistics**

There are now a total of **4,946** registered users on the portal who receive regular updates on job and funding opportunities. A large portion of this statistic is shared between Post Doc and Post Graduate Researchers. To date **133,092** visits to the portal have been recorded.

The [euraxess.ie](http://euraxess.ie) portal operates a research job opportunities and funding advertising facility for academic institutions, research agencies and organizations. Statistical analysis collated prior to the preparation of this report can be summarized as follows:

- 24,175 Job Searches on the portal – a substantial increase since the last report.
- 367 Job Applications made directly via the portal application facility but this does not reflect the large number of applications that have been made directly to organizations.
- 3,374 Organisation profile searches have been made by registered users.

### **Helpdesk**

To date, the help desk has had direct dealings with almost 3100 queries. The majority of queries address third country visa requirements and ranged from entry visas for researchers, partners and/or family visas, short term visas to renewal and change in status of visas.

### **1.7.2. Hosting Agreement Scheme and Extranet**

The office has processed a total 1040 Hosting Agreements for non EEA researchers from 68 countries with 26 accredited organisations including all Irish universities, eight Institutes of Technology, six other research institutions and four from Industry (LM Ericsson Ltd, Solar Print Ltd, Global Business Registered Ltd and IBM). 90% of all hosting agreements approved have been issued to researchers employed by the universities. There are 451 researchers working currently on their research projects (with live agreements) under the hosting agreement scheme in Ireland (a decrease by 50 since the last report). A total of 401 agreements have expired (the number has increased by 70 since the last report) while 133 have been cancelled since introduction of the scheme in late 2007 (an increase by 40 since the last report).

The top two non EEA nationalities with hosting agreements are from China and India issued with 202 in total (98 live) and 196 in total (90 live) agreements respectively. They are followed by US nationals issued with a total of 121 hosting agreements to date (with

45 currently live agreements). A total of 18 Russian and 23 Canadian nationals are currently employed under the scheme in Ireland. Other nationalities with relatively high number of researchers currently working in Ireland are the following: Iranian (16 live agreements); Bangladeshi and Pakistani (12 live agreements); Australians (9 live agreements); New Zealanders, Turkish, Mexicans and Romanians (with 7 live agreements).

To date a total of 465 researchers have availed of the immediate family unification opportunity while 218 have at present their dependants with them for the duration of their research projects in Ireland. The H.A Extranet, containing constantly updated details of agreements issued to all researchers under the scheme, has been regularly used by immigration officers from Irish embassies in Beijing, New Delhi, Moscow and Abuja.

The Irish Hosting Agreement Scheme was presented as an example of the European best practice during the Workshop on Scientific Visa En route the next step in November 2010 in Brussels.

### **1.7.3. EU Projects**

#### **1.7.3(a) MOREBRAIN**

This is an FP7 funded project to investigate the reasons that promote and hinder international mobility of researchers. It is collaboration with partners in Israel, Spain and Iceland, all countries with large research diasporas. An online survey that investigates the reasons why researchers move or remain abroad has been developed with the support of the UCD Geary Institute. The European and the USA based EURAXESS offices have been involved in promotion action of this survey. The preliminary data of the MOREBRAIN questionnaire, based on over 2,500 valid responses from respondents of 51 different nationalities, were analysed and a preliminary report on the survey findings was finalised and submitted to the project coordinator. The MOREBRAIN results to date were presented at an international conference in Cyprus in June and at 8th European Urban and Regional Studies Conference in Vienna in September 2010. The results for respondents in Ireland were correlated with the SIF Irish Universities Study (IUA) results. The online survey has been recently closed and all responses to the online questionnaire are now being analysed. The project has been recently granted a formal extension by 6 months and the final consortium meeting is planned for 7-8 April 2011 in Badajoz in Spain.

#### **1.7.3(b) EURAXESS T.O.P**

Funded by the European Commission for 18 months, the aim of this project is to reinforce the quality, effectiveness and coherence of the services provided by the EURAXESS Services Network. Following the successful Bridgehead Organisation (BHO) Workshop held in Brussels on 23<sup>rd</sup> June, the IUA further defined the training needs of the network and prepared the content for the second project workshop for EURAXESS Services Centres (ESCs) and Local Contact Points (LoCPs) personnel. This

workshop was held in Zagreb from 29<sup>th</sup> November to 3<sup>rd</sup> December. The design of content for the winter workshop has benefited from the outcomes and satisfaction surveys from the BHO workshop. The agenda has been carefully structured to take into account the suggestions and recommendations made in the Evaluation and report on the results of training in the BHO workshop. A report on results of the two workshops and recommendations to be included into the final Handbook for the EURAXESS members will be prepared as a required deliverable of the project. With the design of both of these annual training workshops, IUA is now recognised for its leading expertise in researcher mobility issues.

### **1.7.3.(c) ERAMIND**

The ERA-MIND - *European Research Area Mobile Researchers in Industry Project* was developed to improve the quality and coherence of EURAXESS Services to industry organisations and researchers in industry. This is a collaborative project funded by the European Commission with partners from Netherlands, Italy and Turkey.

The project's third coordination meeting was held in Madrid on the 17<sup>th</sup> November 2010 and was co-ordinated by the IUA in conjunction with a training session to the EURAXESS Spain network. Various representatives from industry and industry associations participated in both sessions. A network of 'Industry end users' has been co-ordinated by the IUA and a number of requests have been sent to further identify a large pool from various disciplines and backgrounds to ensure a well represented and balanced network. The project will benefit from this network to develop a common strategy and tools for serving industrial organizations and mobile researchers in industry. The ERAMIND team participated in the EURAXESS TOP Project in Zagreb and were mainly responsible for sessions and promotion relating to Industry.

Numerous information sessions and co-ordination meetings have been scheduled to take place in throughout 2011. Scheduled events include a joint workshop in conjunction with the national REAP project (Roadmap for Employment-Academic Partnerships) by examining staff mobility between Higher education institutes and business/industry environments, and identifying challenges and opportunities for mobility and career development. This will take place in Waterford Institute of Technology on February 4<sup>th</sup>. Further planned events will be held in Estonia and Austria in the first half of the year.

## **2. Strategic Innovation Fund**

### **2.1. Full Economic Cost Project**

The Full Economic Cost SIF Cycle II project which involves the detailed design and implementation of an FEC model across all universities continues to progress. A very intensive programme of work has been undertaken in the last quarter of 2010.

As reported previously two major tracks of work had been scheduled for Q4 2010:

- Track 1: Completion of FEC Pilot 2 (this is the current FEC Model) which will be run with 08/09 financial data.
- Track 2: Implementation of a number of the B&M Recommendations on the FEC Model which will be run with 09/10 financial data.

As reported previously detailed institutional project output reports have been developed together with a suite of sectoral comparison reports to facilitate benchmarking. In addition a separate suite of sectoral reports which will form the basis of reporting to the HEA has also been designed. When pilot 2 outputs were generated and the institutional and sectoral reports produced it became apparent during the sectoral comparison process that there were a range of issues and inconsistencies which required further investigation.

Accordingly a very detailed and intensive examination of the model together with all model inputs and outputs was undertaken. A range of additional reporting reconciliations were designed and a number of meetings were held with FEC Managers to identify and address issues and inconsistencies. In addition a forensic examination of the FEC system was undertaken. A range of issues were identified as part of this process and these included a number of policy related decisions which were referred to relevant IUA groups and the NSG for resolution.

In addition to the model changes requiring implementation under track 2 above there were a range of further changes arising from the review process described above. A workshop was held with SAS, the project consultants, and was followed up with a one day site visit to each university to assist with the implementation of the required changes. All changes have now been implemented in the FEC models.

Prior to re-running the 2008/09 pilot data it was agreed to undertake a further validation of the models. Consistent dummy data was run through each of the university models to ensure that all models were producing consistent outputs. Consistent results have been produced for teaching related outputs. There have been some technical problems in relation to producing research related outputs but these are being resolved and it is expected that the full validation process will be completed very shortly.

On completion of the validation process it has been agreed that no further changes will be made to the model and the validated model will be used to re-run 2008/09 data and also to run 2009/10 data. The 2009/10 outputs are due to be reported to the HEA in June 2011.

AAP data collection processes are also on-going in universities in respect of 2009/10 and/or 2010/11. There remain some issues with AAP data collection given that IFUT has still not clarified its position in respect of the Croke Park agreement. The NSG hope to address such issues as a matter of urgency.

## **2.2. National Citation Index (NCI)**

The InCites tool from Thomson-Reuters will enable the universities to carry out in depth citation analysis. There are now regular monthly meetings for training and implementation of the work packages. A key issue at the moment is ensuring that all the publications for university are properly attributed so that they do appear in a citation report. This is the tool that will be used for the national Research Prioritisation project. The project is led by the IUA (CO'C) with project leader, Niamh Brennan TCD. The partners are the seven universities, DIT and the HEA. Negotiations are underway for the inclusion of SFI and RCSI.

## **2.3. Fourth Level Ireland Support Network / Attracting International Graduates**

Both the Fourth Level Ireland Support Network and the Attracting International Graduates SIF 1 projects have concluded and the IUA will make available end of project reports. A preliminary description of the Attracting International Graduates outcomes was provided in the previous IUA Review papers.

## **3. Funding**

### **3.1. Recurrent Funding**

The Estimates for Public Expenditure 2011 published in December indicated a 7% reduction in the HE vote. This reduction has been offset to some extent by the introduction of a student contribution charge to replace the existing student service charge. The new student contribution may be charged at a rate of up to €2,000 per student. Although the sector appears to have fared better than may have been feared actual grant allocations to universities are not yet known and 2011 will remain a very challenging year for universities given the cumulative effect of budget cuts over the last number of years and continuing headcount reductions under the Employment Control Framework.

Given the difficulties around defining what services the student service charge could be applied to the introduction of the new student contribution is to be welcomed. The increase in the charge to €2,000 is also welcomed however there is some concern in relation to the proposal that the higher fee would apply to only one child per family at any one time. This is likely to be administratively impossible to implement and the IUA will be writing to the Minister in this regard.

### **3.2. RGAM fee adjustment proposal**

The HEA wrote to universities in December in relation to a proposal to incorporate a fee adjustment into the core grant of universities. Submissions have been invited by 31<sup>st</sup> January 2011.

### **3.3. Capital Appraisal Guidelines**

The HEA has written to universities requesting post project reviews to be completed and submitted to the HEA in respect of all capital projects completed since February 2005 irrespective of funding source or size of project. This is somewhat more onerous than required under the DoF capital appraisal guidelines. The IUA will be working with the HEA to clarify requirements.

### **3.4. Pension Issues**

The IUA is continuing to work with the HEA in relation to addressing a range of operational issues arising from the transfer of university pension schemes to the NPRF and the implementation of model schemes. Pension funding arrangements for researchers and other externally funded staff are subject to on-going discussions between the HEA and relevant government departments and it is hoped that an agreed policy will be finalised urgently.

### **3.5. Nursing Funding**

Discussions have been taking place between the HEA, HSE and relevant departments in relation to transferring the funding of Nursing from the Department of Health & Children to the Department of Education & Skills effective from 2011. There is much concern at the speed at which such a decision is being made and the lack of consultation with the sector.

It has also been indicated that the HSE intend to apply a 7% reduction to funding levels in respect of 2010/11. This is in addition to cuts previously notified to institutions.

### **3.6. Research funding and administration**

The IUA Research Accountants Group met with representatives from Enterprise Ireland (EI) in December 2010 to discuss and resolve issues of mutual interest. A number of issues relating to the grant claims and payment process were discussed and a number of actions were agreed by both parties to address these.

The Research Accountants Group also considered a number of other issues relating to a range of funding agencies.

The IUA proposal for a coordinated approach to research audits originally submitted in 2005 was discussed again at a recent meeting of the Higher Education Research Group. The IUA will be following up this matter on behalf of the sector.

### **3.7. US Federal Family Education Loan Program (Stafford Loan Schemes)**

As reported previously, regulations governing the Federal Family Education Loan Program (FFELP) were in the process of being reviewed by the US Department of Education. All affected parties were invited to make submissions in relation to the proposed changes. The IUA made a submission on behalf of the university sector. The

review of regulations has now been finalised by the US Department of Education. Changes include a requirement that institutions that certify Federal Family Education Loan Program (FFELP) funds of US\$3m or more, would have to translate accounts into US GAAP once every three years. This has significant implications for institutions in terms of cost and administration. The regulations will be effective from 1st July 2011.

## **4. Sectoral Cost Saving Initiatives**

### **4.1. Shared Services**

As reported in the last IUA Review a strategic vision for shared services for the sector has been developed and this was considered by IUA Council at their meeting on 11<sup>th</sup> October. IUA Council agreed that a full cost benefit analysis and implementation plan should be developed for the full scope of potential shared services. A terms of reference for such a project is being finalised by UCFOG and it is intended to tender for external expertise to undertake the project.

### **4.2. Sectoral Procurement Initiatives**

Reporting to UCFOG the Procurement Working Group continues to meet on a regular basis to progress work in relation to sectoral procurement initiatives. A wide range of projects have been completed while others are well advanced. A number of new projects have also been identified and work is commencing in respect of these.

The working group has also been considering a strategy/framework for procurement for the sector and this is being considered in light of the work being undertaken in respect of shared services.

## **5. Corporations Framework**

The HEA has written to the sector seeking confirmation that, in light of the time which has now elapsed without further comment, the existing draft framework is being implemented by universities with effect from January 2011. There are some concerns and issues with the current draft and consequently the IUA will be reverting to the HEA after the IUA meetings on 24<sup>th</sup> January 2011 seeking some changes to the draft prior to implementation.

## **6. Governance Codes**

The Higher Education Authority, in its letter dated 8<sup>th</sup> June 2010, requested proposals on how the requirements of the 2009 Code of Practice for the Governance of State Bodies would be taken on board within the University sector. Many of the 2009 code obligations, updating the predecessor 2001 code, had already been incorporated in the 2007 HEA/IUA code but some new areas had been emphasised. The statutory provisions of the Universities Act 1997 and other legal obligations cover many of the key areas

within the code. In these situations, the legislative provisions take precedence although there are situations where the intent of the codes obligations are respected and incorporated, even if not statutorily provided for.

The Secretaries Group have undertaken a comparative review of the codes, to outline areas for updating or inclusion and to present the findings of a comparison between the 2009 Code of Practice for the Governance of State Bodies ('State Body Code') and the IUA/HEA Universities Code (2007). The draft review was circulated to UCFOG and the HR Directors Group in December 2010 for comments/feedback.

## **7. Oireachtas Joint Committee on Education and Skills**

A number of higher education representatives were invited by the Oireachtas Joint Committee on Education and Skills to attend a hearing on 2 December regarding Curriculum Matters. Organisations represented included IUA, IoTI, HEA, USI, IFUT, TUI and IBEC. IUA was represented by Ned Costello, Bairbre Redmond (UCD Deputy Registrar), and Lewis Purser. Paul Giller (UCC Deputy President and Registrar) was prevented from travelling to Dublin on the day due to snow. All organisations represented made opening statements. Both TDs and Senators asked questions regarding curriculum issues, and a particular focus was placed on the First Year Experience by a number of parties, including IUA. Attention was paid by various Oireachtas members to work practice issues, with questions to the IFUT and TUI representatives, and issues related to the use of HE resources. There was also discussion regarding the core academic skills of students entering higher education from the schools system, and the need for enhanced quality of teaching for maths and science, in particular. A full transcript of the hearing may be found at <http://debates.oireachtas.ie/EDJ/2010/12/02/00004.asp>

## **8. Leaving Certificate Mathematics**

Following formal approval by Council on 11 October 2010 of the IUA Bonus Points pilot scheme for Leaving Certificate Higher Level Mathematics, the details of this scheme were communicated to a wide range of stakeholders through a specific media release, which was widely picked up in the national media, and an IUA newsletter. This pilot scheme, which will run from 2012 for 4 years, has been specifically designed with the objective of maximizing the numbers of LC students who study for and sit the HL Mathematics exams, and in particular of reducing the numbers of students who might drop down from HL to Ordinary Level during the LC senior cycle. This supports government policy in a variety of areas regarding the importance of Mathematics.

Announcement of the scheme was welcomed by the Tánaiste and received strong support from IBEC and various industry players. Following consultation by IUA with DIT and RCSI, including at the level of Admissions Officers, both these latter bodies requested to join the IUA scheme. A specific information package for school guidance counsellors was written and designed by Admissions Officers and IUA on behalf of all 9 HEIs, and sent in

early November to all secondary schools in the country, at the start of the new “CAO season”.

IUA is now taking forward this policy in its contributions to a number of other bodies, including the Project Maths Implementation Support Group, which has been reconvened by DES, and in its dialogue with DES and the Teaching Council regarding upskilling opportunities for existing Mathematics teachers in schools. In this context, a recent publication by DES entitled *Draft National Plan to Improve Literacy and Numeracy Skills* outlines clearly the challenges in this area and provides the framework for improvements in the quality of existing teaching of mathematics, as well as important proposals regarding the training of future school teachers. This publication may be found at [http://www.education.ie/servlet/blobServlet/pr\\_literacy\\_numeracy\\_national\\_plan\\_2010.pdf](http://www.education.ie/servlet/blobServlet/pr_literacy_numeracy_national_plan_2010.pdf)

## **9. National Qualifications Authority of Ireland**

### **9.1. IUA / NQAI Framework Implementation Network**

As noted in IUA reviews during 2010, the joint IUA / NQAI Framework Implementation Network (FIN) has been working since early 2010 on the topic of the Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL). Three case study visits, to TCD, NUIG and UL, were undertaken during summer and autumn 2010 to look at specific programmes, or groups of programmes, with experience in using RPL. The information from these visits has been collated and analysed, along with some additional inputs from FIN members in other institutions, to produce a set of working guidelines for RPL in the universities, touching on issues such as programme design, assessment methods and quality assurance, and identification of principles for managing, organising and communicating RPL. This small publication is currently under preparation and will be available towards March 2011. Updated information regarding the work of FIN can be found at <http://www.nfqnetwork.ie/>.

In addition, IUA worked in cooperation with NQAI during November and December 2010, to inform a forthcoming Expert Group on Future Skills Needs (EGFSN) working paper on the development of the Recognition of Prior Learning in the Context of the National Skills Strategy Upskilling Objectives. This EGFSN paper is expected to be published in early 2011.

### **9.2. Merger of NQAI, HETAC, FETAC and taking over functions of IUQB**

Following the appointment in autumn 2010 of Dr. Pdraig Walsh, Chief Executive of IUQB, as Chief Executive Designate for the new “Qualifications and Quality Assurance Ireland” agency, Dr. Walsh was also appointed Chief Executive of NQAI, since this position was vacant at that body. Dr. Walsh will likewise become Chief Executive of HETAC at the end of January 2011 when that position becomes vacant.

From discussions with a number of key stakeholders, it would appear that the draft legislation regarding the creation of the new agency is unlikely to be published in sufficient time for this to be debated and passed by the Oireachtas prior to the expected general election in Spring 2011.

In the meanwhile, IUA continues to work closely with the existing bodies, and with NQAI in particular. This cooperation includes areas recently transferred to NQAI's responsibility, such as the management of the "Internationalisation Register" (previously managed by DES), and the development of a new "Quality Mark" for Irish HE providers which recruit international students, building on existing quality assurance measures and the IHEQN's voluntary Code of Practice for the provision of pastoral care to International Students. Formal development and application of the "Quality Mark" will depend on the relevant measures in the new legislation, once in place, but in the meanwhile a number of steps can be taken towards establishing common expectations and goals.

### 9.3 Teaching Qualifications

At the request of the IUA Registrars' Group, David Redmond and Lewis Purser met with Trish O'Brien of NQAI on 12 January 2011 to follow-up the remaining issues arising from the work of the IUA/NQAI Teaching Qualifications working group, chaired by Tom Collins, regarding the inclusion in the National Framework of Qualifications of the award previously known as the Higher Diploma in Education and currently designated the Postgraduate Diploma in Education.

This working group, which included the Heads of Education from all Universities and Colleges of Education, recommended in March 2010 that this award be placed at Level 8 of the NFQ. Following a period of discussion, this recommendation was accepted by all universities during Summer 2010. Lewis Purser notified NQAI of this acceptance on 16 July 2010.

Discussions are now underway with NQAI regarding a possible alternative title for the award, other than H.Dip.Ed, which would nevertheless reflect its Level 8 designation, as well as the need to ensure implementation and communication of the Level 8 designation.

As noted in Section 8 above, a recent publication (November 2010) by DES entitled *Draft National Plan to Improve Literacy and Numeracy Skills* has put forward important proposals regarding the initial and in-service training of school teachers, which could have significant impact on the current delivery of teacher training and CPD programmes. This publication may be found at

[http://www.education.ie/servlet/blobServlet/pr\\_literacy\\_numeracy\\_national\\_plan\\_2010.pdf](http://www.education.ie/servlet/blobServlet/pr_literacy_numeracy_national_plan_2010.pdf) In addition, the Teaching Council has also published (December 2010) a *Draft Policy on the Continuum of Teacher Education*, which proposes similar reforms for both initial and in-service teacher training and CPD. This publication may be found at [http://www.teachingcouncil.ie/\\_fileupload/TC\\_EdCtee/policypaper\\_brif\\_draft22dec2010\\_ck\\_5668](http://www.teachingcouncil.ie/_fileupload/TC_EdCtee/policypaper_brif_draft22dec2010_ck_5668)

[1186.pdf](#). As major providers of both initial and CPD for the teaching profession, the universities will need to engage with these bodies in these processes.

## **10. Internationalisation of Education**

### **10.1 *New Education Manager***

Sinéad Lucey was appointed as the IUA Education Manager in November 2010. She is currently working on a strategic document with the IUA International Group to raise the profile of the Irish universities internationally and ultimately increase the number of Non EU undergraduate and postgraduate students coming to Ireland to study.

The IUA will be represented on the high level implementation group by Ned Costello who will regularly brief the relevant groups in the IUA in order to feedback recommendations to the implementation group. The IUA international strategy will align as much as possible with the recommendations from the high level group.

The IUA has been represented by Sinéad Lucey at the new “Education Ireland” brand development group. The new brand will be launched in February and the IUA will seek a consensus with the International group to support the new brand or not.

Some notable initiatives that have taken place in the North American Market including a survey of American students. Together with Enterprise Ireland we will survey American students to fully understand where and why the North American student population comes from in order to plan effective joint campaigns. See <http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/NorthAmericanStudents> for a copy of the survey. The seven universities have agreed to distribute to students in February.

All seven universities have agreed to participate in the New York and Texas Education Ireland Fairs in March. The IUA has worked very closely with Enterprise Ireland in putting these fairs together during December and January in close consultation with the International officers responsible for North America. Their input has been crucial and the fairs will be an ideal benchmark to measure how effective a collaborative approach has been.

Enterprise Ireland and the IUA have identified Genuity PR to deliver a promotional campaign around the March Fairs. Jane Evans Ryan (Genuity), Sinéad Lucey (IUA) and Gill Roe (EI) will develop the campaign using the research information in the 11Ten Report as a key indicator where to maximise the revenue available.

The IUA went to Malaysia in early January to assess whether or not the IUA wishes to pursue a collaborative strategy recruiting students from Malaysia

### **10.2 Engagement with the Higher Education Authority**

The IUA will develop a close working relationship with the HEA. A key project for 2011 is to create an effective reporting structure of International student numbers in order to benchmark ourselves effectively going forward and to set targets for increases in the International student population.

## **11. Communications / Events**

### **11.1.1. Development of Comms for the Higher Education Access Route (HEAR) and the Disability Access Route to Education (DARE)**

Participating colleges are running a series of nationwide application advice clinics on Saturday Jan 22nd for students applying to HEAR and DARE

Videos are being produced for both schemes to help access staff when making schools presentations. The videos will be first aired at the application clinics and will be available for viewing on [accesscollege.ie](http://accesscollege.ie) and on a new [accesscollege youtube](http://accesscollege.youtube.com) channel.

The schemes recently received great media coverage in the CAO supplements of the National Newspapers

### **11.2. Rian.ie Launch**

#### **October 20<sup>th</sup>, Convention Centre Dublin**

The Librarians Open Access Project – RIAN.ie – was launched officially on Wednesday October 20th by Mary Coughlan, Tánaiste and Minister for Education. The event was timed to coincide with international OPEN ACCESS Week. A brochure was produced for this event which was distributed to all participating colleges throughout open access week to publicize RIAN. The portal went live in July and by the launch had received 540,000 visits to the site accessing the 12,343 items in RIAN from all participating institutions. Item views had grown steadily from 27,940 in July to 108,484 in September and page views have grown by 46% to 475,676.

### **11.3. ESOF 2012**

The IUA Communications Manager was invited to become a member of the Media and Marketing Committee of ESOF 2012. The overall organizing committee, headed by Chief Scientific Advisor, Patrick Cunningham, is very keen to get the 7 universities heavily involved and will be particularly keen to have the call for proposals well circulated amongst university researchers.

**About ESOF:** The 5th Euroscience Open Forum (ESOF2012) will convene in Dublin, Ireland on 12–16 July 2012. Held every two years, ESOF, organised by Euroscience, is a unique opportunity for leading scientists, researchers, industry, policy makers, science and technology communicators and the general public to discuss new discoveries and debate the direction that research is taking in the sciences, humanities and social sciences.

**About the Dublin Bid:** Dublin's proposal has been in preparation since March 2008 by bringing together the scientific, academic and industrial establishment of Ireland. Over 50 stakeholders, drawn from all sectors of society, came together under the stewardship of the Chief Scientific Adviser, Professor Patrick Cunningham and Senior Executive of the Bid, Aidan Gilligan. Dublin's aim is to attract 8,000 Irish and international delegates while engaging 50,000 citizens in a truly Olympics of European Research style event on 12–16 July 2012.

More information can be found on [www.esof2012.org](http://www.esof2012.org)

#### **11.4. IUA Newsletter November**

The IUA e-newsletter was distributed via email on November 25<sup>th</sup>. This newsletter is received by over 1200 HE and Government professionals. The main articles of note included:

- Appointment of IUA International Education Manager
- Webinar Master Classes on Marie Curie Proposal Writing
- Graduate Education Forum
- Bonus Points for Maths
- Hosting Agreement Scheme Growth
- Rian.ie – Putting Irish Research on the map
- Boost in College Places for HEAR and DARE