

INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY TRALEE
VALIDATED RESEARCH DEGREE
PROGRAMMES

RESPONSE TO THE REVIEW REPORT OF THE
EXPERT PANEL.

THURSDAY 12TH DECEMBER 2013

Response to the Review Report of the External Panel

The Institute of Technology Tralee welcomes the Panel's conclusions on page 31 of its report that '*On the basis of the information supplied, discussion with graduates and staff, and of a sample of examiners' reports on recent graduating students, the panel concluded that the ITT arrangements for the examination of research students generally meet with the HETAC guidelines 'Assessment and Standards' (December 2009).*' The Institute also welcomes the 5 commendations made by the Panel in their Report:

- The Institute is to be commended on its entrepreneurial approach to the various sources of funding for research.
- The Institute is to be commended on the care with which it has approached this difficult topic [plagiarism].
- The Institute is to be commended for the effective approach to matters of ethical approval in the area of Nursing.
- The Institute is to be commended for the way in which it has encouraged the enthusiasm and engagement of students.
- The Institute can be commended on the way in which it has fostered close and productive collaborations with local industry.

The Panel makes twenty-two recommendations in its Report. A significant number of recommendations made by the Panel had been identified and scheduled for implementation, by the Institute in its own Self-Evaluation Report (SER) which was submitted to the QQI in advance of the panel visit. To date, 13 of the recommendations made by the panel have been addressed. 9 are in the process of being implemented and target dates have specified for completion (see implementation plan – Appendix A).

The panel identified four recommendations which should be addressed as matter of priority. The Institute's anti-plagiarism policy and procedures (Recommendation 5, also the Institute's SER, pages 21, 22 and 23), were under review at the time of the Panel's site visit and are now approved, promulgated, with training sessions delivered. In relation to Recommendations 10 and 11, an Institute-wide Research Ethics Committee is being established, which incorporates the good practice already in existence in the Department of Nursing. This will be implemented as and from the start of Semester 2 academic year 2013/2014. Finally, in relation to Recommendation 16 the Postgraduate Student Progress Reports has been updated to include a specific section in relation to training in research methods at discipline level.

ITT's Strategic Plan and Research Strategy is reaching the end of its cycle and is currently being reviewed in parallel with the process of strategic dialogue with the HEA around the establishment of a mission based compact covering the period 2014 – 2016. This is a robust, evidence-based process of engagement between the HEA and third-level institutions on the strategic planning. The purpose of this Compact is to provide a strategic framework for the relationship between the Higher Education Authority and the Institute of Technology, Tralee. The compact sets out how the IT Tralee's mission and strategic objectives align with national priorities for higher education with agreed strategic objective indicators of success against which our institutional performance will be measured. When the process is complete the Institute will forward the revised strategic plan and research and innovation strategy to the QQI.