

**Report of the Delegated Authority
Evaluation Group
on the
Cork Institute of Technology**

June 2005

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CHAIRPERSON'S FOREWORD

The Evaluation Group for the Delegation of Authority to Make Awards was appointed by the Higher Education and Training Awards Council to examine the application made by the Cork Institute of Technology to extend delegated authority to make awards for programmes up to and including level 10 of the National Framework of Qualifications.

The Council also requested the Evaluation Group to conduct, as part of its evaluation, a review for the purposes of Section 30 of the Qualifications (Education and Training) Act, 1999, of the operation of delegated authority by the Institute since 2001. The Evaluation Group membership comprised national and international members with a wide range of expertise and experience. I wish to record my thanks to them for having accepted the task and for their generous and professional commitment to the evaluation. The Evaluation Group felt privileged to be given the opportunity to consider the application and participate in this pioneering project.

The Qualifications (Education and Training) Act, 1999, provides for the delegation of authority to make awards to recognised institutions and the Council has indicated that it has a strategic aim of promoting optimum delegation to institutions, subject to their capacity to meet the legislative requirements. Thus, the implementation of this policy of delegation of authority is an important milestone in the development of Irish higher education. The achievement of delegated status is, in essence, a recognition of an institute as a provider of quality assured third level education and training programmes. The quality of that provision is best assured when there is an appropriate balance of responsibilities between the institution and the Council. The Council's development and implementation of its policy for delegation of authority is one way in which that balance can be achieved, i.e., the realisation of increased autonomy for the institute with increased public accountability.

The Evaluation Group undertook its task in a rigorous yet fair manner which demanded considerable effort and participation from both the members of the Evaluation Group and the Institute alike. Those whom the Evaluation Group met expressed their views with candour and courtesy and the members appreciated the straightforward way in which all their questions, including some very demanding ones, were addressed. It must be said also, that during the Evaluation Group's visit, the members were struck by the clarity of purpose shared by all at the Institute, including its students and its external stakeholders. The Institute is undoubtedly held in high regard by its staff, students and its wider stakeholders.

My colleagues and I would like to thank the Chairman of the Governing Body, Councillor Donal O'Rourke and Dr Brendan Murphy, Director of the Institute and all whom we met for their kindness and hospitality. We especially appreciate the assistance given in this regard by the Registrar, Mr. Brendan Goggin, the Assistant Registrar, Mr. Ed Riordan and Ms. Eva Kuhl, who was seconded to co-ordinate and drive the self-evaluation process. We would also like to thank the staff of the Council who did so much to ensure that the visit went smoothly.

1. Introduction

The Higher Education and Training Awards Council (“the Council”) was established on 11 June 2001, under the Qualifications (Education and Training) Act, 1999. The Council is the national qualifications awarding body for higher education and training outside the university sector in Ireland, other than the Dublin Institute of Technology. The Council’s role and functions include the setting of standards for named awards, the validation of programmes, the agreement of providers’ quality assurance procedures and the review of the implementation and effectiveness of those procedures. The Council may also, as part of its function, delegate authority to make awards to recognised institutions.

The Council welcomes the delegation of authority to make awards to recognised institutions and will facilitate optimum delegation of that authority i.e., the Council will delegate authority for as wide a range of awards as possible subject to rigorous criteria and procedures and consistent with the requirements of the Qualifications (Education and Training) Act, 1999. As such, this approach takes account of the maturation of the recognised institutions and the extent to which they have developed the capacity and processes to develop, quality assure and self-validate programmes of higher education and training leading to awards whose standards have been set by the Council. It also recognises that self-regulation and self-validation for established higher education and training institutions, such as the Institutes of Technology, which allows these institutions to take appropriate responsibility for their own processes, subject to regular review, is in line with best international practice.

The Evaluation Group hopes that its report will advance this process.

2. Findings of the Evaluation Group – Executive Summary

The Evaluation Group examined the application from the Cork Institute of Technology (the Institute) against the criteria determined by the Council and agreed with the National Qualifications Authority of Ireland (“the Qualifications Authority”) in accordance with Section 29 of the Qualifications (Education and Training) Act, 1999. The following is an executive summary of its findings:

- the Institute has operated delegated authority in accordance with the criteria determined by the Council;
- the Institute meets the criteria for the delegation of authority to make awards that relate to, Operations and Management, Council Conditions Attached to Delegated Authority and the Objects of the Qualifications (Education and Training) Act, 1999;
- the Institute has the capacity to meet those criteria that relate to the development, validation, implementation and continuous improvement of its existing taught higher education and training programmes up to and including level 9 of the National Framework of Qualifications;
- the Institute has the capacity to meet those criteria that relate to the development, validation, implementation and continuous improvement of its existing research higher education and training programmes at level 9 of the National Framework of Qualifications in the specific areas in the School of Science (incorporating the Department of Applied Physics and Instrumentation, Chemistry and Biological science) Electronic Engineering, Computing, Mechanical and Manufacturing Engineering, Chemical and Process Engineering and Building and Civil Engineering reflecting the expertise of the research-active academic staff;
- the Institute has the capacity to meet those criteria that relate to the development, validation, implementation and continuous improvement of its existing research higher education and training programmes at level 10 of the National Framework of Qualifications in the areas in the school of science (incorporating the Department of Applied Physics and Instrumentation, Chemistry and Biological science) and Electronic Engineering and Mechanical and Manufacturing Engineering reflecting the expertise of the research-active academic staff.

3. Background to the application from Cork Institute of Technology for delegation of authority to make awards

The Minister for Education and Science set up an Interim Review Group (IRG) in 1997 to consider applications from Institutes of Technology for the delegation of authority to make awards. For this purpose the Institute was reviewed and a recommendation was made that it should receive delegated authority to make awards at National Diploma and National Certificate level. The Higher Education and Training Awards Council, having regard to the determination made by the Minister for Education and Science pursuant to section 29(8) of the Qualifications (Education and Training) Act, 1999, that a review had taken place, granted authority to the Institute in October 2001 to make its own awards at National Certificate and National Diploma levels. The Order in Council which gave effect to the delegation set out as a condition, that a review of progress on actions taken by the Institute arising from the recommendations of the Interim Review Group should be undertaken. To this end, the Council established a Delegated Authority Advisory Group under the chairmanship of Mr. Sean Cromien. The Advisory Group visited the Institute in March 2002 and reported to the Council in June 2002. This led to the confirmation of delegated authority for the 2001/02 and 2002/03 academic years.

Since then the Institute adopted an active yet cautious approach to the operation of delegation of authority with the intention of extending that delegation when the issues raised in the IRG and Delegated Authority Advisory reports were addressed. Similarly, the Institute decided that, in line with HETAC policy, it would seek accreditation in specified fields of learning at Masters and Doctoral levels before making a formal submission for the extension of delegated authority.

In formulating its application for delegation of authority, the Institute conducted a process of internal and external consultation and seconded a member of its academic staff to co-ordinate and manage the process. Internal consultation surveyed all staff and students by means of questionnaire and the formation of some 30 focus groups representing staff and students at all levels within the Institute. In addition, Section 29 (2) of the Qualifications (Education and Training) Act 1999 requires consultation with joint providers as follows: "Where a programme of higher education and training is organised or procured, in whole or in part, by a recognised institution and is provided, in whole or in part, by any other provider, the recognised institution shall consult with such other provider before making a request under subsection (1) for delegation of authority to make awards in respect of that programme." In this regards the Institute consulted with University College Cork, Limerick Institute of Technology, Tralee Institute of Technology and Fachhochschule Darmstadt.

A formal submission was made by the Institute to HETAC in December 2004 seeking an extension of delegated authority up to and including level 10 of the National Framework of Qualifications. The Council considered this document and satisfied itself that it addressed the criteria determined by the Council for delegation of authority to make awards. The Council sought and received the agreement of the Qualifications Authority in January 2005 to conduct a subsequent evaluation of the Institute. This agreement was subject to a further agreement between the Council and the Authority which required the Institute to make a submission and receive accreditation to hold a register for postgraduate students in at least one field of learning at levels 9 and 10 of the National Framework of Qualifications prior to the commencement of the delegated authority evaluation. Two separate submissions from the Institute to that effect were received by HETAC in May 2004 and evaluations were reported upon in August and December 2004. HETAC's Research Postgraduate Committee considered the reports of the Research Evaluation Panels and by virtue of the authority vested in it under Section 56 of the Qualifications (Education and Training) Act, 1999 decided to accredit the maintenance of a register in specific fields of learning at levels 9 and 10 of the National Framework of Qualifications. The Council then appointed a Delegation of Authority Evaluation Group (the Evaluation Group) consisting of persons with particular knowledge and experience of higher education and training and quality assurance systems in higher education and training (ref. Appendix A). It appointed as Chairperson, Mr John Hayden, former Secretary/Chief Executive of the Higher Education Authority and arranged for a pre-evaluation visit to the Institute by the

Chairperson accompanied by Mr. Des Carolan, Head of Delegated Authority, HETAC. This was undertaken on the 7th of March 2005. The visit afforded the opportunity to clarify issues, discuss arrangements and agree the dates and the agenda for the on-site evaluation visit.

In accordance with Council policy, the review of the Institute's application for an extension of its delegated authority incorporated a review of its existing delegated authority.

4. Evaluation visit

The Evaluation Group visited the Institute on the 19th and 20th of April 2005. The visit offered the opportunity for the Evaluation Group to determine whether the Institute continued to meet the criteria for delegation of authority at levels 6 and 7 and the readiness and capacity of the Institute to meet the criteria for the purposes of an extension of delegated authority to make awards at levels 8 to 10 of the National Framework of Qualifications.

The criteria for the delegation of authority have been determined by the Council and agreed with the Qualifications Authority. They are set out under four headings: Operation and Management, Education and Training Programmes, Council Conditions Attached to the Delegation of Authority and the Objects of the Qualifications (Education and Training) Act, 1999 (see extract from the Criteria and Procedures for the Delegation and Review of Delegation of Authority to Make Awards – Appendix F).

The Evaluation Group was welcomed by the Chairman of the Governing Body Councillor Donal O' Rourke and Dr Brendan Murphy, Director of the Institute. The Chairman and Director spoke of the importance of delegation of authority to the Institute and how it is seen as an essential element of the Institute's strategic development and growth.

Thereafter the visit was conducted, with minor deviation, in accordance with the agreed agenda (Appendix C), the format of which comprised a mixture of question and answer sessions and audit-trails. This enabled the Evaluation Group to examine the operation and management of the Institute and the programmes provided at both overview and detailed operational levels. The findings of the Evaluation Group and the processes employed are set out in more detail in sections 5 to 10 of this report.

5. Meetings of the of the Group with the Institute in relation to the major areas of the Council's criteria for the delegation of authority to make awards

5.1 - Operation and Management

The Evaluation Group met with the Chairman, Director, Registrar, Members of the Executive Board, Assistant Registrar, Learner Representatives and the Delegated Authority Co-ordinator to discuss and examine the structures and processes for its operation and management under the following headings: institutional mission and purposes, governance, organisation and administration, planning and evaluation, academic and other staff policies, library and information resources, physical resources, learner services, public responsibility and integrity, and financial resources and management.

The Evaluation Group commenced its analysis by seeking an update on the progress achieved by the Institute in relation to the recommendations of the Interim Review Group report of March 2000 and the subsequent Delegated Advisory Group report of 2002. The Evaluation Group examined the progress made against the recommendations under the following headings: reporting structure, management structure, staff development, interdepartmental arrangements, quality assurance and student feedback mechanism. A summary of that update is separately attached to this report as Appendix H. There is some overlap between this summary and the content of the body of this report which aims to address the Council's criteria for delegated authority in a sequential manner.

The Evaluation Group found that the Institute has a clear Mission Statement which relates directly to its Strategic Plan. This Mission Statement was originally drawn up in 1992 and the Evaluation Group heard that it has been an institutional reference point for over a decade. The Mission Statement is featured prominently in the Institute's Prospectus, its website and in all major publications. It is also displayed in the main foyer of the Bishopstown Campus. The Mission Statement is currently being revised in tandem with the development of the Institute's strategic plan and the Institute expects that it and the strategic plan will be adopted together.

The Institute's legal basis is the Regional Technical Colleges Act, 1992 and the Regional Technical Colleges (Amendment) Act, 1994. The Institute is a body corporate and came into formal existence on the 1st January, 1993. The 1992 Act gave a separate statutory existence to the Institute and designated the Crawford College of Art and Design and the Cork School of Music as named schools. The latest constituent School of the Institute, the National Maritime College of Ireland, was established with the approval of the Institute's Governing Body in the summer of 2004. On 9 July of that same year, a Memorandum of Understanding was signed by the Minister for Education and Science, the Minister for Defence and Cork Institute of Technology, underpinning their cooperation in the operation of the new college. The Institute's current structure comprises of ten schools, seven of which are on the Bishopstown campus. The Cork School of Music and the Crawford College of Art and Design are located in their own buildings in Cork city centre. What was previously the Department of Nautical Studies has recently completed a move to the new National Maritime College of Ireland in Ringaskiddy, Co. Cork.

The Institute has a Governing Body which is a statutory body appointed in accordance with Section 4 of the Regional Technical Colleges' (Amendment) Act 1994. The Governing Body focuses on the overall direction and strategic management of the Institute. In this regard, it considers proposals presented to it by the Director and senior Institute officers. It ensures that the Institute is fulfilling its strategic purposes, behaving in accordance with its statutory obligations and that appropriate reporting systems are in place to support it in meeting its responsibilities. The Governing Body has set up the following sub-committees: Finance, Development, Arts, Coiste Gaelige and Internal Audit.

The key executive position is that of Director, who is the Chief Officer of the Institute, with the authority and responsibility for day to day management and who is answerable to the Governing Body for setting and meeting objectives consistent with the Institute's mission and strategy.

The new management structure, referred to earlier has resulted in the formation of an Executive Board (operating at institutional level), a Faculty Executive Board (operating at academic discipline level), a School Executive Board (operating at School level), a Department Committee (operating at departmental level), Course Boards (based within a 'home' department, but operating inter-departmentally), Course Teams and an Examination Appeals Board. Other fora that facilitate communication and discussion are provided for by a Senior Staff Forum and a Department Staff Forum.

The Institute Executive Board (IEB) is a non-statutory committee of the Institute. Its role is to assist the Director with the management of the Institute and to formulate Institute policy for approval by the Governing Body. During the academic year, the IEB holds fortnightly meetings. The meetings of the IEB are governed by a number of operational procedures or standing orders. The Director publishes a schedule of IEB meetings at the beginning of each academic year and agendas and action lists of its meetings are placed on the Institute's Intranet. The role and functions of the other management boards are outlined in Appendix I.

The Institute has an Academic Council appointed by the Governing Body to assist in the planning, co-ordination, development and overseeing of the academic work of the Institute. It protects, maintains and develops the academic standards of the courses and activities of the Institute. All senior staff of the Institute, comprising all members of the Institute Executive Board, Heads of School and Heads of Department are members of the Academic Council while lecturing staff, the Librarian, the Assistant Registrar, the Chair of the Apprenticeship Board of Studies and up to seven student members, are also represented. The Director is Chairperson and the Registrar is Secretary to the Council. The Academic Council has eight sub-committees, namely: Executive Committee of the Academic Council, Academic Planning Committee, Academic Review Committee, Admissions Committee, Learning Resources Committee, Regulations Committee, Research and Development Committee, Standing Orders and Procedures Committee.

The Evaluation Group then examined the Institute's arrangements for strategic planning and review. The Director outlined that, with the new management structures now in place, the Institute recently launched two interlinked planning exercises. The first of these is the revision of the current Academic Plan, which is driven by the Academic Planning Sub-Committee of the Academic Council. The second exercise is the development of a new Strategic Plan for the Institute. The Strategic Planning process is driven by the Director's Office and overseen by a dedicated Strategic Planning Facilitator, who is an academic staff member on full-time secondment. The Strategic planning process commenced in September 2004 and it includes a revision of the Institute's Mission Statement. The Institutes Academic Plan underwent a mid-term review in 2000 – 2001 and the development of a new draft is currently underway.

The Evaluation Group examined the Institute's arrangements for staff development both in terms of measures in force to enable academic staff to enhance their levels of qualifications and training programmes for staff designed to improve organisational performance. Central training provision is organised by the Registrar's Office which includes development of staff to Masters, Doctoral and Primary Degree level and advanced qualifications generally. The Institute also provides evening courses designed and run by its Adult and Continuing Education Department. These are mainly short courses and workshops designed to meet the needs of academic, administrative and technical staff which may be run on a departmental or inter-departmental basis. Specific Information Technology training is also provided by the Institute's IT Unit to raise the level of IT competence of staff. In addition to the centrally administered staff training and development, each Academic Department has an annual budget for staff development. The budget is administered by the Head of Department in line with the department priorities and the development needs of staff. Total funding allocated for staff development and training by the

Institute has risen steadily in recent years from 1.56% to 2.03% of total and an increasing pay budget.

The Evaluation Group then asked the Institute to outline its provision of learner support services and heard that it operates a comprehensive system of non-academic supports and services to students. These include, recruitment, admissions, registration, grants, access office, careers and graduate services, chaplaincy, counselling, student health services, international office, accommodation office, student clubs and societies and a sports and recreation office.

With regard to public responsibility and integrity, the Evaluation Group was aware that being a public body and largely funded by the State, the Institute has a specific obligation to ensure it addresses the needs of society, an obligation which is reflected in its Mission and Vision statements. The Institute's financial statements are prepared for and audited by the Office of the Comptroller and Auditor General. Once signed off by the Comptroller and Auditor General the statements are lodged with the Department of Education and Science and are available publicly. Internal Audit services are currently provided by contracted auditors (Deloitte and Touche). Internal audits do not focus solely on financial matters. They also report on key areas of the Institute's activities and include risk identification. Actions recommended by the internal audit are examined and addressed as appropriate through the Institute's governance and management arrangements.

The Evaluation Group also heard about the physical development of Cork Institute of Technology which has been strongly driven by a very rapid growth in third level student numbers throughout the 1980s, 1990s and into the present century. In addition to the main Bishopstown Campus, CIT incorporates three specialised Schools. Cork School of Music and the Crawford College of Art and Design are located in the city centre, while the National Maritime College of Ireland is at Ringaskiddy in Cork Harbour. Allied to this, the Institute is a major provider of apprenticeship education, having tripled its apprentice numbers from the early 1990s. Meeting these diverse needs has proved to be challenging, and the Institute has been forced to rely in part on prefabricated accommodation. A comprehensive building programme now in full progress, coupled with substantial land purchases at Bishopstown, provides the potential for the Institute to meet future increases demand for places, subject to the availability of funding as recommended in the Kelly Report. The Evaluation Group was also aware however that the accommodation arrangements for the Cork School of Music were less than satisfactory and that a recently approved Public Private Partnership agreement had encountered difficulties which had delayed development. The Institute was hopeful that this issue would be resolved at an early date.

5.2 - Education and Training Programmes

The Evaluation Group met with the Institute's Registrar, Assistant Registrar, Heads of Schools, Representatives of the Heads of Departments, Learner Representatives and the Delegated Authority Co-ordinator to discuss the arrangements in place for the development, provision, quality assurance and review of its education and training programmes.

The Qualifications (Education and Training) Act, 1999 (Section 28), sets out the statutory obligations of the Institute in respect of quality assurance. It requires that Institutes must "establish procedures for quality assurance for the purpose of further improving and maintaining the quality of education and training ... and shall agree those procedures with the Council".

The Evaluation Group noted that the Institute's quality assurance procedures had been agreed with Council in October 2003.

The Evaluation Group took the opportunity to examine the Institute's processes for the approval and programmatic review of programmes. The Assistant Registrar outlined the processes involved in the development and approval of programmes and their scheduled review, which the

Evaluation Group was satisfied involved appropriate provision for and involvement of external expertise and scrutiny.

The Institute also outlined the role, structure and inter-relationships of its Academic Council, and its various School, Departmental and Course Committees, in the development, implementation, monitoring and review of its education and training programmes. The Evaluation Group was advised of the Institute's arrangements and processes for assessment/examination which reflect the Examination Marks and Standards previously laid down by the National Council for Educational Awards and which have been adopted and amended by HETAC. The Institute also outlined the role and function of its Examinations Appeals Board.

The Group also heard of the Institute's arrangements for access, transfer and progression, the role of its DEIS – The Educational Development Department and the arrangements that it has established for the Recognition of Prior Learning by which process over 800 students to date have gained formal recognition in terms of exemptions/grades.

The Evaluation Group discussed issues related to access, transfer and progression procedures as determined by the Qualifications Authority and the Objects of the Act. The Registrar assured the Evaluation Group that the Institute was fully aware of its responsibilities under the procedures for access, transfer and progression as determined by the Qualifications Authority and stated that he believed the Institute was substantially in compliance. The Evaluation Group was also satisfied that the Institute was substantially addressing the criteria that relate to the Objects of the Act and in particular, the Group was impressed with the efforts of the Institute to promote diversity as witnessed by its links with other providers.

6. Audit Trails

For parts 3A and 3B of the agenda (Appendix C), the Evaluation Group formed a number of subgroups to conduct an audit trail of taught and research programmes and issues related to operations and management as follows:

Operations and Management

A number of areas under operations and management were examined in greater detail during the audit trail process. Additional information was sought and received in relation to staff development and training. In particular clarification was sought as to whether the increase in training and development spend for 2004 included development costs related to the new National Maritime College. The Institute reported that the training and development allocation did not include the College and that related training and development was included in the development costs for the project. The group heard that much of the training and development activity appears to be a reaction to immediate need but also heard that the Executive Board has decided to establish a subcommittee to push the identification of training and development needs in a more strategically related direction. A new information management system for the Institute (CORE) will contain a training and development module which will help the tracking of the staff development allocation. Additional information was also sought on a selected number of recent Deloitte and Touche internal audit reports and the Evaluation Group was satisfied that procedures were in place and working to ensure adequate response to issues raised. Quality audits of the Institute's education and training programmes are a central function of the Academic Review Committee of the Academic Council and the Evaluation Group was satisfied that the process was being well managed and that results were being fed back in a manner likely to enhance the effectiveness of the quality assurance management system. One of the Evaluation Group members also met with the Learner Services Officer and the President of the Students' Union and reported that services provided by the Institute were of a high quality.

Taught programmes

A number of programmes were selected by the Chairperson of the Evaluation Group for detailed analysis. Programmes validated by the Institute since the delegation of authority were among these programmes. The Chairperson requested, prior to the visit, that specified detailed information relating to the selected programmes be made available to the Evaluation Group. He also requested that the Institute make arrangements for access to and facilities to copy all or sections of the documents which the Evaluation Group might wish to source for verification purposes (Appendix D). The audit trail of these programmes included analysis, where appropriate, of minutes of the various school and programme boards, external examiner reports and broadsheets of the Examinations Board. The purpose was to track the implementation and gauge the effectiveness of the Institute's processes for the design, validation, monitoring and improvement of its programmes. A subgroup was established by the Chairman for this purpose and individual members were assigned the responsibility of examining allocated programmes. The examination involved the inspection of records for programmes, from initial development proposals, through internal approval, external review, formal approval, programme monitoring and alterations suggested and or implemented. In all cases, the individuals of the subgroup also met with relevant management and academic staff of the Institute to verify the information reviewed and to follow up on every issue that appeared unclear or inconclusive. This task was facilitated with generous co-operation by the Institute by making available all staff and information sought.

Overall, the Evaluation Group found that the Institute has been substantially and effectively operating processes for the development, implementation, monitoring and continuous improvement of its taught programmes and found the quality of documentation supplied and sought to be of a very high calibre.

Research Programmes

Three members of the Evaluation Group met with the Assistant Registrar, Head of Development, Industrial Liaison Officer and the Chairman of the Research and Development Committee to discuss the Institute's arrangements for the validation, provision, monitoring and continuous quality improvement of its research education and training programmes. The subgroup heard that the Institute has a long association with the provision of postgraduate research programmes and at present, approximately one third of all PhDs awarded by HETAC are to students of the Institute. Research funding has increased from € 1.374 million in 1999 to € 3.293 million in 2004. The number of postgraduate students currently registered with HETAC is 116 at Masters level and 30 at Doctoral level.

The meeting afforded the opportunity for the members of the subgroup to discuss the Institute's arrangements for research generally and clarify issues relating to the Institute's recent application to HETAC for accreditation to maintain a register for research degrees in specified discipline areas. The subgroup and the complete Evaluation Group were aware of the report of the findings of the Postgraduate Evaluation Panel (PEP) of 30th August and 20th December 2004.

The subgroup heard that the Institute's Development Office has responsibility for strategic research, development and innovation issues and the commercialisation of research. The Office acts as an information source for research funding and as a contact point for funding organisations. Its remit also embraces the industrially and commercially orientated activities of the Institute. The Head of Development is a member of the Institute Executive Board. At present the Industrial Liaison Office reports into the Head of Development and provides a single contact point for interactions between CIT researchers and industry, government agencies and the Institute. With the appointment of a Head of Research it is envisaged that research-related activities will become the principal responsibility of that function and that some of the activities within the present remit of the Industrial Liaison Office will be taken on by that office. The members of the Evaluation Group were very impressed with this area of the Institute's operations.

The subgroup questioned the Institute in respect of its definition of research active staff, which was a pertinent issue raised in the HETAC accreditation report. The Institute explained that the issue of definition was yet to be resolved and would have to be in any event to the satisfaction of HETAC by June of 2005. The Head of Development did express the view however, that the Institute had some difficulty in embracing the criterion of publication in reputable peer review journals as a primary measure of research active and preferred a measure that included broader criteria such as the attraction of research funding and research supervisory activity. The subgroup then explored the criteria for the appointment of research supervisors and monitoring of students. The Institute outlined that it currently operates to the HETAC guidelines and standards in this respect and that delegation of authority would simply mean a transfer of the responsibility for decisions regarding supervisory appointments from HETAC to the Institute. Similarly, the Institute currently manages the assessment process in line with the HETAC requirements for same and declared that it was confident that the responsibility for autonomously operating the process under delegated authority would be professionally and effectively managed. The subgroup also explored the position with regard to the Institute's Ethics Committee and heard that it has been established and operates as a working group of the Research and Development Committee of the Academic Council. To date, no research undertaken by the Institute's students has required approval by the Ethics Committee.

The subgroup also conducted two separate meetings with a selection of the Institute's research supervisors and a selection of currently registered students. From the supervisors the subgroup heard of the training provided by the Institute of Technology sector for research supervision and of the mentoring arrangements in place within the Institute to develop supervisory experience. The supervisors also explained that continuous development opportunities are well provided for by the Institute by such means as attendance at conferences and updating inputs. The supervisors also outlined some of the supports provided by the Institute to encourage take up of research supervision which include reduction in teaching contact time, the Institute's six graduate scholarships each year and the provision of modest seed funding. The subgroup also heard from the supervisors that links with industry, while being the prime responsibility of the Industrial Liaison Office, are also made informally. Many supervisors have industrial backgrounds themselves and other contact sources come from undergraduate placement in industry which forms part of many of the Institutes education and training programmes. Supervisors were critical of one aspect of the Institute however, namely its current website, which they believed was very research unfriendly in that it does not easily facilitate contact with research staff.

The students who met the subgroup spoke positively of their research experience within the Institute and praised the supervisory staff for their support. Accommodation for writing up however appeared to vary, with some students having good dedicated facilities whereas others had to make do with using lab facilities or borrowing time in staff offices.

One member of the subgroup sought documentation on some registered research students which was made available and was easily audited.

In producing its findings in relation to the Institute's research programmes, the Evaluation Group was mindful of:

- the Council's decision in 2003 that Institutes of Technology applying for delegated authority to make awards at level 9 and 10 of the National Framework of Qualifications should normally be accredited to hold postgraduate candidate registers in accordance with Council procedures;
- the reports of the findings of HETAC's Postgraduate Evaluation Panel engaged to consider the Institute applications for accreditation to maintain postgraduate registers;
- the Council's decision to grant accreditation to the Institute to maintain registers of postgraduate candidates in specified areas at levels 9 and 10 of the National Framework of Qualifications.

7. Tour of the Institute

The Evaluation Group also took the opportunity to visit some of the Institute's support services which it believed had direct bearing on the quality of the provision of programmes and which also reflected the effectiveness of its operation and management. In particular the Evaluation Group visited the Institute's Library and Information Technology Resources unit. The Main Library at the Bishopstown campus is housed in the purpose-built Library/Information Technology building finished in 1997. Adjoining the Main Library in Bishopstown, the Information Technology Centre with IT suites, lecture theatres and more than 100 open-access PCs. A project to link the libraries of the Crawford College of Art and Design and the Cork School of Music with the Bishopstown campus through a central library system is at an advanced stage. The Evaluation Group also toured the building development on the Bishopstown campus referred to earlier in this report and on day 1 of the evaluation the Chairman visited the National Maritime College of Ireland in Ringaskiddy which was opened recently (October 2004) and which provides programmes leading to the HETAC awards of Bachelor of Engineering in Marine Engineering and Bachelor of Science in Nautical Science. Both the Chairman and the Evaluation Group were impressed with the facilities that they saw and the services provided.

8. Meeting with the Institute's external stakeholders

The Evaluation Group met with a representative range of the Institute's stakeholders (Appendix E) to seek their views on the Institute's operations and programmes, its liaison with partner providers and other interested parties and their general perceptions and understanding of delegation of authority, its relevance and its desirability. The Evaluation Group was impressed with the level of positive support expressed at the meeting and concluded that the Institute is highly regarded within the region, that it has a reputation for responsiveness and sensitivity to regional, community, and individual needs and that it has solid and wide support for its application for delegated authority which is seen as a necessary to boost the status of the Institute and support the development of regional employment opportunities.

9. Meeting with representatives of the Institute's staff

The Evaluation Group met with a broad cross-section of the Institute's staff to hear their views on the application for delegated authority. It was clear that staff had been consulted regarding the application and involved in its preparation. The Evaluation Group found strong support for the extension of delegation of authority which was perceived as acknowledgement of the Institute's maturity as a provider of quality higher education and training programmes. Staff believed that delegation would enable the Institute to act more responsively and with greater flexibility but also recognised that increased autonomy brings with it increased public accountability.

10. Findings and Final Comments

The Institute has recently undertaken a major restructuring of its management structure, and deserves great credit for the way in which that complex task was handled, especially in the manner in which it involved and led all its staff and external stakeholders in the change process. This culture of consultation has also been evident in the recent decision to embark on a process of semesterisation and modularisation.

The Evaluation Group felt that that involvement and resulting sense of ownership was expressed in the evident energy, enthusiasm and commitment of the Institute's governors, management, staff, learners and external stakeholders.

The Evaluation Group also felt that there was a high degree of understanding of institutional issues at all levels throughout the Institute and that there was a sense of ownership and commitment to the Institute's existing and planned operations. Members of the Evaluation Group were particularly struck by the positive manner in which staff, students and external stakeholders expressed their support for the Institute's application for delegated authority. There was an almost universal view that delegated authority would greatly enhance the status of the Institute and have a positive influence on prospective investment decisions for the region. There was also a strong belief that delegated authority would be an affirmation of the Institute's maturity and quality as a provider of a broad range of higher education and training programmes and that it would enable it to provide its programmes with greater flexibility, efficiency and effectiveness.

In summary, the Evaluation Group found that the Institute's operation and management arrangements met the criteria determined by the Council for the purposes of delegation of authority. The Evaluation Group also believed that the Institute has the capacity to meet those criteria that relate to the development, validation, monitoring and continuous improvement of its existing taught higher education and training programmes up to and including level 9 of the National Framework of Qualifications. In relation to research, the Evaluation Group found that the Institute has the capacity to meet those criteria that relate to the development, validation, monitoring and continuous improvement of its research programmes, in the specific fields of learning for which postgraduate accreditation is to be granted, at levels 9 and 10 of the National Framework of Qualifications. The Evaluation Group is aware however that such delegation is conditional on the Council being satisfied that the Institute has adequately addressed the issues raised in the recent reports produced by the Postgraduate Evaluation Panels.

APPENDIX A

Delegation of Authority Evaluation Group

Cork Institute of Technology – 19th and 20th April, 2005

Mr. John Hayden

Chairperson
Former Chief Executive/Secretary
Higher Education Authority

Dr Geraldine Butler

Senior Lecturer
Department of Biochemistry
Conway Institute of Biomolecular and Biomedical Research
University College, Dublin

Professor Gerard Gillen

Head of Department of Music
National University of Ireland,
Maynooth

Mr. Eoin Gorman

President
Students' Union
Institute of Technology, Tallaght

Dr. Jane Horgan

Senior Lecturer
School of Computing
Dublin City University

Ms. Grainne NiUid

Manager, Campus Incubation
Enterprise Ireland

Professor Gerard Hurley

Department of Electronic Engineering
National University of Ireland,
Galway

Dr. Colette Henry

Head of the Department of Business Studies
Dundalk Institute of Technology

Dr S. G. Perrin

Senior Lecturer, Learning & Teaching Fellow
Deanery of Humanities,
Liverpool Hope University

Mr. Gerry Pyke

Secretary/Assistant Director General Corporate Services
FÁS, The Training and Employment Authority

APPENDIX B

Terms of Reference of the Delegated Authority Evaluation Group

In conducting its review of the application for delegated authority from Cork Institute of Technology, the Evaluation Group was required to:

- Review an application from the Institute, including the consultation conducted by the institution for the purposes of section 29(2) of the Act.
- Conduct a site-visit to the Institute to evaluate, against the criteria determined by the Council under section 29(3) of the Act, the institution's operation of delegated authority to date and its capacity to continue to operate and extend its delegated authority to make awards.
- Contribute to the formulation of a report to the Council, of the findings of the Evaluation Group, against the criteria determined by the Council under section 29(3) of the Act, regarding the institution's capacity to operate delegated authority.

APPENDIX C

Agenda for Delegated Authority Evaluation Visit

DAY 1 - 18TH APRIL - NATIONAL MARITIME COLLEGE

14.00 - 15.00 Visit by the Evaluation Group Chairman to the National Maritime College

DAY 2 - 19TH APRIL - CORK INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY

MORNING

09.00 Private meeting of the Evaluation Group

09.30 - 10.00 Introduction

Welcome and clarification of agenda/format and running order for the visit (Director, Chair of Governing Body).

10.00 - 11.30 Part 1 - Organisation and Management

Meeting with Director, Representative of the Governing Body, Members of the Executive Board, Learner Representative(s)¹.

Format: Question and answer/discussion.

Indicative Scope: Background to the delegation of authority application, the self-evaluation process, expectations from the evaluation, review of progress against the Delegated Authority Advisory Group report, governance and management structure, strategic planning and evaluation, learner services, human resources policy/staff development arrangements, physical resources, public responsibility, financial resources management.

11.30 - 13.00 Part 2 - Education and Training Programmes - Overview

Meeting with the Registrar, Head of Development, Heads of Schools, Representatives of the Heads of departments, Learner Representative(s)²

Format: Question and answer/discussion.

Indicative Scope: Operation of delegated authority to date, overview of academic quality assurance procedures, Objects of the Act and Council conditions attached to delegated authority, access, transfer and progression arrangements.

AFTERNOON

14.00 Private Meeting of the Evaluation Group

14.30 - 16.00 Part 3A - Audit Trail

Study of selected programmes from across the Schools of the Institute which reflect the levels of awards for which Delegated Authority has been operated and is being sought. Audit trail evaluation of the application of the Institute's quality assurance arrangements to programme development, validation, monitoring, evaluation and review. Further examination/audit trail of selected issues that relate to institutional operations and management.

¹ Student Union President, Vice-President/Education Officer.

² Students participating on Course Boards and currently registered research students (6 to 8 in total – broad faculty representation).

DAY 2 - 19TH APRIL - CORK INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY (CONTD.)

16.00 **Tour of Institute Library and other facilities**

17.00 - 18.00 **Part 4 - Meeting with Stakeholders and Co-providers**

DAY 3 - 20TH APRIL - CORK INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY

MORNING

09.00 **Private Meeting of the Evaluation Group**

09.30 **Part 3B - Audit Trail ³**

Continuation of DAY 1 activity

12.15 **Part 5 Meeting with representative group of the Institute's staff**

AFTERNOON

14.00 **Part 6 - Private Meeting of the Evaluation Group and Exit Meeting**

³ Audit trail will involve meetings with Institute staff. Taught programme audits will typically involve meetings with Heads of Department and Course/Programme Leaders. Research audit will involve a meeting with the Director, Registrar, Head of Development and Industrial Liaison Officers and (separately) registered students. Other officers of the Institute may be requested to meet Evaluation Group members in relation to Operations and Management issues.

APPENDIX D

Additional information requested from the Institute by the Chairman of the Delegation Evaluation Group for reference and examination during the evaluation process

- 1) The following list of taught courses have been selected by the Chairperson of the Delegated Authority Evaluation Group for examination under Part 3 of the evaluation visit agenda:

Higher Certificate in Business in Hotel and Catering Supervision
Bachelor of Business Studies in Management
Bachelor of Business Studies in First Line Management
Bachelor of Business in Management
Bachelor of Business (Honours)

Higher Certificate in Arts in Counselling Skill
Bachelor of Arts in Fine Art
Bachelor of Arts in Community Education and Development

Higher Certificate in Engineering in Building Services Engineering
Higher Certificate in Engineering in Electronic Engineering
Bachelor of Engineering in Biomedical Engineering
Bachelor of Engineering in Manufacturing Engineering
Bachelor of Engineering in Mechanical Engineering

Higher Certificate in Science in Applied Chemistry
Higher Certificate in Science in Construction
Higher Certificate in Science in Interior Architectural Technology
Bachelor of Science in Applied Physics and Instrumentation
Bachelor of Science in Cell and Molecular Biology
Bachelor of Science in Food Science Technology
Bachelor of Science in Agriculture
Bachelor of Science (Honours) in Chemical and Process Engineering
Bachelor of Science (Honours) in Computer Applications
Bachelor of Science (Honours) in Software Development with a Language
Master of Science in Advanced Scientific Techniques

Bachelor of Music (Honours)

The evaluation group will require the following information in regard to the above programmes:

- The Certificate of Course Approval issued by HETAC or CIT.
- The HETAC or CIT Assessors' Report.
- The current Course Schedule.
- The Institute's current course document, including a list of personnel involved in the delivery of the programme.
- A summary of alterations made to the course (if any), as a result of recommendations made by the original HETAC or CIT assessor panel and or recommendations made as a result of the application of the Institute's quality assurance procedures.
- External examiner reports and Examinations Board minutes.

- 2) The following information is requested in relation to Research Programmes:
- List of programmes/students registered currently by the Institute.
 - Summary report on the progress of all students currently registered for research Masters and Doctoral degrees.
 - Progress report files for all registered students.
 - External examiner reports and Examinations Board minutes.
- 3) The following additional information is requested by the Chairperson to be available on the days of the evaluation visit:
- Summaries of:
- Programmatic review reports since 2001 and implementation status of recommendations.
 - The current status of preparations for planned programmatic reviews.
 - Records of the Institute's evaluation of the effectiveness of its quality assurance processes and recommendations and actions undertaken.
 - The Institute's identification of training and development needs and a breakdown by school of participation numbers per training and development programmes.
 - A copy of the Institute's Quality Assurance Manual.
 - Minutes of the Institute's primary Governance and Management bodies and their respective subcommittees.
 - Statistical information on student retention rates.
 - Internal audit reports in relation to, HR Development, Admissions, Quality, Mission Statement and Corporate Governance.
- 4) The Chairman requests that the Institute makes arrangements for the Evaluation Group to have access to and facilities to copy, if required, all or sections of the documents listed above at 1), 2) and 3).

APPENDIX E

External Stakeholders met by the Evaluation Group

The Evaluation Group met with the President of Cork Institute of Technology Students' Union, and Learner Representatives of the following courses:

The Evaluation Group met with the following representatives of the following external stakeholders:

Mr. Brian Gallagher, Technical Director, PM Group

Mr. Conor Healy, Regional Director, The Industrial Development Authority – Regional Office

Mr. John Connolly, Manager, Clonakilty Technology Park

Mr. Declan O' Byren, Director, PJ Hegarty

Mr. Bob Savage, Production Director, EMC

Ms. Ellemarie Mc Carthy, Community Relations Officer, Cork County Council

Ms. Mary Mc Carthy, Director, National Sculpture Factor/Cork

Mr. Pat O' Callaghan, Regional Director, FÁS, The Training and Employment Authority

Mr. Cyril Thornton, HR Director, Novartis

Mr. Ger Looney, Principal, St. John's College of Further Education

Mr. Frank Mulvihill, Chairman, Guidance Councillors Association

Mr. Murtagh Murphy, Boston Scientific

Mr. Mark O' Sullivan, Cork Business Innovation Centre

Professor Gerry Wrixon, President, University College Cork

Mr. John Shiel, Technology Development Advisor, Enterprise Ireland

APPENDIX F

Extract from the Criteria and Procedures for the Delegation and Review of Delegation of Authority to Make Awards, 2004

Authority to make awards will be delegated to a recognised institution in accordance with the criteria set out below. The criteria will be used for both an initial application for delegation of authority and the review of delegation of authority. In the first instance, the criteria will be used to assess the capacity of a recognised institution to operate under delegated authority. To this end the Council will satisfy itself, based on the recognised institution's past, current and planned management processes, including those processes for the development, programme validation, implementation and review of its higher education and training programmes, that it is reasonable to award delegation of authority to make awards. In the case of a review of delegated authority, the criteria will serve to help the Council take a rounded view of how the recognised institution has operated delegation of authority in all its respects.

The Council will issue a guide to recognised institutions, which will elaborate the criteria and may be used for the preparation of documentation to be submitted to the Council and for the evaluation/review panel visit. The criteria are set out here under four headings: Operation and Management, Education and Training Programmes, Council Conditions attaching to delegation of authority and Objects of the Qualifications (Education and Training) Act 1999.

1.1 Operation and Management

The Act clearly sets out that the Council and the Authority, in deciding whether to grant delegated authority, have to review and be satisfied with the operation and management of the recognised institution in relation to programmes of higher education and training that it provides, organises or procures. The Council intends that the evaluation of the operation and management of the recognised institution will be undertaken using the criteria listed below. The criteria are designed to assess, in relation to programmes of higher education and training provided, organised or procured, the efficiency and effectiveness of the recognised institution's:

- Governance, organisation and administration
- Planning and evaluation
- Academic and other staff policies
- Library and information resources
- Physical resources
- Learner services
- Public responsibility and integrity
- Financial resources and management

The Council notes that, in undertaking the review of the operation and management, some of the criteria are generally consistent with requirements of the Regional Technical Colleges Act 1992, under which, existing recognised institutions operate statutory obligations.*

1.2 Educational and training programmes

The criteria set out here are intended to assist the examination of the recognised institution's processes for the development, validation, implementation and review of its higher education and

* There may be a need for the evaluation/review to have regard to audits/reviews undertaken in relation to any of the above by other parties

training programmes. In reviewing the programmes, account will be taken of the effectiveness of processes operated by the recognised institution

- to develop and validate those programmes, and
- to maintain and continuously improve the quality of those programmes.

This is a prime criterion.

As appropriate for the delegation of authority, the Council shall also seek to establish that:

- The institution's quality assurance procedures have been agreed with the Council in accordance with the Council's 'Guidelines and Criteria for Quality Assurance Procedures in Higher Education'.
- The institution has, or in the case of review can show evidence of the effective operation of, quality assurance procedures for:
 - the design and approval of new programmes, subjects and modules, including the assurance that the standards of knowledge, skill or competence, determined by the Council have been incorporated into outcomes to be associated with the successful completion of the programme
 - the regular evaluation or review of existing programmes, subjects and modules, including the assurance that the standards of knowledge, skill or competence, determined by the Council have been incorporated into outcomes to be associated with the successful completion of the programme
 - the fair and consistent assessment of learners
 - the on-going monitoring of programmes
 - the selection, appointment and development of staff who are providing programmes
 - the evaluation of premises, equipment and facilities in relation to programmes
 - the evaluation of the effectiveness of quality assurance procedures.

1.3 Conditions attached to Delegation of Authority

These criteria focus on the recognised institution's capacity to comply with or its record of compliance with the conditions determined by the Council for the purposes of the delegation of authority. Council conditions shall include:

- adherence to the agreed wording on parchments issued by the recognised institutions, as defined in the Order in Council granting Delegation of Authority
- co-operation and assistance to the Council, and the Authority where appropriate, in the performance of their functions
- establishment of procedures for the assessment of learners which are fair and consistent and for the purpose of compliance with standards determined by the Council under the Act

- implementation of procedures for access, transfer and progression determined by the Authority under the Act
- consultation with other providers as stipulated under Sections 28 and 29 of the Act
- provision of such information as the Council requires for the purposes of the performance of its functions, including information in respect of completion rates
- fulfilment of such other conditions as the Council may from time to time determine, in consultation with the recognised institution

1.4 Objects of the Qualifications (Education and Training) Act, 1999

The purpose of these criteria is to establish whether the recognised institution can show how its application of delegation of authority will be or has been supportive of the objects of the Qualifications (Education and Training) Act 1999. In addition to those objects of the Act that are specifically evaluated in the preceding criteria, the recognised institution should be able to demonstrate, through its policies and operational procedures, that it shall or has operated delegation of authority in a manner that:

- contributes to the provision of a system for the co-ordination and comparison of higher education and training awards;
- facilitates lifelong learning through the promotion of access and opportunity for all learners;
- promotes the recognition of knowledge, skill or competence acquired;
- contributes to the realisation of national education and training policies;
- promotes co-operation with other providers;
- promotes diversity within higher education and training and between higher education and training and further education and training;
- contributes to the realisation of national policy and objectives in relation to the extension of bi-lingualism in Irish society.

APPENDIX H

Progress made against the Delegated Advisory Groups' report of 2002

The following report was made by the Institute as part of additional materials sought by the Chairman to support its application to HETAC for the extension of delegated authority in April 2004. The issues were discussed broadly by the Evaluation Group at the Operations and Management meeting on day 1 of the evaluation visit. While every action listed in the report was not verified by the Evaluation Group, it feels confident from its discussions with the institute that the progress outlined has been achieved.

IRG Recommendation 1

Consideration should be given to lines and structures of reporting to the Director.

Advisory Group Comments:

“The Advisory Group are appreciative of the amount of time given by management in the Institute to this matter and accept the value of engaging in this exercise in a spirit of partnership with staff and their union. However, we consider that now is the time for action to establish a new structure. We are pleased, therefore, to learn that the Institute has approached the Department of Education and Science for resources to implement such a new structure and hopes to meet the Department in mid-April 2002. If the proposals are sanctioned, we understand that management will be in a position to begin implementing the new structure in September 2002. We welcome this development. Even if sanction is delayed or is not forthcoming, we believe management should examine whether there is scope to move immediately at least some way towards the new structure proposed.”

CIT Actions:

As stated to the Advisory Group during their visit to CIT in 2002, the Institute proceeded to implement a new management structure on an agreed basis with staff and the Department of Education and Science. The necessary approval of the Department of Education and Science for the revised structure and the new posts which it entailed was obtained following considerable dialogue. The advertising and filling of the posts in the new structure was completed in June 2004.

The Institute is now organised into ten schools, including the Cork School of Music, the Crawford College of Art and Design and the new National Maritime College of Ireland.

The structure is essentially built around co-ordinated groups of schools and departments, and is a devolved one rather than the flat organisation which was observed by the IRG. This devolved structure permits: clearer lines of reporting; a far smaller cohort of managers reporting directly to the Director; a central senior management group (the Institute Executive Board) with a strategic planning brief.

A full account of the revised management structure is given in pages 12 to 15 of the DA Submission. A diagram of the new management structure is to be found on page 14 of the submission.

IRG Recommendation 2

CIT's management structure, which is unique to the Institute, should be strengthened with a view to enhancing the capacity to monitor activities.

Advisory Group Comments:

"This recommendation overlaps to a considerable extent with the foregoing one. Speedy progress on Recommendation 1 should help to enhance the capacity to monitor activities."

CIT Actions:

The Institute has indeed moved as rapidly as possible in putting in place the revised structure, and agrees that this recommendation overlaps with Recommendation 1. As regards monitoring of activities, it may be noted that the new structure incorporates six posts which are comparable in function and range of responsibilities to Heads of Faculty (three Coordinators, the Principal of CCAD, the Director of CSM, and the Head of NMCI). Eight Heads of School report to these. Under the Heads of School, the number of Departments has been increased (using in part the increased allocation of Senior Lecturer 2 posts referred to in the Advisory Group Report) to better match the specialist areas of learning, resulting in 26 Departments overall.

IRG Recommendation 3

Consideration should be given to the allocation of resources for staff training and development.

Advisory Group Comment:

"[...] The point may be made in relation to the assessment of staff training and development in monetary terms that this measure does not give the full picture since it excludes the training given to staff through in-house research and other activities.

[...] While the figures [regarding expenditure on staff development] showed increased activity per staff member over the period, the Group considered them a little on low side by comparison with the recommended figure of 3% of payroll recommended in the Programme for Prosperity and Fairness. We would encourage the Institute to accelerate improvements in this area."

CIT Actions:

Staff development by its nature is clearly an area which requires a partnership approach between staff and management for its best implementation. A working party drawn from a variety of relevant Departments of the Institute was constituted under the Partnership Initiative in November 2002, with a brief to "examine the existing processes for the provision of staff Training and Development", and to "make recommendations for an equitable and transparent staff Training and Development process that is clearly communicated to all staff". The working party's findings and recommendations were set down in a comprehensive report, published within the Institute in April 2004.

The Partnership Group identified a need for more awareness of the opportunities available, for greater coordination and for a revision of procedures for responding to requests for support. Since that study, a senior member of the administrative staff in the Registrar's Office has been assigned duties in relation to staff development. A staff development section of the CIT Intranet has been created with information on programmes and application procedures. The procedures for application and approvals have been amended. All of these improvements have been brought to the attention of all staff.

The Institute agrees fully that the assessment of staff training and development in monetary terms does not give the full picture. Central initiatives include Masters and Primary Degree support (formerly HESDN), Advanced Qualifications support to Masters or Doctoral level, staff participation in approximately 150 evening CIT courses, in-house short courses, and IT Training through a purpose-built IT Training Centre with a full-time IT Trainer. A further range of staff development activity is carried out under the aegis of the academic Departments. The

Development Office coordinates staff training associated with Research and Development activity.

The overall Institute expenditure on staff development is in excess of €0.75 million p.a.

IRG Recommendation 4

The departmental structure should be analysed with particular reference to interdepartmental communications and the provision of courses requiring interdepartmental collaboration.

Advisory Group Comment:

“Management indicated to the Advisory Group that there were in operation several well-tested arrangements which help to promote cross-disciplinary communication and activity in the Institute. They also made the point that the formalising of the faculty structure will inevitably foster closer interdepartmental communication and coordination. The Advisory Group accept that a revised structure should give the opportunity for closer interdepartmental communication and coordination but this may not come as automatically as suggested and may need to be carefully monitored.

On the second part of the recommendation, the Advisory Group were given details of new courses established in recent years which involved interdepartmental collaboration. While welcoming this development, we felt the Institute could do more in this area and recommend that the initiation of new cross-disciplinary courses should be accelerated.”

CIT Actions:

The Governing Body and Director are mindful of the Advisory Group’s comment that closer communication and coordination may not flow automatically from the adoption of the new structures, and through the Institute Executive Board and the Academic Council such interdepartmental communication is and will continue to be a priority.

In practical terms, Programmatic Reviews are now coordinated and conducted on a School-by-School basis with a specific School Review document; this was not the case at the time of the IRG or Advisory Group reports, and is a direct consequence of the management revisions.

Furthermore, the Advisory Group was given a list of eight cross-disciplinary programmes, and promotion of this trend has continued. The following are examples of collaborative new courses in development via the CP1, CP2 and Validation quality processes during 2005:

- Master of Arts degree in Digital Game Design and Production, involving the Departments of Media Communications, Business, Electronic Engineering and Computing.
- Master of Arts in Art Therapy, involving the Crawford College of Art and Design and Social Care staff.
- Master of Engineering in Telecommunications Engineering, involving Electronic Engineering and Computing Departments.

A further spur to the development of interdisciplinarity will be the implementation of Modularisation and Semesterisation across the Institute. This was approved and recommended to Governing Body by the Academic Council, following a detailed process of consultation and debate, on 15th March 2005. By devising its courses around modules, the Institute will be able to combine modules offered by different Departments and units into coherent programmes with a focus on outcomes.

IRG Recommendation 5

A strong external dimension should be incorporated in quality assurance procedures in the context of delegation of authority to award qualifications.

Advisory Group Comment:

“Management informed the Group that the Institute was committed to the involvement of external academic staff, professional bodies, practitioners and employers in the review of its operations. The Advisory Group welcome this commitment. We note that external involvement in new programme evaluation is considered at the final validation stage of the process, following consideration by the Academic Council (although not at the first stage). The five-year programmatic reviews also have an external involvement. We encourage the Institute to continue with its development of external involvement in its activities. We note that it has no international dimension incorporated in its quality assurance policy procedures but is mindful of the draft guidelines and criteria for Institutional quality assurance procedures recently published by HETAC and will give further consideration to this area. We would encourage this.”

CIT Actions:

In accordance with the CIT Quality System (which is approved by HETAC) the Institute continues to ensure a strong external involvement in its quality processes. As recommended by the Advisory Group, the international dimension of review panels has been strengthened. Where practicable, international expertise is included, not just in the Final Validation stage, but also at the prior CP2 stage. This also goes for Programmatic Review Panels. This is in line with the requirements of Section 28(2) of the Qualifications Act, which require “evaluation at regular intervals and as directed from time to time by the Council of the programme of education and training concerned, including evaluation by persons who are competent to make national and international comparisons”. Some examples of the sources of international experts are:

- Queen’s University Belfast – Engineering Programmatic Review 2001
- Birmingham University – Humanities Programmatic Review 2003
- Fachhochschule Darmstadt, Germany – Computing Programmatic Review 2004
- Open University United Kingdom – CP2 Panel considering the Master of Engineering in Telecommunications Engineering March 2005.

IRG Recommendation 6

The mechanisms for student feedback now in place should continue to be developed.

Advisory Group Comment:

“The Group welcome the fact that there is student representation on a number of sub-committees of the Academic Council. We recommend that consideration should be given to extending this to all sub-committees of the Academic Council to the extent that this is considered practicable.

We also welcome the recent initiative of a survey by questionnaire of first year students, carried out in December 2001, which resulted in over 750 students being surveyed. It was not possible at this time to ascertain the usefulness of the survey. We note that the Institute are at present considering introducing the survey on an regular basis, annual or otherwise, following a full analysis of the results and that it hopes to put a formal feedback arrangement in place through the Academic Council.

The Group encourage the Institute to advance this matter and recommend that the feedback mechanism implemented should ensure that those contributing to the survey are aware of the results and action taken.

We are aware that, in a number of other countries, arrangements are made to assess the quality of teaching through feedback from students. There may be scope to move eventually in this

direction in the Institute, although we appreciate that this would have industrial relations aspects and is, indeed, an issue in the wider educational field.”

CIT Actions:

As recommended by the Advisory Group, CIT has ensured that every Committee of the Academic Council has at least one student representative.

As regards surveys of students, commencing in 2004 and again in 2005, the Institute has adopted formal universal survey procedures for each subject of each full-time course. This involves three survey instruments as follows:

- An evaluation form given by each subject lecturer to each student in a class
- A summary of the responses prepared by the lecturer which is forwarded to the Head of Department
- An evaluation form regarding the course as a whole which is given by the Head of Department to each student on the course.

This exercise in feedback is a major one, involving the preparation and analysis of approximately 50,000 items per annum. The Institute is pleased to report that in spite of the potential for industrial relations difficulties correctly referenced by the Advisory Group, the survey process has been implemented through the CIT Common Forum with the agreement of the relevant unions.

IRG Recommendation 7

Priority should continue to be given to the development of research related to industry and to the development of research methodology.

Advisory Group Comment:

“The Advisory Group are satisfied that the Institute has made progress in emphasising the development of research related to industry and in developing research methodology. The Institute is to be congratulated on its progress and encouraged to continue to make further progress, in particular in developing research methodology”.

CIT Actions:

The Institute has applied for HETAC Institutional Research Accreditation to Level 10. In addition, specific Accreditation has been achieved in the following fields:

- Level 10 (Doctoral) accreditation in Applied Physics and Instrumentation, Chemistry and Biological Sciences, Mechanical/Manufacturing Engineering and Electronic Engineering.
- Level 9 (Masters) Accreditation in Computing, Chemical and Process Engineering and Building & Civil Engineering.

The Institute’s overall processes for the recruitment, registration, supervision and assessment of research students have therefore been approved to Level 10 by Council. The Research Register Accreditation submissions of CIT gave extensive information regarding the volume and nature of research.

As regards development of strategic lines of research activity, the Institute works through Specialist Research Groups and Industry/Technology Centres.

- Adaptive Wireless Systems (AWS) Group - Department of Electronic Engineering.
- Advanced Control Group (ACG) - Department of Electronic Engineering.
- PROTEOBIO (Mass Spectrometry Research Centre for Proteomics and Biotoxins) - Department of Chemistry
- Molecular Diagnostics & Cell Biology Unit - Department of Biological Sciences

- Centre for Surface Interface Analysis (CSIA) - Department of Applied Physics and Instrumentation
- Environmental Monitoring and Space Sciences Group – Department of Applied Physics and Instrumentation
- Centre for Advanced Manufacturing and Management Systems (CAMMS)
- Clean Technology Centre (CTC).

Research areas targeted for future development are:

- Quantum Optics (Department of Applied Physics and Instrumentation)
- Computational Modelling in Engineering (Department of Mechanical Engineering)
- Irish Musicology (CSM).

APPENDIX I

Boards and Committee of the New Management Structure

Role, Functions and Operation of the Faculty Executive Board

The role of the Faculty Executive Board is to assist the Coordinator with the management of the faculty, the formulation of faculty and strategy policy for approval by the IEB, and the allocation of resources to Heads of School.

The Faculty Executive Board reports through the Co-ordinator to the Institute Executive Board and may establish sub-committees as working parties to assist it in its work. It normally meets fortnightly during term-time. The meetings of the Faculty Executive Board are attended by the designated Administrator. The Action List of the Faculty Executive Board is circulated to the senior staff in the faculty and is placed on the staff Intranet.

Equivalent Boards are operating in CCAD, CSM and NMCI, with the respective Principal, Director and Head as *ex officio* chair.

Role, Functions and Operation of the School Executive Board

The role of the School Executive Board is to assist the Head of School with the management of the School, the formulation of School strategy and policy for approval by the Faculty Executive Board, and the allocation of resources to Heads of Department.

Role, Functions and Operation of the Department Committee

The role of the Department Executive Committee is to assist the Head of Department with the management of the Department, the formulation of Department strategy and policy for approval by the School Executive Board, and the allocation of resources within the Department.

The Department Committee reports through the Head of Department and the Executive Board and may establish sub-committees and working parties to assist it in its work. It normally meets at least five times during the academic year. The meetings of the Department Committee are attended by the Departmental Secretary. The Action List of the Department Committee is circulated to the academic staff in the Department and is placed on the staff Intranet.

Course Board

Course Boards are responsible for the development, review and operational monitoring of individual programmes. The membership of the Course Board is:

- Head of Department or nominee
- Course Coordinator(s)
- Course Lecturers (typically 5 - 6) representing the key subject areas of the course(s) concerned, including service subject areas
- Student course representatives (minimum of two).

The Head of Department nominates the Chair and other staff members to the Course Board. The Course Board student representatives are nominated by the students. The composition and operation of each Course Board is reviewed annually.

Course Team

The Course Team consists of all lecturers on the course and is chaired by the Course Coordinator. It augments the work of the Course Board by reviewing the operation of the course and student progress.

The Course Team meets once a term, typically, early in the academic year, mid-way through it, and in preparation for the Examination Board. The Action List of the Course Team is circulated to the members of the Department Committee.

Examination Appeals Board

The Examination Appeals Board is appointed by the Academic Council. Its main function is to hear appeals by students of examination results.

The Examination Appeals Board is composed of a Coordinator (from a different faculty or College to that from which the appeal originates), three other members of the Academic Council, and a student representative.

The Board concerns itself with determining if the examination process for the appellant has been carried out correctly and fairly, and if the appropriate re-check and review processes are conducted properly. A detailed description of the Examination Appeals process is contained in Book 2 of the CITT *Academic Quality System*.

Senior Staff Forum

The membership of the Senior Staff Forum is:

- Director (Chair)
- Members of the Executive Board
- Head of School
- Heads of Department

The Senior Staff Forum provides a discussion and communications forum for senior staff. It normally meets once per term.

Department Staff Forum

The membership of the Department Staff Forum is open to all academic, technical and administrative staff within the Department. The Department Staff Forum is chaired by the Head of Department, and the Department Secretary acts as Secretary to the Department Staff Forum.