



Mary Immaculate College Teaching And Learning Policy Statements

August 2014

Table of Contents

Preamble.....	1
MIC Future Education Landscape document (2012)	2
The Teaching & Learning Culture	2
Overarching Philosophy	2
Academic Staff.....	3
Commitment to Continuous Quality Assurance.....	4
The Centre for Teaching & Learning.....	5
Mary Immaculate College Strategic Plan 2012-2016	6
Pillar 2 Excellence in teaching and learning and in advanced scholarship and research	6
The Teaching & Learning Culture	7
Inter-institutional Programme Development & Delivery	9
Enhancing our learning environment and providing a work place of the highest quality	11
Mary Immaculate College HEA Performance Compact 2012 – 2016	15
Shared, coordinated academic planning.....	16
Regionally coordinated approach to transfer and progression pathways.....	17
Shared services and facilities, including harmonisation of systems and processes	18





Mary Immaculate College Teaching and Learning Policy Statements

from

MIC Future Education Landscape document (2012), Strategic Plan 2012-2016 and MIC HEA Performance Compact 2012-2016.

Preamble

Mary Immaculate College (MIC) is an autonomous university-level Catholic College of Education and the Liberal Arts, academically linked with the University of Limerick. It is also part of the Shannon Consortium cluster, along with University of Limerick, Limerick Institute of Technology and Institute of Technology, Tralee. MIC serves the needs of a growing and diverse student population of over 3,000 students. Undergraduate programmes for B.Ed. and B.A. degrees and a range of post-graduate programmes at Diploma, Masters and Doctoral levels are offered in the College. The College also supports a wide range of academic and professional research.

Excellence in Teaching and Learning is core to MIC's policy documents and is embedded within *MIC Future Education Landscape document (2012)*, *Strategic Plan 2012-2016* and is a central component in MIC's *HEA Performance Compact 2012-2016*. This document is an aggregate of the policy statements contained in these documents.



MIC Future Education Landscape document (2012)

The Teaching & Learning Culture

Overarching Philosophy

The National Strategy for Higher Education to 2030 emphasises and prioritises the importance of aligning academic provision with the needs of our economy. This goal is shared by the College and the excellence of our graduating teachers, the essential role they play in influencing younger learners within the life-cycle, together with the highly developed analytical and communication skills gained by our Humanities students and postgraduate students, ensure that graduates of MIC take their place as significant influencers of our burgeoning Knowledge Economy. The broader strategic role played by Mary Immaculate at system level is to contribute, through its outstanding graduates, to the very building blocks of that economy, and, concomitantly, of society.



At the same time, the institutional distinctiveness of Mary Immaculate College lies in an academic programme of superb quality that is not led wholly by the demands of the economy or current public policy but remains a function, also, of the emphasis put by this institution on imparting to its students that

which is necessary for a flourishing life. Not all our students seek economic dividends from participation at the College, but all receive a broad and holistic learning experience that enables them to live a rounded life. For those seeking to maximise their prospects in the labour market, this fundamental tenet of the traditional university concept underpins the professional and career development support structures that help them to extract the maximum potential from a suite of academic qualifications that are highly regarded. For others, participation at higher level should offer more than the skills necessary for the economy alone by extending equity of opportunity for engagement in learning for its own sake to people at all stages within the life-cycle.

The premise behind an educational experience at Mary Immaculate College is that what is good for the economy is good for society, not just the market. This is based on the firm belief that while our graduates deserve and receive the best possible preparation for participation in the Twenty First Century economy, the very particular institutional ethos that obtains ensures that they are not simply geared for participation in the Knowledge Economy, but for creation of a Just Economy and a Good Society.

Academic Staff

The National Strategy for Higher Education stresses the importance of a teaching and learning culture that is informed by research and of ensuring that the practice of teaching and learning intertwines with capacity for using and performing research. Over the course of the last two decades, MIC has invested significantly in the recruitment and support of highly qualified academic staff with the capacity or potential capacity to contribute to the growing research profile of the College. This has resulted in sustained growth in staff engagement in research through publications, contributions to professional conferences, external collaborations, research funding networks and recruitment of doctoral research students. Up until the mid to late 1980s, the focus of the College was almost exclusively concentrated on the teaching of undergraduate students and, with some notable exceptions, research activity was not deemed to form part of its mission. This was, in the main, externally mandated and was historically reinforced in the way in which the Colleges of Education were funded. Consequently, there was limited institutional support internally for those wishing to undertake research and this was clearly reflected in the small percentage of staff with doctoral degrees.

Since that time, the College has steadily sought to cultivate a research culture and encourage research activity in a variety of ways. Academic staff appointments and promotions use applicants' research records as one of the three foremost criteria in their evaluations (alongside teaching and service to the community). 70% of academic staff members now hold doctoral level qualifications. Additionally, a further cohort of academic staff (19%) is engaged in doctoral studies currently. This will bring the percentage of academic staff in the College holding doctoral qualifications to c. 90% within the next 3-5 years. These figures compare very favourably with published levels of doctoral qualifications amongst staff within other

institutions in the university sector and significantly exceed levels typically found within the Institute of Technology sector.

Commitment to Continuous Quality Assurance

The embedding of a culture of continuous quality assurance is a key driver of change and enhancement within the higher education sector. The MIC Mission Statement emphasises the centrality, for this institution, of quality within the learning culture where “excellence in teaching, learning and research at undergraduate and postgraduate levels” is of cardinal importance.

Quality of teaching and learning has been a particular priority within the Shannon Consortium also and MIC has joined its partners in actively supporting innovation in this area and promoting the pursuit of excellence in teaching and learning inter-and intra-institutionally as a central plank of the Consortium’s own mission. This has been pursued through reflective practice and institutional recognition for and awareness-raising around, examples of best practice. Indeed, the achievements of the Shannon Consortium in relation to Teaching and Learning innovation have been commended in the Davies Report (2010), an independent report that was commissioned by the Higher Education Authority to evaluate the effectiveness of SIF.

At MIC, the role of quality within the teaching and learning culture has been championed through the Centre for Teaching & Learning, which emerged as an intra-institutional change-agent on foot of the activities of the Shannon Consortium under SIF. The Centre provides a nexus for institutional engagement with Shannon Consortium initiatives as well as a promoter of intra-mural activities, enabling academic staff to engage in reflective practice, curriculum development and continual professional development.

The Centre for Teaching & Learning



The Centre for Teaching and Learning (CTL) was established in 2007 and its mission is to:

- Support teaching and the scholarship of teaching;
- Advocate exemplary practices and innovation in teaching and learning;
- Strive for teaching enhancement interventions which are supportive, voluntary, and confidential;
- Promote reflective practice and scholarly dialogue on teaching and learning;
- Foster collegiality and collaboration amongst faculty and regional institutional partners;
- Encourage, recognise and reward demonstrated excellence in teaching;
- Promote the integration of research in teaching and learning.

Mary Immaculate College Strategic Plan 2012-2016



Pillar 2 of the MIC Strategic Plan 2012 – 2016 encodes excellence in teaching and learning and in advanced scholarship and research:

Pillar 2 Excellence in teaching and learning and in advanced scholarship and research

Our second pillar cuts to the core of our mission as a higher education institution. MIC has a rich history of innovation and pioneering activity in teaching and learning as the first College of Education to be established outside Dublin, the first to offer a Liberal Arts programme and the first to produce both a Bachelor of Education degree in Education & Psychology and a Bachelor of Arts in Early Childhood Care & Education. Today, the College stands at the brink of a new and exciting period for teaching and learning and the pursuit of research, replete with both challenges and opportunities for our core mission. The College will meet these challenges by locating its responses within and across the following inter-linked strategic contexts:

- Undergraduate Studies
- Postgraduate Studies

- Diversity of Participation, Progression & Lifelong Learning
- The Teaching & Learning Culture
- The Research Culture
- Inter-institutional Programme Development & Delivery

The Teaching & Learning Culture

Because of our historical focus on Teacher Education, MIC has always had a strong commitment to the principle of professional development. We have applied this principle in outreach to practitioners teaching in the primary school system in numerous examples of provision for Continuing Professional Development (CPD). We have also concentrated much effort in development of our faculty, fostering innovation in teaching and learning, alongside a strong emphasis on the connection between teaching and research, as part of our ethos.

Following establishment of a Centre for Teaching & Learning (CTL) in 2007, we have concentrated our efforts on providing a service for faculty that facilitates student evaluation of teaching. The Student Evaluation of Teaching process (SET) is a key instrument in quality assurance of teaching at MIC and frequent participation by academic staff is seen as part of a cycle of learning that informs better delivery as well as the approach taken by ancillary support services for students such as the Learner Support Unit.

We note that a focus on teaching and learning is core to the National Strategy for Education which advocates joined-up approaches which, it is proposed, will fall within the framework of a new National Forum for the Enhancement of Teaching & Learning. Having worked very closely with our partners in the Shannon Consortium to launch coordinated initiatives in teaching and learning under the Strategic Innovation Fund we welcome further developments towards support for a community of practice in this area.

Challenges that we envisage include the need to ensure that our institution and all other HEIs enjoy equity of participation in the governance of such structures as the National Forum. We will also work collaboratively with our partners to advocate for sustainability of any external initiatives having experienced the draw-backs to finite resourcing under SIF,

disseminated through a competitive process that worked against the spirit of partnership and collegiality we believe is essential to teaching and learning.

Internal challenges will be to build on the impetus given to our Centre for Teaching & Learning through SIF by making it part of our mainstream provision and closely integrated with our programme delivery strategies. We also seek to adopt a more cohesive approach to teaching and learning by fostering closer coordination of the broader teaching and learning environment. Teaching and Learning demands integration of a number of enabling systems, often set apart in HEIs' organisational structures. These systems include quality assurance, IT and AV, funding for staff development (including Training of Trainers) and research. Finally, from a significant baseline, we will continue to build towards a deeply embedded culture of quality teaching and learning by working proactively with our staff and by incentivising and celebrating their excellence in teaching and learning.

5.3.5.2 Goals & Targets

Goal 1	To support teaching and the scholarship of teaching
Targets	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Significant enhancement of existing teaching and learning leadership, infrastructure and resourcing▪ Demonstrable improvement in systematic coordination between teaching and learning and integral services such as quality assurance, IT/AV, and Research Office
Goal 2	To advocate for, demonstrate and embed exemplary practices and innovation in teaching and learning
Targets	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ % increase in events and initiatives designed effectively highlight and showcase exemplars of excellence and innovation in teaching & learning▪ % increase in staff participation▪ Evidence of increased incorporation of teaching and learning methodologies into curricula, syllabi and practice
Goal 3	To provide teaching enhancement interventions which are supportive, voluntary and confidential

Targets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Number of Peer Observations of Teaching (POTs) undertaken ▪ Number of Teaching Portfolios developed ▪ % increase in rate of participation in SETs
Goal 4	To foster collegiality and collaboration amongst faculty and regional institutional partners towards reflective practice and scholarly dialogue on teaching and learning
Targets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Continued participation in Shannon Consortium Regional Teaching & Learning Awards initiative as well as participation in national award programmes from the National Academy ▪ Participation in and organisation of regional Teaching & Learning workshops and symposia ▪ Significant contribution to, participation in and inclusion with the National Academy for Teaching & Learning
Goal 5	To significantly advance and embed incorporation of blended learning strategies and new technologies in the teaching and learning environment and programme design
Targets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Review of challenges and opportunities for MIC in incorporation of blended learning strategies and new technologies for teaching and learning ▪ Number of programmes modified / newly designed to incorporate blended learning and new technologies ▪ Number of new technologies provided and administered effectively and cohesively in collaboration with teaching and learning structures ▪ Number of training interventions for design, roll-out and use of blended learning strategies and new technologies for teaching and learning ▪ Evaluation of integration and effectiveness of blended learning strategies and new technologies for teaching and learning

Inter-institutional Programme Development & Delivery

In its recommendations towards increased synergy and resource optimisation between higher education institutions, the National Strategic for Education cites the Shannon Consortium as

a pioneering exemplar of the model of clustering envisaged. As a member of the Shannon Consortium, MIC recognises the dividends for the Exchequer, the student community, our scholars and our administrative infrastructures, of inter-institutional cooperation and coordination. Success indicators are distributed across many contexts of the higher education enterprise but it is in programme delivery where many of the most exciting developments have happened already and which, undoubtedly, lie ahead.

In the coming years, we aim to significantly increase the instances of inter-institutional programmes delivery involving MIC that are already in place (e.g. Structured PhD in Education delivered in conjunction with UL, Structured PhD in Philosophy of Art and Culture in conjunction with UL and NUIG).

A cardinal feature of our inter-institutional academic strategy will be to build on existing collaboration for widening participation and lifelong learning at third level by further development and participation in joined-up approaches to targeting and outreach and building effective and appropriate access and progression pathways that provide clear routes within and between institutions for learners.

5.3.7.2 Goals & Targets

Goal 1 To foster closer collaboration with partner institutions towards inter-institutional delivery of academic programmes

- Targets
- Joint review of new possibilities for inter-institutional undergraduate and postgraduate module and programme creation and co-delivery with partner HEIs, with particular emphasis on opportunities involving the University of Limerick within the Shannon Consortium framework
 - Number of new modules and programmes jointly designed and delivered at all relevant NFQ levels
 - Institutional ethos and values embedded in programme design and learning outcomes



Goal 2	To maintain a high quality student-centred focus in inter-institutional delivery strategies
Targets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Effective and coordinated academic monitoring, student support and teaching and learning systems in place ▪ Number of shared service agreements in place for academic support
Goal 3	To further develop inter-institutional pathways for access to third level learning opportunities and for progression
Targets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Joint review of challenges and opportunities in establishing joined-up targeting, outreach and access pathways ▪ Number of new inter-institutional initiatives for outreach and access in place ▪ Evidence of effectiveness of inter-institutional outreach, access and retention strategies ▪ Evidence of increased learner progression between MIC and partner institutions

Enhancing our learning environment and providing a work place of the highest quality

Today, our student community stands at 3,200. One of the greatest challenges we have faced in recent years has been to expand and raise the standard of our campus infrastructure to the level of quality required, and deserved, by our learning community – students, staff and visitors. We have made huge strides in meeting this challenge with the implementation of a 3-phase campus development master plan and achieving our targets for the first two phases of that plan. We have more than doubled our buildings stock and have provided the very highest standards of accommodation and integrated technological infrastructure. We have provided world-class teaching and research space in our new TARA Building which also houses the main hub for key student resources, including the administrative centre of the Mary Immaculate Students' Union (MISU). TARA is also the location for our state-of-the-art auditorium – the Lime Tree Theatre – which, in the coming years, will be a focal point for our efforts to promote our campus as a public space. Our multi-purpose sports and recreation complex, Tailteann, was voted RIAI Leisure Building of the Year, 2008.

We have been fortunate to have received significant Exchequer funding for a large proportion of these recent developments and are immensely appreciative of this support. The return on this investment has been of significant value to the State, with increased through-put of graduates educated to the highest standard as well as a research culture of outstanding quality, much of it focused strongly on primary system curriculum development, educational disadvantage and the formulation of strategies for inclusion. The contribution of our graduates to the wider education system and to the Knowledge



Economy, as well as the economic contribution of the College and the campus community to Limerick City and its environs, ensures that investment in MIC has long-term effect.

We have also invested heavily in our estate, laying particular emphasis on adding value to the public space, with the opening up and transformation of our magnificent campus grounds. We have aimed our resources at the fitting out of the Lime Tree Theatre as a public auditorium that will act as a key element in local and regional strategies to foster inclusion and civic participation through the performing arts as well as to highlight Limerick City as a place of cultural excellence.

While our future challenges include the need to steward and maintain our estate at a world-class level, there is an urgent need to deliver strategically essential capital development. As we proceed with implementation of the final stage of our campus development master plan, refurbishment and extension of our Library Building must take priority. The existing Library Building was completed in 1979 and intended to accommodate 750 students. A library, well-designed, and properly stocked and equipped, is the lifeblood of a university-level institution and it is imperative that the College succeeds in bringing the existing building to Twenty First

Century standards and equipping it to meet the needs of a large and diverse learning community. This is a major objective for us and by the end of this strategic planning period we will have made tangible progress towards its attainment.

The hall-mark of efficient, effective and quality service provision is cohesive interaction between all functional elements within the process. We recognise this and we will strive to bring about significant enhancement of coordination and integration within and between our horizontal and vertical decision-making and implementation processes.

The greatest asset we have in pursuit of our mission is our staff community. We have asked much of our staff during our rapid and significant expansion during the last two decades. More has been asked with the consequences for resourcing and extra pressures on existing staff that have followed under the prevailing economic conditions. At all times our staff community has responded generously and proved equal to the tasks we have faced together. We are fortunate to enjoy the efforts of a staff body with an extraordinarily high level of commitment to academic excellence as well as to the ethos of community, partnership and the high quality whole-student experience that is our most prominent hall-mark.

All members of our staff community deserve the highest levels of support, investment in their development, and well-being at work and we will continue to provide this through effective dialogue, excellent communications and a strong spirit of partnership. We will ensure also, that our recruitment and promotional strategies reflect our institutional values of inclusion, equality and diversity and meet the highest standards of transparency, fairness and compliance.

One of our most cherished founding values continues to be the usage of An Gaeilge as a primary spoken language, enlivening the lived experience across our campus. We will continue to foster usage of the Irish language amongst our students and our staff and we will strive for excellence in service delivery through the medium of Irish in alignment with national goals.



True to our heavy emphasis on the concept of community, we will strive to maintain and enhance our connections and linkage opportunities with both our alumni and our retired colleagues. Those who have departed from our campus will remain a celebrated part of our extended community.

Goals & Targets

Goal 1 To provide our learning community, our visitors, and the wider community with an estate of the highest standard of quality, accessibility and beauty.

Targets

- % of remaining stages of MIC campus development masterplan completed
- Number of benchmarking exercises undertaken to establish comparative quality of the MIC estate

Goal 2 To significantly enhance our library infrastructure to fully meet the diversity of needs amongst our learning community and of members of the wider community wishing to share our resources

Targets

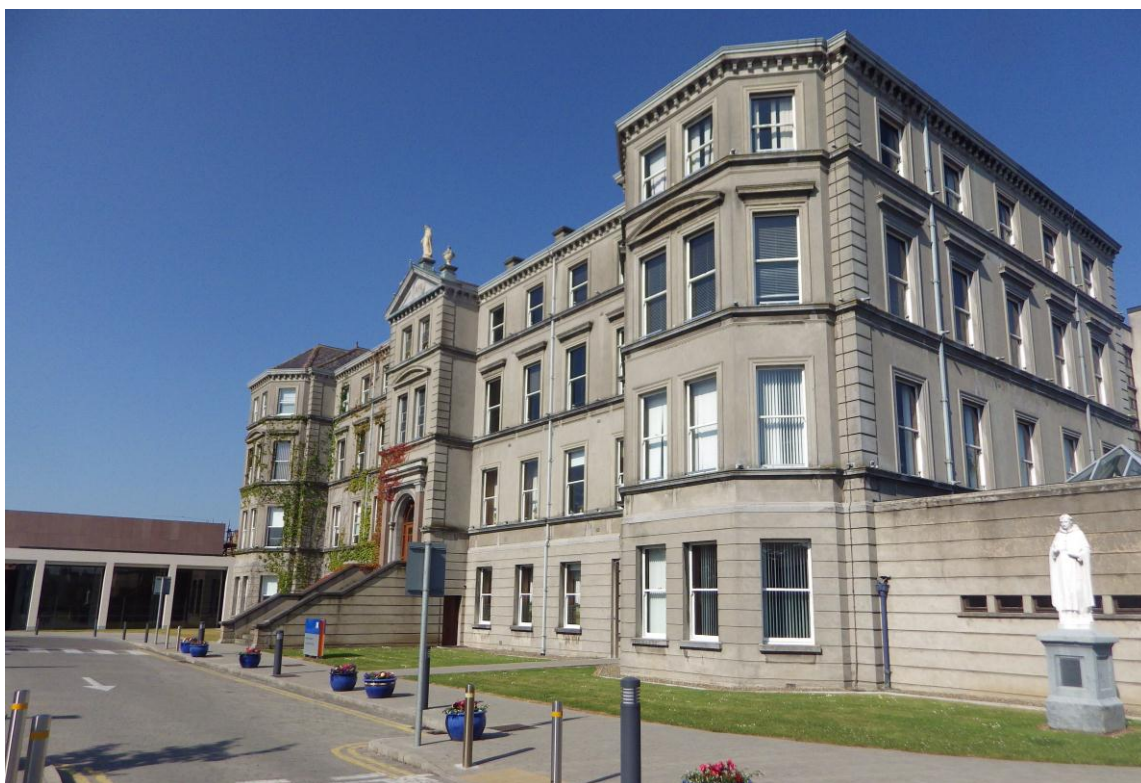
- Evidence of substantial progress towards refurbishment and extension of College Library

Goal 6 To renew our emphasis on continuous quality assurance and to work as a whole community to situate our work in strategic context, to value and celebrate our endeavours, to actively seek the views of all those whose needs we serve, and to be imaginative in realising the potential for improvement.

Targets

- Quality Review Schedule approved
- Number of Quality Reviews undertaken across academic and professional services departments
- Commencement of IUQA institutional review process





Mary Immaculate College HEA Performance Compact 2012 – 2016

The Mary Immaculate College HEA Performance Compact 2012 – 2016 refers to key teaching and learning strategic collaborations, especially with the University of Limerick. Core to the compact is the commitment to shared and coordinated academic planning within the Shannon Consortium. Excellent teaching and learning and quality of the student experience is clearly articulated within the Compact. Institutional objectives relevant to Teaching and Learning are included. Note that fixed references from the original document are retained.

Shared, coordinated academic planning

The College has agreed with the University of Limerick that in response to the Minister's request for re-configuration of Liberal Arts provision in Limerick, a jointly-delivered Liberal Arts programme, with common entry for students, should be provided by both institutions. This builds on significant foundations already laid by both institutions in shared delivery of modules to students on both campuses (using blended learning for synchronous and asynchronous teaching).

MIC and UL have also agreed to jointly develop a National Institute for Studies in Education (NISE), on foot of the Report of the International Review Panel on the Structure of Initial Teacher Education Provision in Ireland (2012). This vehicle will seek to share and disseminate best practice in teaching and learning, as well as policy on teacher education, and will act as a regional hub for other stakeholders with a core interest in teacher education, and will systematise a coordinated approach to school placement for student teachers. It will also provide a framework for joint academic planning and development of modules designed to be offered in common to students at MIC and UL, offering a coordinated approach for the provision of so-called 'foundation' modules that extend across the primary and post-primary continuum (see Objective 1.2, below). MIC and UL have committed to the development of strong structures for governance, leadership and management of this vehicle and agree that the governance structure of the Institute will report directly to the Governing Bodies of both parent institutions.

Regionally coordinated approach to transfer and progression pathways

MIC, UL and LIT have agreed that a federated Limerick Graduate School should be created in order to facilitate closer integration, resource-sharing, and jointly-delivered services for students of each institution's individual Graduate Schools. This will have the effect of increasing the shared critical mass for attraction of high calibre graduate students to the region, research innovation, and funding. The Limerick Graduate School will also enable students and supervisors to enjoy higher levels of synergy and cross-fertilisation of ideas and will provide a vehicle for vertical progression of students between institutions.

Building on the very robust foundations created by the Shannon Consortium partners during SIF 1-2, the Mid West Cluster will integrate access and retention mechanisms through a shared platform. This will enable joint planning, target-setting and outreach, as well as coordinated reporting.

Shared services and facilities, including harmonisation of systems and processes

The Shannon Consortium has been recognised as an exemplar of shared services and system harmonisation. A good example of this is the Shannon Consortium Procurement Network which created an integrated procurement process that has yielded significant savings to the Exchequer. MIC and UL also share a common student registration system and part of the work of the Mid West Cluster will be to enhance institutional ICTs and MIS as shared systems. This will be crucial in the access context where common approaches to the creation of higher education pathways and reciprocity of recognition of pre-university programmes are targets. Perhaps the most ambitious and significant goal in the area of shared service development and delivery lies in the realm of blended learning as an added value to teaching and learning and pedagogy. This will be designed to complement existing synergies in teaching and learning and the building of a community of practice within the Regional Learning Network established under the Shannon Consortium. The Mid West Cluster partners have a strong track record of cooperation in the area and count amongst their goals the creation of a common e-learning platform, inclusive of facilities, hardware, software and training supports. The partners will seek external funding for this platform through joint applications.

1.7	Institution objective	To foster collegiality and collaboration amongst faculty and regional institutional partners towards reflective practice and scholarly dialogue on teaching and learning [Pillar 2 (5) / Goal 4]
	Performance indicator	Continued participation in Shannon Consortium Regional Teaching & Learning Awards initiative as well as participation in national award programmes from the National Forum for the Enhancement of Teaching and Learning [Pillar 2 (5) / Goal 4 / Target 1]
		Participation in and organisation of regional Teaching & Learning workshops and symposia [Pillar 2 (5) / Goal 4 / Target 2]
		Significant contribution to, and participation in the National Forum for the Enhancement of Teaching and Learning [Pillar 2 (5) / Goal 4 / Target 3]

Baseline	3 Regional Teaching & Learning Awards won by MIC Academic staff since 2007
	25% of MIC Academic staff participating in Shannon Consortium integrated teaching & learning events (e.g. <i>Conversations in the Consortium</i> reflective practice seminars)
Interim target, end 2014	Joint Task Force (MIC-UL-LIT) recommendations towards a Mid West Cluster 'Regional Learner Network' incorporating integrated planning, delivery of teaching and learning interventions, and continuation of Regional Teaching & Learning Award
	5% increase in initiatives devised and contributed by MIC to Mid West Cluster teaching and learning events programme
	5% increase in participation by MIC staff in Mid West Cluster teaching and learning training events / workshops
Interim target, end 2015	Mid West Regional Learner Network operational
	5% increase in initiatives devised and contributed by MIC to Mid West Cluster teaching and learning events programme
	10% increase in participation by MIC staff in Mid West Cluster teaching and learning training events / workshop
Final target, end 2016	Cumulative 15% increase in initiatives devised and contributed by MIC to Mid West Cluster teaching and learning events programme
	20% increase in participation by MIC staff in Mid West Cluster teaching and learning training events / workshop

3.1 Institution objective	To implement a process of programme re-conceptualisation with emphasis on (a) creation of collaborative intra-faculty and inter-faculty offerings and (b) learning outcomes that are focused on the fostering of critical and creative thinking and outstanding communication skills, that are informed by inclusive discourse on changing professional needs, that promote lifelong learning and that complement the institutional ethos and values of the College [Pillar 2 / Goal 2]
Performance indicator	Unique, innovative and outstanding 4-Year Bachelor of Education programme finalised, approved, resourced ¹ and launched by September 2012 [Pillar 2 / Goal 2 / Target 1]
Baseline	In-depth re-conceptualisation exercise completed, resulting in new programme vision for Bachelor of Education degree, module structure and learning outcomes based on Bologna Framework, Teaching Council guidelines, DES policy on literacy and numeracy in ITE, and international best practice rooted in peer-recognised research Preparation for re-conceptualisation of Bachelor of Education in Education & Psychology
Interim target, end 2014	Bachelor of Education degree programmes approved by Teaching Council, launched, and operational Four-Year BEd: 812 FTEs (406 per annum) Four-Year BEd Education & Psychology: 62 FTEs (31 per annum)
Interim target, end 2015	Four-Year BEd: 1,218 FTEs (intake TBC by DES) Four-Year BEd Education & Psychology: 93 FTEs
Final target, end 2016	Four-Year BEd: 1,624 FTEs (intake TBC by DES) Four-Year BEd Education & Psychology: 125 FTEs

¹ Adequate resources have not been allocated for this development to date

3.2	Institution objective	To renew our emphasis on continuous quality assurance and to work as a whole community to situate our work in strategic context, to value and celebrate our endeavours, to actively seek the views of all those whose needs we serve, and to be imaginative in realising the potential for improvement [<i>Pillar 6 / Goal 6</i>]
Performance indicator		<p>Quality Review Schedule established [<i>Pillar 6 / Goal 6 / Target 1</i>]</p> <p>Number of Quality Reviews undertaken across academic and professional services departments [<i>Pillar 6 / Goal 6 / Target 2</i>]</p> <p>Commencement of IUQB (i.e QQI) institutional review process [<i>Pillar 6 / Goal 6 / Target 3</i>]</p>
Baseline		<p>5 formal Quality Reviews completed</p> <p>Quality Review Schedule 2012-2017 approved, following consultation with academic and professional services departments</p> <p>First formal Student Exit Survey completed (2011 graduating cohort)</p>
Interim target, end 2014		<p>7 further Quality Reviews completed / commenced</p> <p>3 further Student Exit Surveys completed</p> <p>4 First Year cohort Learning Experience surveys completed (including surveys and focus groups designed to capture student experience of re-conceptualised Level 8 & 9 programmes)</p>
Interim target, end 2015		<p>4 new Quality Reviews completed / commenced</p> <p>4 further Learning Experience surveys completed</p>

Final target, end 2016	3 new Quality Reviews completed / commenced
	4 further Learning Experience surveys completed
	Participation in National Student Survey
	Demonstrable evidence of academic and professional support service delivery modified in response to key Quality Review / Exit Survey findings 2012-2016
	Preparation for commencement of final 3 Quality Reviews scheduled 2012-2017
	Preparation for institution-wide Quality Review by QQI

3.3	Institution objective	To ensure the prominence of a student-centred culture throughout support services that are cohesive and multi-faceted [<i>Pillar 3 / Goal 1</i>]
	Performance indicator	Consultative review of student support services focusing on maintaining the fullest provision for the whole-student approach, effectiveness of service integration and linkage with academic provision, and efficient coordination within management infrastructure [<i>Pillar 3 / Goal 1 / Target 1</i>]
		Recommendations implemented, new structures in place [<i>Pillar 3 / Goal 1 / Target 1</i>]
	Baseline	Exceptional commitment of all staff to a student-centred teaching and learning culture and the whole-student ethos of the College
		Establishment of informal student support services network for integrated case management / referral
		Sub-optimal coordination and integration of distributed service delivery
		Excellent strategic and operational partnership with MISU (MIC Students' Union)

Interim target, end 2014	Consultative review of students supports and service infrastructure completed with recommendations arising
	Scheduled Quality Review of student support services completed with recommendations arising
	Director-level appointment incorporating responsibility, <i>inter alia</i> , for coordinating services aimed at access, retention and progression (see x, above)
Interim target, end 2015	Recommendations from both reviews (2014) implemented, new structures in place
Final target, end 2016	Demonstrable enhancement of cohesion between support-services underpinning the student-centred culture at MIC

3.4	Institution objective	To enhance retention and progression rates [Pillar 2 (4) / Goal 2]
	Performance indicator	Effective monitoring and reporting system in place with secure and confidential data flows between relevant support units [Pillar 2 (4) / Goal 2 / Target 1]
		Stronger operational linkages between academic staff and professional staff for ensuring student retention and progression [Pillar 2 (4) / Goal 2 / Target 3]
		Enhanced system of financial support for students (including students in difficulty) with increase evidence of linkages fostered for contributions under Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) and more seamless coordination with external agencies providing grants and other aids [Pillar 2 (4) / Goal 2 / Target 5]
		Evidence of % increases in retention and progression above current baselines [Pillar 2 (4) / Goal 2 / Target 6]
	Baseline	Total student retention rate: 90%
		Total Facilitated External Transfer for non-completing First Year students: 56%

	Learner Support Unit 1:1 meetings providing academic advice and guidance: 891 per academic year
	Year Coordinators appointed for Bachelor of Education programme
	Establishment of informal student support services network for integrated case management / referral
Interim target, end 2014	Total student retention rate: 92%
	Adoption of policy and protocols for availability of programme exit awards
	Secure intranet-based MIS for tracking access / retention / referral / early warning
	Formalisation of student support services network for integrated case-management
	Learner Support Unit 1:1 meetings providing academic advice and guidance: 950 per academic year
Interim target, end 2015	Total student retention rate: 93%
	Total facilitated external transfer for non-completing First Year students: 60%
	Learner Support Unit 1:1 meetings providing academic advice and guidance: 975 per academic year
	Coordination of internal and cross-institutional retention and progression through integration with Mid West access platform and systematic partnership with wider community
Final target, end 2016	Total student retention rate: 93%
	Level 7 awards for students opting to exit 3- or 4-year programmes following completion of Year 2
	Total facilitated external transfer for non-completing First Year students: 70%
	Learner Support Unit 1:1 meetings providing academic advice and guidance: 1000 per academic year
	Quantum of financial support from CSR/non-mainstream donations for students at risk

3.5	Institution objective	To significantly enhance our library infrastructure to fully meet the diversity of needs amongst our learning community and of members of the wider community wishing to share our resources [<i>Pillar 6 / Goal 2</i>]
	Performance indicator	Evidence of substantial progress towards refurbishment and extension of College Library [<i>Pillar 6 / Goal 2 / Target 1</i>]
	Baseline	Long-standing deficits in space and quality of MIC Library Building
	Interim target, end 2014	Plans for new Library Building finalised, with key goal to provide access to learning resources designed to meet wider public needs and promote engagement by public in city-based campus Joint application to funding pools (e.g. JESSICA / EIB Funds) via Joint Local Authorities consortium of local stakeholders
	Interim target, end 2015	Finance package in place for commencement of planning and pre-construction processes
	Final target, end 2016	Planning and pre-construction process commenced
3.6	Institution objective	To significantly enhance student communications [<i>Pillar 3 / Goal 3</i>]
	Performance indicator	Academic feedback culture and mechanisms significantly enhanced Student perceptions of academic feedback systems continuously monitored Range of new student-centred information delivery protocols in place Student enrolment, registration and payments systems significantly enhanced Student communications fora established
	Baseline	Student representation (via MISU nominations) across all formal MIC committees and boards Exit Survey feedback (2011, 2012) revealing perceived need for improvements in student communications and academic feedback

	Insufficient options for online fee payment and absence of online enrolment system
	Online module registration available
	Text alert service available (critical incidents only)
	Ageing website and intranet facilities for students
Interim target, end 2014	New student-faculty fora introduced (4 meetings per annum)
	50% academic feedback via VLE (Moodle)
	Establish Corporate Communications Office incorporating responsibility for coordination of student communications
	Significant enhancement of student information pages on MIC website
	New student intranet portal introduced
	Text alert service devolved to faculties and core service units for targeted information dissemination
	100% of all student notifications delivered via combination of e-mail, Facebook, Twitter, and SMS (in addition to existing notification arrangements)
	Dedicated student information smartphone app (iOS and Android) introduced
Interim target, end 2015	Online student enrolment introduced
	Online fees payment mechanism introduced
Final target, end 2016	Conduct comprehensive valuation of students' current perceptions of communications effectiveness
	Address any new / remaining deficits in Strategic Plan 2017-21

3.7	Institution objective	To improve the quality of the MIC postgraduate student experience [<i>Pillar 2 / Goal 3 (2)</i>]
	Performance indicator	<p>Consultative review of postgraduate student experience at MIC [<i>Pillar 2 / Goal 3 (2) / Target 1</i>]</p> <p>Establishment of dedicated, fully equipped, resourced and clustered work-space for postgraduate students [<i>Pillar 2 / Goal 3 (2) / Target 2</i>]</p> <p>Improved communications, consultation mechanisms and information delivery for postgraduate students [<i>Pillar 2 / Goal 3 (2) / Target 3</i>]</p>
	Baseline	<p>Postgraduate student facilities distributed across campus; ageing work spaces</p> <p>Postgraduate Office and Research Office located and administered separately</p> <p>Approval for creation of MIC Graduate School</p>
	Interim target, end 2014	<p>New MIC Graduate School created and integrated with Research Office</p> <p>Acquisition of new building, with centralisation and fit-out of fully equipped, resourced and clustered work space for students in the Graduate School (adjoining Research Office and administrative facilities)</p> <p>Qualitative survey of exiting postgraduate students conducted</p> <p>Task Force to undertake consultative review of current and future postgraduate needs</p>
	Interim target, end 2015	<p>Cross-fertilisation of graduate scholarship and mentoring via federated Limerick Graduate School and Mid West Cluster Graduate Training Network</p>
	Final target, end 2016	<p>Fully equipped, resourced and clustered work space for visiting scholars within the Limerick Graduate School</p>
3.8	Institution objective	To support teaching and the scholarship of teaching [<i>Pillar 2 / Goal 1 (5)</i>]

Performance indicator		Significant enhancement of existing teaching and learning leadership, infrastructure and resourcing [<i>Pillar 2 / Goal 1 (5) / Target 1</i>]
Baseline		<p>Building blocks for a teaching and learning culture in place:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Teaching & Learning Co-ordinator - Teaching & Learning Steering Committee - MIC Centre for Teaching & Learning established - Shared services within the Shannon Consortium
Interim target, end 2014		<p>Establishment of Teaching & Learning Directorate</p> <p>Appointment of Director of Teaching & Learning</p> <p>Appointment of 2 Educational Technologists via contract for service</p> <p>Shared service framework within Mid West Cluster based on the Shannon Consortium model</p>
Interim target, end 2015		<p>Teaching & Learning Officer appointed</p> <p>Educational Technologist position mainstreamed</p>
Final target, end 2016		Teaching & Learning culture fully supported and driven by intra- and inter-institutional leadership, infrastructure and resourcing
<hr/>		
3.9	Institution objective	To advocate for, demonstrate and embed exemplary practices and innovation in teaching and learning [<i>Pillar 2 / Goal 2 (5)</i>]
	Performance indicator	<p>% increase in events and initiatives designed effectively highlight and showcase exemplars of excellence and innovation in teaching & learning [<i>Pillar 2 / Goal 2 (5) / Target 1</i>]</p> <p>% increase in staff participation [<i>Pillar 2 / Goal 2 (5) / Target 2</i>]</p>

Baseline	Monthly range of intra-institutional events (MIC Centre for Teaching & Learning) and inter-institutional (Shannon Consortium) – e.g. <i>Conversations in the Consortium</i> series of seminars for community of practice
	20% academic staff participation
Interim target, end 2014	20% increase in number of events and initiatives showcasing exemplars of excellence and innovation in teaching & learning
	100% increase in academic staff participation (over 2012)
Interim target, end 2015	30% increase in teaching and learning events and initiatives (over 2012)
	75% increase in academic staff participation (over 2014)
Final target, end 2016	10 large group events per semester including Special Interest Groups, seminars, workshops, presentations to Faculty Boards.
	80% academic staff participation (400% increase over 2012)

3.10	Institution objective	To provide teaching enhancement interventions which are supportive, voluntary and confidential [Pillar 2 / Goal 3 (5)]
	Performance indicator	Number of Peer Observations of Teaching (POTs) undertaken [Pillar 2 Goal 3 (5) / Target 1] % increase in rate of participation in SETs [Pillar 2 Goal 3 (5) Target 3]
	Baseline	10 POT pairings, per annum SET participation rate: 31%
	Interim target, end 2014	15 POT pairings, per annum SET participation rate: 31%
	Interim target, end 2015	20 POT pairings, per annum SET participation rate: 31%
	Final target, end 2016	25 POT pairings, per annum SET participation rate: 31%

3.11	Institution objective	To foster collegiality and collaboration amongst faculty and regional institutional partners towards reflective practice and scholarly dialogue on teaching and learning [<i>Pillar 2 / Goal 4 (5)</i>]
Performance indicator		Continued participation in Shannon Consortium Regional Teaching & Learning Awards initiative as well as participation in national award programmes from the National Forum for the Enhancement of Teaching & Learning [<i>Pillar 2 Goal 4 (5) / Target 1</i>]
		Participation in and organisation of regional Teaching & Learning workshops and symposia [<i>Pillar 2 Goal 3 (5) / Target 2</i>]
		Significant contribution to, participation in and inclusion with the National Forum [<i>Pillar 2 Goal 3 (5) / Target 3</i>]
Baseline		2 short-listed candidates for Shannon Consortium Regional Excellence in Teaching & Learning Award
		2 short-listed candidates for NAIRTL Teaching & Learning Awards
		3 regional Teaching & Learning workshops and symposia per academic year
		25% baseline participation in Regional T & L events
Interim target, end 2014		2 short-listed candidates for Mid West Cluster Regional Excellence in Teaching & Learning Awards
		5% increase in regional Teaching and Learning events offered via MIC
		5% increase in MIC academic staff participation rate in regional Teaching and Learning events
		2 MIC representatives to National Forum
Interim target, end 2015		2 short-listed candidates for Mid West Cluster Regional Excellence in Teaching & Learning Awards

	5% increase in regional Teaching and Learning events offered via MIC
	10% increase in MIC academic staff participation rate in regional Teaching and Learning events
	2 MIC representatives to National Forum (once established)
Final target, end 2016	2 short-listed candidates for Mid West Cluster Regional Excellence in Teaching & Learning Awards and engage in National Forum competitions if/when announced
	15% increase in regional Teaching and Learning events offered via MIC
	15% increase in MIC academic staff participation rate in regional Teaching and Learning events
	2 MIC representatives to National Forum, plus 2 representatives contributing to Forum sub-committees as members (if applicable).

3.12	Institution objective	To significantly advance and embed incorporation of blended learning strategies and new technologies in the teaching and learning environment and programme design [Pillar 2 / Goal 5 (5)]
	Performance indicator	Number of programmes modified / newly designed to incorporate blended learning and new technologies [Pillar 2 / Goal 5 (5)]
		Number of training interventions for design, roll-out and use of blended learning strategies and new technologies for teaching and learning [Pillar 2 / Goal 5 (5)]
		Evaluation of integration and effectiveness of blended learning strategies and new technologies for teaching and learning [Pillar 2 / Goal 5 (5)]
	Baseline	Commitment to blended learning delivery / use of learning technologies in Strategic Plan with several modules designed and approved with incorporation of same

	Limited usage of Blackboard, and subsequently, Moodle, as preferred institutional VLE
	No course sharing across Shannon Consortium via blended learning technologies
	Limited training for VLE-usage
	Training in usage of IWBs
	90% usage of out-dated Local Area Network server to host course / module information
	> 10% of modules delivered using blended learning / learning technologies
	> 10% multimedia content in online course materials
Interim target, end 2014	Establishment of Blended Learning Unit, nested within Centre for Teaching & Learning
	Appointment of 2 Educational Technologists for pedagogical support and training
	60% of faculty actively using VLE
	45% of modules hosted on VLE (Level 6-10)
	80 hours training in usage of learning technologies, per annum
	15-20 MIC modules delivered across Mid West Cluster via blended learning
	Interim evaluation of integration and effectiveness of blended learning strategies
Interim target, end 2015	70% of faculty actively using VLE
	50% of modules hosted on VLE (Level 3, 6-10)
	100 hours training in usage of learning technologies, per annum
	20% increase in MIC modules delivered across Mid West cluster via blended learning
Final target, end 2016	80% of faculty actively using VLE
	65% of modules hosted on VLE (Level 3, 6-10)
	150 hours training in usage of learning technologies, per annum
	20% increase in MIC modules delivered across Mid West cluster via blended learning

Summative evaluation integration and
effectiveness of blended learning strategies
2012-2016
