

# **Minutes of the High Level Group Meeting on International Education**

**Academy Plaza Hotel, 2.30pm**

**Wednesday 21<sup>st</sup> March, 2018**

*Refer to Annex 1 for list of Attendees.*

*Refer to Annex 2 for list of Subgroups*

## **1. Introductions**

The Chairperson welcomed the members of the group and conveyed Alan Wall's apologies. Ciara Cotter, SFI introduced Lisa Ardill as a new member to the group who will be also representing SFI.

## **2. Minutes of Last Meeting for approval**

The Chairperson proposed to give the members a week to examine the minutes. Members to get back to DES with any changes by cob 30<sup>th</sup> March, otherwise they will be taken as read.

## **3. Discussion on issues arising from the implementation of Irish Educated, Globally Connected; An International Education Strategy for Ireland. (2016-2020).**

- *Markets – progress, including high potential markets.*

EI provided an update on the markets.

In Q4 of 2017 a full time Education EI pathfinder was placed in Singapore. To be involved in 15 Markets this year including developing markets South East Asia, Nigeria, Canada, and Middle East which are all expanding rapidly.

Nigeria and Indonesia – Education pathfinder to be placed. If market warrants further investment in Vietnam and Korea a pathfinder will be considered. Brazil currently has a pathfinder but intention is to expand resource in South America.

An Ireland-China education forum promoting the exchanges and cooperation between Chinese and Irish higher education institutions took place yesterday in Clontarf Castle,

The Asia Pacific Conference will take place in the Aviva, Dublin from 24 – 25 April.

- *Ministerial Education Missions 2018*

DES provided an update on the Ministerial Education Missions and Incoming delegation.

To date Four Ministerial Missions took place:

February - India, Minister Mary Mitchell O'Connor and Vincent Landers  
March SPD - UAE and OMAN, Minister Mitchell O'Connor and Alan O'Callaghan  
- Germany, Minister Bruton and Vincent Landers –

Upcoming:

April – Brazil likely to be Minister Mitchell O'Connor  
May – NAFSA, Secretary General  
- Canada, Toronto, examining the ELT Sector and expertise sharing with key Government States.

Proposed:

September – Malaysia, Minister Bruton  
October - China, Minister Mitchell O'Connor  
November – Japan  
Indonesia – To be confirmed

IUA suggested it would be useful for them and EI to tie into the Malaysian trip. SFI suggested having a joined up approach with the Japanese Embassy, and informed the group that SFI will be attending a conference in Japan in November. DES stated they will start the process and if TM visit goes ahead Minister Halligan may go on this visit if its research focused.

*Action Point:*

THEA and IUA requested feedback from bilateral missions and Joint Working Groups on the relevant markets, perhaps at subgroup meetings.

DFAT updated the group on the 2018 St Patrick's Day Ministerial programmes. A large number of Ministerial programmes included engagements specifically focused on the promotion of Ireland as a destination for International Education.

**Incoming Visits:**

To Date

March – The Thailand Deputy Prime Minister met with Minister Bruton

Proposed

May – Oman, Minister of Higher Education to meet with Minister Mitchell O'Connor  
June - UAE, Minister for Higher Education to meet with Minister Mitchell O'Connor

- ***Strategic Actions***

**SG 1 – A Supportive National Framework – DES**

DES gave a brief overview of Strategic Priority 1- five strategic actions aimed at Government Departments and Agencies and thanked all members for their input.

DES gave an update on the International Education Mark (IEM) and informed the members that the legislation remains on schedule for the introduction of the Mark in 2018. Government approval has been received for the Heads of Bill and the proposed Bill has been exempted from pre-legislative scrutiny by the Oireachtas Joint Committee on Education and Skills. As the drafting and legislative processes advances, QQI and DES will continue to develop the practical measures for the roll out and implementation of the IEM. The intention is to have the IEM in place for 2019.

The HEA mentioned Brexit in terms of an incentive to bring in scholars and are working with DES on a draft to initiate the process.

SFI informed the group that on the 10<sup>th</sup> May they along with the HEA will be attending the London Research Conference on Industry and Academics, driven by the British Irish Chamber of Commerce. SFI, the IRC and the British Irish Chamber of Commerce to take it beyond Brexit.

Cost Benefit Analysis – plan to proceed with a tender for contract by end of 2018.

## ***SG 2: Internationally oriented, globally competitive institutions – Gemma Irvine, HEA***

### Student numbers

It was noted that the work is ongoing and both HEA and THEA are making good progress.

MEI circulated a copy of their student numbers and informed the group they are on target with numbers up 8% in 2017. It was noted that the overall target for 2020 is 132,000 with Brazil a very strong market. MEI highlighted that Colombia is a huge market for them. In relation to pathways to higher education from ELT, further progress needs to be made.

MEI informed the group that while they have numbers for public institutes they do not have them for private institutions and need to accomplish this.

MEI commended DES on publishing the Foreign Language Strategy.

DES discussed the Erasmus in regard to the possibility of the need to tweak the English Language Strategy.

DFAT informed the group that they intend to open Embassies in Colombia, Chile Amman Jordon, Wellington NZ, Vancouver Canada, and Mumbai India towards the end of 2018.

EI stated they are exploring South Africa. IUA highlighted that South East Asia is a priority as very few are coming to Ireland and suggested looking to the subgroups to unlock these markets. IUA again highlighted the need for quicker turnaround of Visas.

The HEA stated that the data is currently being worked on and figures for Nigeria, USA and China are available.

DES updated the group on the SPD visit to Germany with Minister Bruton. It was noted that Irish students studying German are learning through English and not through the medium of German, whereas German students are learning English in an immersion based model, with all classes held in English only.

*Action Point*

- DFAT to inform MEI when Irish Embassy opens in Colombia.

***SG 3: Subgroup 3: Sustainable growth in the high-quality English Language Sector – Lorcan O'Connor Lloyd, MEI***

IE Brand – DES mentioned that The Education in Ireland brand will be promoting the Non-EU Adult ELT sector and are working on the International market preparations, for when the IEM is in place.

***SG 4: Subgroup 4: Succeeding Abroad - Vincent Landers, DES***

Enhancing Alumni – DES meeting with DFAT on 22<sup>nd</sup> March to discuss how we can maximise the opportunity with regard to the International Strategy, the Trade Strategy and the Diaspora.

DFAT highlighted they have funding for Irish abroad.

EI informed the group of their ongoing work around the HEIs.

#### ***4. Meetings of Subgroups***

For various reasons as subgroup 2 meeting was re- scheduled from 27<sup>th</sup> March to 11<sup>th</sup> April and SG3 and SG4 were scheduled on the same day, all agreed to bring SG3 meeting forward to Tuesday 27<sup>th</sup> March at 10am in DES offices.

*Action Point*

Mary Whelan, DES to notify members of SG3 of change of date.

#### **5. AOB**

HEA informed the group of the upcoming Student Ambassador Programme/Government of Ireland Scholarship awards in Farmleigh on 20<sup>th</sup> April. The closing date for receipt of applications for the Government of Ireland Scholarships is Friday 23 March 2018 for academic year 2018-2019. HEA stated they are well on target.

The HEA also informed the group that the Erasmus+ International numbers are up, and expect to award 4,000 students.

EI highlighted to the group the issue around the processing of visas and acknowledged the big contribution by the Dept. of Justice and INIS to improved visa processing. Dept. of Justice informed the group that the visa applications need to be complete and on time in order for them to be processed without delay.



**ANNEX 1:**  
**ATTENDANCE LIST**

**Representing**

**Name**

***Departments and agencies***

Department of Education and Skills

Vincent Landers (Chair)  
Alan O'Callaghan  
Joe Gleeson  
Anne Holland  
Mary Whelan

Department of Foreign Affairs & Trade

Alma Ní Choighligh

Department of Justice and Equality

Michael Walsh  
Gerry O'Regan

Enterprise Ireland

Giles O'Neill

Higher Education Authority

Gerry O'Sullivan

Quality and Qualifications Ireland

Carmel Kelly

***Representative groups/institutions***

Technological Higher Education Association

Miriam Ryan

Irish Council for International Students

Sheila Power

Irish Universities Association

Sinéad Lucey

Marketing English in Ireland

David O'Grady  
Padraig Hourigan

Science Foundation Ireland

Ciara Cotter  
Lisa Ardill

Assoc. of Study Abroad Providers In Ireland  
(ASAPI)

Janice Gaffey

*Apologies`*

Department of Education and Skills	Alan Wall
Department of Justice and Equality	Lorna Conway
Dept. of Transport, Tourism and Sport	Maria Melia
Higher Education Authority	Gemma Irvine
Quality Qualifications Ireland	Bryan Maguire Sue Hackett
Union of Students in Ireland (USI)	Sóna Cahill
Higher Education Consultants Assoc	Prof Diarmuid Hegarty
Conference of Heads of Irish Colleges of Education (C.H.o.I.C.E.)	Holly Cowman
Technological Higher Education Association	Jim Murray
Irish Universities Association	Lewis Purser
Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland	Philip Curtis
Assoc. of Study Abroad Providers in Ireland (ASAPI)	Rebecca Woolf

## ANNEX 2

### SUBGROUP LIST

#### **SUBGROUP 1: A supportive national framework**

MEMBERSHIP:

Department of Education & Skills  
Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade  
Department of Justice & Equality  
Department of Business, Enterprise & Innovation  
Higher Education Authority  
Quality and Qualifications Ireland  
Irish Universities Association  
Technological Higher Education Association  
Science Foundation Ireland  
Irish Council for International Students  
Union of Students in Ireland

#### **SUBGROUP 2: Internationally oriented, globally competitive institutions**

MEMBERSHIP:

Department of Education & Skills  
Department of Business, Enterprise & Innovation  
Higher Education Authority  
Irish Universities Association  
Technological Higher Education Association  
Higher Education Colleges Association  
Union of Students in Ireland

#### **SUBGROUP 3: Sustainable growth in the high-quality English language training (ELT) sector**

MEMBERSHIP:

Department of Education & Skills  
Department of Justice  
Department of Transport, Tourism and Sport  
Technological Higher Education Association  
Enterprise Ireland  
Marketing English in Ireland  
Sector Reps



<b>SUBGROUP 4: Succeeding Abroad</b>
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MEMBERSHIP:
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Department of Education & Skills
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Department of Foreign Affairs & Trade
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Department of Justice
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Enterprise Ireland
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Irish Universities Association
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Technological Higher Education Association
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Higher Education Colleges Association
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Conference of Heads of Irish Colleges of Education
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