Annual Report 2015/2016

Athlone Institute of Technology
Mission and Values of Athlone Institute of Technology

Our Mission
We are proud of our distinct mission and role in the provision of higher education for the midlands region and beyond. The mission statement encapsulates and reflects the Institute’s core values.

“To provide student-centered, career-focused education, training and applied research programmes for our diverse cohort of learners within a professional and supportive environment. We are fully committed to intensive engagement with regional business, enterprise and social communities while maintaining our global orientation.”

Our Commitments
AIT is committed to its role within the midlands region and nationally. We pursue our mission across our full range of activities and are focused on fulfilling our commitments, which encapsulate the Institute’s priorities, ethos and values:

• AIT is a student-centred institution
• AIT delivers career-focused education and research
• AIT provides inclusive access to higher education
• AIT pays a regional, national and international role

Our Vision
AIT have an ambitious and challenging vision for the strategic development of our Institute, which is that:

“AIT will be a technological university distinguished by outstanding learner experience, international focus, distinctive regional contribution and high quality impact of its staff, teaching, applied research and innovation.”

Achieving our Goals
Our strategic goals align with broader national goals including those outlined in the National Strategy for Higher Education to 2030.
This Report has been compiled and edited by the President's Office and the Marketing and Communications Office, Athlone Institute of Technology.
Chairman’s Statement

Frank Ryan
Chairman
Athlone Institute of Technology
As Chairman of the Governing Body of Athlone Institute of Technology, it gives me great pleasure to present our Annual Report for the academic year 2015/16.

Our institute plays a pivotal role in the continued growth and development of the Midlands and surrounding region. Our commitment to helping the region achieve its strategic goals is demonstrable by our endeavours this past year.

We recently appointed a Midlands Regional Skills Forum Manager to work in partnership with industry representative groups, including Enterprise Ireland, IDA Ireland and Local Enterprise Offices. This appointment will provide a cohesive structure for our institute and local industry to work together to ensure that the current and future skill needs of employers within the region are met.

This role, which is an initiative under the Government Action Plan for Jobs, will be integral to ensuring that our institute remains agile and adaptable and, ultimately, responsive to the ever evolving needs of industry. We are committed to ensuring the continued growth of our region through a pipeline of suitably qualified, work-ready graduates.

As key internal stakeholders, our staff are also instrumental in cultivating and nurturing our symbiotic relationships within the region. To that effect, one of our esteemed Nursing and Health Science lecturers, Dr Mary McDonnell Naughton, engaged in community engagement initiatives with Roscommon County Council and Roscommon Leader Partnership on both an Age Friendly Initiative and a Social Inclusion and Community Activation Programme in the Monksland area. Monksland is one of the fastest growing new urban areas in the country with little or no community infrastructure. This collaboration will facilitate a project to be undertaken, which will explore societal challenges in the Monksland area through research. The primary rationale and basis for this study is to explore the needs of the local residents and community in Monksland, and by so doing to use the information gleaned as an evidence base to develop a Strategic Action Plan of targeted interventions for the community. The research project, firmly grounded in Community Development Principles will focus on the following concepts: Meeting expectations of a community; Building infrastructure; The Family; Culture; Economic needs; Leadership for societal innovation. The subsequent collated data will be analysed and the results compiled for a report in December 2018, which will inform ongoing public policy, build strategic vision on how to maximize the potential of the area and inform the Strategic Plan for the Monksland area.

This year, our institute made significant strides in its ambition of achieving Technological University status. We were recently granted delegated authority by Quality and Qualifications Ireland (QQI) to award PhDs in the areas of Software Engineering and Network Communications. Here to fore, the Institute has been granted delegated authority to award PhDs in the areas of Polymer Engineering, Microbiology and Toxicology. This will further enhance our strategic focus on our core research areas and is a reflection of our institute’s commitment to academic excellence and growing its burgeoning postgraduate research capacity.

Finally, at the core of our institute is our community of staff and students, who collectively continue to drive our institute forward and contribute to our outstanding achievements. I would like to take this opportunity to commend all staff and students for their outstanding dedication to the institute.

Frank Ryan
Chairman, Governing Body
President’s Introduction

Professor Ciarán Ó Catháin
President
Athlone Institute of Technology
At Athlone Institute of Technology, we are committed to delivering an exceptional third level experience, both in terms of academic excellence and student satisfaction. We are in a state of constant evolution; growing our physical environment, programme offering and burgeoning research output, enabling us to attract top talent to the Midlands.

As the sole HEI servicing the region, our institute plays a fundamental role in ensuring its continued growth and development. The symbiotic relationship cultivated between our institute and industry within the region must be continually fostered and nurtured to ensure continued flow of students and graduates into the vibrant and upwardly mobile region.

At our institute, the student voice forms a critical component of our quality assurance process, which is why, year-on-year we encourage our key stakeholders - our students - to participate in the Irish Survey of Student (ISSE) Engagement. It gives me great pleasure to say that our institute continues to enjoy the highest response rate of any HEI nationally (54% versus 22%). In addition, 87% of our student body rates their overall academic experience as being ‘good’ or ‘excellent’ which is a testament to our wonderful community of academics and ancillary staff.

Internationalisation is at the heart of our institute, and has grown from strength to strength this year. Currently, our international students account for 12% of our overall full-time student cohort. We have been building successful partnerships in China since 2001 in computer and software engineering, mechanical engineering, design, pharmaceutical science, business and accounting, and have recently expanded our reach with two key institutes: Beijing University of Technology and Jianghan University. Both of these educational institutions will be instrumental in encouraging the unilateral flow of students and staff to and outwardly from our institute. As an aside, I was greatly honoured this year also, to have received an honorary doctorate in Management from MSU, Management and Science University in Kuala Lumpur in January.

The research output of our institute continues to strengthen nationally and globally each year and this year was no exception. Our Technology Transfer Strengthening Initiative 2 Consortium (TTSI2), in collaboration with Maynooth University, Waterford and Carlow IT, enabled us to provide a first class service to companies seeking expertise, knowledge and research which impacted not only our region but contributed to the national economy as a whole.

In terms of our three research centres – Materials Research Institute (MRI), Software Research Institute (SRI) and Bioscience Research Institute (BRI), Luke Geever, a Principal Investigator at the MRI and the institute’s first Fulbright Scholar, completed his tenure at the Harvard Medical School, Boston. Elsewhere, I am delighted to say a team of SRI researchers led by Dr Brian Lee was successful in securing H2020 funding to investigate cybersecurity. The BRI also enjoyed a year of considerable success, formally joining an EU Technology Platform (FABRE) to focus future European (H2020 and beyond) funding calls in the Agri-food sector on topics of particular relevance to national and regional needs.

This year, we are also extremely privileged to have conferred a Distinguished Fellowship Award on Dr Mary Guinan, a world virology expert and former Chief Scientific Advisor at the Centre for Disease Control in Atlanta, Georgia. Dr Guinan is a true inspiration to us all and we are proud to name her a prestigious fellow.

Finally, I would like to pay tribute to each member of our community; our staff, students, alumni and industry partners. Each of you have contributed significantly to the development of our institute over the past year and are instrumental in ensuring its continued success.

Professor Ciarán Ó Catháin
President
Governance

Governing Body Members

Ex-Officio Members as per Section 4 of the 1992 Act from 1 April 2015
- Mr. Frank Ryan [Chairperson Section 2(a)]
- Professor Ciarán Ó Catháin [President, Section 2(b)]

Governing Body Members as per Section 4 of the 1994 Act from 1 April 2015 Under Section 4(1)(a) and (b)
- Mr. Pat Gilmore
- Cllr. Kathleen Shanagher
- Cllr. Tom Farrell
- Ms. Laura Leonard
- Mr. Denis Magner
- Cllr. Pat O Toole

Under Section 4(1)(c)
- Mr. John O Connor
- Ms. Brigid Delamere

Under Section 4(1)(d)
- Mr. James Keane

Under Section 4(1)(e)
- Mr. Kevin Ronan
- Ms. Donna Mulkerrins

Under Section 4(1)(f)
- Ms. Geraldine Talty

Under Section 4(1)(g)
- Mr. Paul Madden
- Ms. Colette Ryan
- Mr. Liam Rattigan
- Ms. Natasha Kinsella
- Mr. Kieran Mulvey

Secretary to the Governing Body
Mr. Bill Delaney
GOVERNING BODY MEETINGS
During the period from 1st September 2015 to 31st August 2016 the Governing Body met on seven separate occasions on the following dates:

16th September 2015  16th March 2016
20th October 2015    4th May 2016
9th December 2015    22nd June 2016
10th February 2016

MANAGEMENT AND SENIOR STAFF
The Institute has three Faculties: Business and Hospitality, Engineering and Informatics and Science and Health, which in turn are further divided into Departments to provide courses/programmes of study to students. Each Faculty has a Dean of Faculty and relevant Heads of Department.

President
Vice President for Academic Affairs and Registrar
Vice President for Financial and Corporate Affairs
Vice President for Strategic Planning and Institutional Performance

Professor Ciarán Ó Catháin
Dr. Joseph Ryan
Mr. Bill Delaney
Mr. John McKenna

Dean of Faculty of Business & Hospitality
Head of Department Professional Accountancy, Financial Services and Business Computing
Head of Department of Business and Management Studies
Head of Department of Hospitality, Tourism and Leisure Studies

Mr. Eoin Langan
Mr. Brendan Doyle (Acting)
Mr. Owen Ross
Dr. Anthony Johnson

Dean of Faculty of Engineering & Informatics
Head of Department of Electronics & Informatics
Head of Department of Polymer, Mechanical, Civil Engineering and Trades

Dr. Austin Hanley
Mr. Marcus Rahilly
Mr. Joe Lawless

Dean of Faculty of Science and Health
Head of Department of Life and Physical Sciences
Head of Department of Nursing and Health Sciences

Dr. Don Faller
Dr. Carol O Donnell (Acting)
Dr. Pearse Murphy

Head of Department of Humanities
Director of Research
Marketing and Communications Manager
Head of Department of Lifelong Learning
Health and Safety Officer
Academic Affairs and Student Administration Manager
Finance Manager
Human Resources Manager
Librarian
Information Technology Manager
Estates Manager
External Services Manager
Industry Programmes/Technology Transfer Manager
Director of International Relations
Student Services Manager

Mr. Oliver Hegarty (Acting)
Mr. Paul Killeen
Mr. Brian Lynch
Dr. Michael Tobin
Mr. Fergal Sweeney
Ms. Dymphna Fitzgerald (Acting)
Ms. Betty Buckley
Mr. Liam Brennan
Ms. Josephine Corkery
Mr. Rossa Coleman
Mr. Cormac Cloonan
Ms. Lorna Walsh
Ms Breda Lynch
Ms. Mary Simpson
Ms. Sarah La Cumbre
Goverance

ACADEMIC COUNCIL

The Academic Council is the Statutory Body appointed by the Governing Body to assist in planning, co-ordinating, developing and overseeing the academic/educational activities of the Institute. The Academic Council, and its sub-committees, protect, maintain and develop academic standards throughout the Institute, and advise Governing Body on all relevant matters relating to academic standards.

ACADEMIC COUNCIL MEMBERSHIP

Professor Ciarán Ó Catháin (Chair)
Dr. Joseph Ryan
Dr. Austin Hanley
Mr. Eoin Langan
Dr. Don Faller
Mr. Paul Killeen (until March 2016)
Ms. Jo Corkery
Ms. Cora Mc Cormack
Ms. Sarah La Cumbre
Mr. Brendan Doyle
Mr. Marcus Rahilly
Mr. Anthony Johnson
Dr. Michael Tobin
Dr. Pearse Murphy
Dr. Marc Cashin

Mr. Tom O Donoghue
Ms. Brenda Reilly
Mr. Jim Mc Namara
Mr. Denis Mc Carthy
Mr. Anthony Commins
Ms. Dympna Scanlon
Ms. Marie O Halloran
Dr. Noreen Morris
Ms. Beatrice Moran
Dr. Concepta Brougham
Ms. Donna Mulkerins
Mr. Declan Rodgers
Mr. Kevin Ronan
Ms. Clare Brennan
COURSE APPROVALS

Faculty of Engineering & Informatics
BSc. (Hons) in Quantity Surveying
Higher Diploma in Science in Software
Cloud Application Development (ICT Skills Conversion one year full-time)

Faculty of Science and Health
BSc. (Hons) in Animation and Illustration
BSc. (Hons) in Physical Activity and Health
BSc. (Hons) in Microbiology
Higher Certificate in Hearing Aid Audiology (blended learning)
Certificate in Volunteering
BA (Hons) in Early Years Care and Education
Certificate in Supported Self-Directed Living (Special Purpose Award)

Faculty of Business & Hospitality
Bachelor of Business in Culinary Entrepreneurship (1 year add-on)
Bachelor of Business in Office Management and Administration

Department of Life Long Learning
Certificate in Business in Management and Leadership Development (Level 6) SPA 50 credits

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>STAFF</th>
<th>No.</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Core Staff</td>
<td>435</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Academic Staff</td>
<td>256</td>
<td>59%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Support Staff</td>
<td>179</td>
<td>41%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contract Research &amp; Specialist Staff</td>
<td>82</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Academic Staff</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>28%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Support Staff</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>72%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Staff</td>
<td>517</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Academic</td>
<td>278</td>
<td>54%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Support</td>
<td>239</td>
<td>46%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Non-Academic /Academic All Staff Ratio | 0.9 |
| Student FTE/Academic Staff Ratio     | 16  |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Staff Age Profile (Proportion of Staff aged.....)</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>20-39</td>
<td>22%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40-54</td>
<td>56%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>55 and above</td>
<td>22%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Proportion of Academic Staff who are female      | 46% |
| Proportion of Senior Academic Staff who are female | 13% |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Staff Qualifications (Proportion of.............)</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Full-time Permanent Academic Staff with Masters or Higher qualification</td>
<td>88%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Full-time Permanent Academic Staff with Doctorate qualification</td>
<td>31%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All Permanent Academic Staff with Masters or Higher qualification</td>
<td>87%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All Permanent Academic Staff with Doctorate qualification</td>
<td>29%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Number of Students Registered by Course Level as at 1st March 2016

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>UG or PG</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Full-time</th>
<th>Part-time</th>
<th>E-learning</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>UG</td>
<td>Access (Undergraduate)</td>
<td>33</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UG</td>
<td>FETAC Advanced Certificate</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>184</td>
<td></td>
<td>186</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UG</td>
<td>Foundation (Undergraduate)</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UG</td>
<td>Professional Training Qualification (Undergraduate)</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>140</td>
<td></td>
<td>158</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UG</td>
<td>Undergraduate Certificate</td>
<td>743</td>
<td>130</td>
<td></td>
<td>873</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UG</td>
<td>Undergraduate Diploma</td>
<td>30</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UG</td>
<td>Undergraduate General Degree</td>
<td>1060</td>
<td>270</td>
<td></td>
<td>1330</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UG</td>
<td>Undergraduate Honours Degree</td>
<td>1722</td>
<td>137</td>
<td></td>
<td>1859</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UG</td>
<td>Undergraduate Occasional</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>121</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>167</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PG</td>
<td>Masters Research (Postgraduate)</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PG</td>
<td>Masters Taught (Postgraduate)</td>
<td>106</td>
<td>68</td>
<td></td>
<td>174</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PG</td>
<td>PhD (Postgraduate)</td>
<td>20</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PG</td>
<td>Postgraduate Certificate</td>
<td>7</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PG</td>
<td>Postgraduate Diploma</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>52</td>
<td></td>
<td>118</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PG</td>
<td>Postgraduate Occasional</td>
<td>51</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total: 3856, 1195, 13, 5064

*Undergraduate Part-time figure includes 159 Apprentices*

### Number of Students Registered by Course Mode as at 1st March 2016

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>UG or PG</th>
<th>Full-time</th>
<th>Part-time</th>
<th>E-learning</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>UG</td>
<td>3614</td>
<td>1012</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>4639</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PG</td>
<td>242</td>
<td>183</td>
<td></td>
<td>425</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total: 3856, 1195, 13, 5064

### Number of Students Registered by School/Faculty as at 1st March 2016

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Faculty</th>
<th>Full-time</th>
<th>Part-time</th>
<th>E-learning</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dept of Lifelong Learning</td>
<td>542</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>542</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Business &amp; Hospitality</td>
<td>1342</td>
<td>238</td>
<td></td>
<td>1580</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Engineering &amp; Informatics</td>
<td>791</td>
<td>274</td>
<td></td>
<td>1065</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Science &amp; Health</td>
<td>1723</td>
<td>141</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>1877</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total: 3856, 1195, 13, 5064
Students from more than 50 different nationalities call AIT home, reflecting the quality of education and warmth of welcome they receive. Equally, our international journey is about forging graduates who have benefited from the latest global thinking and experiences, while a growing number of staff will participate in international exchange programmes.

### Number of Students by Gender per Faculty

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Faculty</th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Female</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dept of Lifelong Learning</td>
<td>213</td>
<td>329</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Business &amp; Hospitality</td>
<td>803</td>
<td>777</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Engineering &amp; Informatics</td>
<td>964</td>
<td>101</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Science &amp; Health</td>
<td>485</td>
<td>1392</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>2465</strong></td>
<td><strong>2599</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### INTERNATIONALISATION

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2015/16</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Full-time</td>
<td>Part-time</td>
<td>Total</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>International - EU</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>International - Non-EU</td>
<td>257</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>271</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Erasmus Incoming (EU and Exchange)</td>
<td>139</td>
<td>139</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Exchange (Non-EU)</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brazilian Science without Borders (Non-EU)</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>33</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>473</strong></td>
<td><strong>17</strong></td>
<td><strong>490</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% International</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Domiciliary Origin of Students Enrolled on Full-time Courses

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Domicile Type</th>
<th>Country/County</th>
<th>Count</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Europe EU Member</td>
<td></td>
<td>161</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Europe – Non EU Member</td>
<td></td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>International (Excl.’ Europe)</td>
<td></td>
<td>303</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ireland (EU Member)</td>
<td>Offaly</td>
<td>570</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Galway</td>
<td>427</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Roscommon</td>
<td>306</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Westmeath</td>
<td>853</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Longford</td>
<td>232</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Rest of Ireland</td>
<td>995</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>3856</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**SUNDAY TIMES UNIVERSITY GUIDE**

AIT rose three places to number 11 in this year’s Sunday Times listing, positioned immediately behind CIT, DIT and WIT. This is the second time in three years that AIT IS ranked at number 11. In its editorial, the Sunday Times noted that AIT thinks ‘outside the box when it comes to benefits for its students.’
STUDENT EXPERIENCE AND PARTICIPATION

ISSE
As in 2014 and 2015, AIT continues to have the highest response rate of any HEI with 54% against a national rate of 22%. This result, achieved via a partnership approach between the Quality Office, Academic Staff and the Students Union, provides a rich data source that feeds into our Quality Assurance process.

Completion Rates Table

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>AIT Response Rate</th>
<th>National Response Rate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2014</td>
<td>41%</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2015</td>
<td>51%</td>
<td>22%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2016</td>
<td>54%</td>
<td>22%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The results for AIT continue to be positive with 87% of students rating their overall academic experience as being good or excellent. This rating has increased from 84% in the first year of ISSE in 2014. In addition, 84% of students would chose AIT if they were to start again in Higher Education. This rating has remained constant since 2014.

**How would you evaluate your entire educational experience at this institution?**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rating</th>
<th>2014</th>
<th>2015</th>
<th>2016</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Good/Excellent</td>
<td>84%</td>
<td>83%</td>
<td>87%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**If you could start over again, would you go to the same institution you are now attending?**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rating</th>
<th>2014</th>
<th>2015</th>
<th>2016</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Probably Yes / Definitely Yes</td>
<td>82%</td>
<td>83%</td>
<td>84%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

ISSE Indices for AIT as benchmarked against all the HEIs that take part in ISSE, all the Institutes of Technology and the Universities. This benchmarking is completed for all students, first year, final year and taught postgraduate students.

AIT is performing above the norm in the following categories
- Supportive Environment
- Quality Interactions
- Effective Teaching Practice
- Student Faculty Interaction
- Collaborative Learning
- Quantitative Reasoning
- Reflective and Integrative Learning
- Higher-Order Learning
Memorandum of Understanding with Beijing University of Technology
A Memorandum of Understanding, was signed by Professor Ó Catháin, Athlone Institute of Technology and Professor Liu Gonghui, President of Beijing Union University (BUU), at the Embassy of Ireland in Beijing on 22 October 2015. The signing ceremony was attended by the Minister of Education & Skills, Jan O’Sullivan T.D., Ms. Mary Doyle, Assistant General Secretary at the Department of Education & Skills and Ambassador Kavanagh, Irish Ambassador to China. A preliminary meeting held between Professor Ciarán Ó Catháin and Professor Liu Gonghui, facilitated discussion on collaboration on postgraduate research initiatives, particularly in Software Engineering.

Memorandum of Understanding with Jianghan University
A delegation from Jianghan University, led by the President and Chairman travelled from Wuhan to attend an education event at the Embassy of Ireland, Beijing. Chairman Tan Ren Jie and Professor Ó Catháin signed a Memorandum of Understanding between AIT and Jianghan University at the Embassy. Jianghan University and AIT commenced a programme of collaboration for Design and Multimedia and the first intake of 100 students commenced their undergraduate studies at Jianghan University in September 2015.
Professor Ciarán Ó Catháin is awarded an honorary doctorate in Management from Management & Science University (MSU), Kuala Lumpur on 23 January 2016.

Over the course of recent years, the ties between AIT and partner colleges in Malaysia have been growing and strengthening. The Institute is mindful to collaborate with the best international teachers and researchers, to share ideas on curriculum development that will deliver for our community and stakeholders. In pursuing this ideal, AIT have found equally committed partners, among the Malaysian higher education community and are delighted to say that MSU is one of those partner institutions. Professor Shukri, President of MSU led a delegation to Ireland in September 2015 and was conferred with a Distinguished Fellowship from AIT. The conferring of an honorary doctorate from MSU on Professor Ó Catháin cements even more deeply, bonds between the two institutions. Discussions are ongoing between the two institutes, in relation to opportunities for collaboration on curriculum design, research projects, student and staff exchange programmes. The student exchange agreement signed between AIT and MSU during this visit to Kuala Lumpur will promote study abroad opportunities. AIT students will have the opportunity of completing a semester or year abroad in Kuala Lumpur as part of their academic programme of study. AIT actively encourages students to consider an international experience to enhance their study experience at Athlone and introduce them to business customs in Asia.
RESEARCH AND INNOVATION

Research, innovation and enterprise activity at AIT is real-world oriented, calibrated to meeting the needs of industry through its strategic research institutes in materials, bioscience and software. With a particular focus on supporting start-ups and entrepreneurs, AIT is an innovation partner of choice for industry. AIT has been building its research profile over recent decades and has in place the conduits to transfer knowledge and technologies in a manner that supports regional and national industry-based partners. A strong quality infrastructure and tradition of focused inquiry has earned AIT considerable research autonomy with awarding authority to doctoral level. Research capacity and capability is being continually strengthened in Athlone. Providing support to the economic, social, cultural and environmental development of the region is a priority for AIT. Our strategy is to be a partner of choice for enterprise, focusing our applied research, innovation and enterprise support activities on addressing the needs of regional and national industry by proactively collaborating with start-ups and established companies and by providing a comprehensive range of knowledge intensive services, with a focus on SMEs. The Midlands Innovation and Research Centre (MIRC), operates as a converging hub for innovation, research and enterprise. It provides incubation facilities for innovative and knowledge-based enterprise, supports client companies by making available to them the resources and expertise of the institute and provides enterprise programmes for entrepreneurs and start-ups.

Innovation

AIT’s objective during the 2014-16 Strategic Dialogue with the HEA to improve knowledge transfer through the commercialisation of research, was underpinned by our Technology Transfer Strengthening Initiative 2 Consortium (TTSI2), - in collaboration with Maynooth University and Waterford and Carlow IT.

Enterprise Ireland/Knowledge Transfer Ireland funded/supported TTSI2, was linked to nationally important metrics. Operating as a national programme, ensured that individual HEI strategy and outcomes were coherent, with a national agenda and that HEIs were collectively focused, acting nationally but operating locally.

Examples of excellent performance by AIT under TTSI2 were reflected by:

- Recognition of the performance of AIT as part of an ‘A’ rated Consortium.
  - The Consortium was issued an A rating by an international panel in the mid-term programme review (December 2014) - an affirmation of the effectiveness of our operations model. The Panel recognised our alliance “as an impressive consortium that truly sees itself as a team serving four institutions and working together in partnership. A strong KT strategy with effective KT operations is evident. There is also strong evidence of trust, sharing and a good working relationship between the partners”.
- The award of follow-on TTSI3 Core funding to our existing Consortium and the award of funding for a pilot
Consultancy programme to a MU/AIT/ITC Consortium.

- Exceeding our targets of Licences/Options/Assignments for 2015 and 2016, many of which were to companies new to HEI collaboration.

TTSI2 facilitated AIT in providing a first-class service to companies seeking to exploit a national system of expertise, knowledge and research; AIT and the wider TTSI2 Consortium provided a set of key impacts of value to the national economy, promoting new company growth, existing company expansion and bringing to market competitive new technologies and services.

For example, AIT’s collaborations with Shabra Group, a plastics recycling and reprocessing company, are testament to the impact our applied research has had on companies. From an initial collaborative project establishing their R&D department, the company has accessed expertise and equipment during many collaborations - driving their own R&D capacity and informing key decisions on capital investment. In addition, the company has located a pilot line at AIT’s APT Technology Gateway, choosing it as its strategic partner for trialing new materials.

**Enhanced engagement with enterprise and the community and embedded knowledge exchange**

Engagement with enterprise and the community and knowledge exchange is a key strategic priority – and differentiator - of AIT and the Institute continued to grow this activity during 2016. A key strategic priority for AIT – working in partnership with Enterprise Ireland – is, to increase significantly, the number of high-growth knowledge-intensive export-focused businesses in the Midlands. The Institute continues to make support of enterprise and entrepreneurship in the region part of its core mission by developing its innovation capacity, transferring the knowledge and technology that companies (indigenous and multinational) need, to develop new products, processes and designs.

**Innovation Vouchers**

The Institute continues to make our knowledge resources available in a flexible manner in responding to the needs of SMEs – completing 40 Innovation Voucher projects on behalf of SMEs during 2016. In June 2016, Enterprise Ireland confirmed that “Of the 37 participating Knowledge Providers with Vouchers processed to date [from 2007], AIT is ranked 2nd”.

AIT completed 230 collaborations with 161 companies during 2016 ranging from Innovation Voucher projects, to direct/contract funded projects, to large Innovation Partnerships. AIT continually engages with industry/enterprise partners to determine their future research needs. For example, APT expanded its service offerings in 2016 in areas such as melt spinning, blown film extrusion, filament production and 3D printing.

**Knowledge Intensive Services**

AIT delivers a broad range of knowledge-intensive services for regional and national industrial clients, delivering results in a time-frame that matches industry needs. Key drivers in relation to our knowledge intensive service provision to SMEs and industry are our two Enterprise Ireland Technology Gateways – in polymer processing and testing (Applied Polymer Technologies) and connected media (COMAND) - and our Centre for Industrial Services & Design. AIT staff actively engage with clients to provide services including product design, product prototyping, analytical testing, polymer processing, bioscience collaborations, and software development (focused on digital media communications and applications, and network and infrastructure management).
Increasing Awareness of AIT’s Knowledge Resources
The following were among measures undertaken by AIT during 2016 to increase awareness of our R&D facilities and knowledge resources:

- New content was - and continues to be - created for the Materials Research Institute (MRI), Applied Polymer Technologies (APT), Software Research Institute (SRI), Connected Media Application Design and Delivery (COMAND), Bioscience Research Institute (BRI) and Centre for Industrial Services & Design (CISD) internet portals. This content provides updates on facilities, expertise and case studies of completed industry interactions.
- A vibrant social media presence has been established and maintained utilising Twitter, Facebook and LinkedIn. Content is regularly refreshed to drive traffic and engagement.
- AIT’s R&D capabilities were showcased at Maynooth University’s Connect event in April.
- AIT participated in the National Industry 4.0 Summit in April.
- Participated in an IBEC regional event in May.
- Participated in a Technology Gateway Network Industry Showcase in May.
- APT and COMAND were represented in Enterprise Ireland’s Innovation Arena at the Ploughing Championship in September.
- In September, AIT hosted a Life Science Career Fair in collaboration with the Biopharma and MedTech sector and the Midlands Regional Skills Forum. The event brought together over 50 companies across the sector who were actively recruiting for positions.
- An industry Innovation workshop was hosted by APT Centre in October.
- AIT participated in Maynooth University’s Connect eHealth event in November.
- Enterprise Ireland and IDA client visits are hosted by AIT on an ongoing basis.

MooCall
Former MIRC client MooCall - a calving alert system that notifies a farmer around one hour before calving - won the Agri-Food category in the Irish Times Innovation Awards 2016. Moocall is now used in 30 countries around the world, with more than 13,000 sensors sold and has just announced a multi-million dollar contract with Animal Health International, a leading US distributor. Current MIRC client Reproinfo – a smart diagnostic technology for bovine reproduction - was a runner-up in the same category.

New Frontiers
Sweepovac, a participant start-up on our New Frontiers 2012 programme (HPSU 2013), with collaboration on the development of its product from AIT’s Centre for Industrial Services and Design, had major success with a video of its product, a self-contained vacuum device that fits in any kitchen or utility. In May 2016 on ‘Insider Design’s’ Facebook page Sweepovac went viral in the USA with 48 million views.

Midlands Innovation and Research Centre
In February 2016, the Board of Enterprise Ireland awarded AIT €3.0m funding for the 1,135m² expansion of MIRC facilities on the Institute’s East Campus. An expanded MIRC will have the following impacts on the region:

- Increase the research, innovation and entrepreneurship infrastructure and capacity of the Midlands - Will be cross - dimensional in its impact on Ireland’s targets under the EU’s Europe 2020 growth strategy.
- Support smart (knowledge and innovation driven) growth
- Improve competitiveness
• Support enterprises in the region who do not have a formal R&D capacity to make the transition to R&D performance by developing collaborative relationships with AIT and acquiring the knowledge they need to develop new products, processes and designs – thereby improving their productivity, quality and efficiency
• Foster significant job creation
• Support the necessary shift in the Midlands towards a regional economic base, which creates more sustainable and diversified sectors of employment, is more innovative, more knowledge-based, and can increasingly compete on an international basis
• Will be key to achieving the Government’s targets in the Midlands Action Plan for Jobs to increase the number of entrepreneurs/start-ups in the region by 25% in the coming years, improve the 5-year survival rate by 25% and improve scaling performance of companies by 25%
• Support graduate retention, creating high quality sustainable employment and supporting graduate entrepreneurship
• Significantly enhance the enterprise, innovation, research and ICT infrastructure and capacity of the Midlands

MEND Cluster SME Engagement Working Group
During 2016, a MEND Cluster SME Engagement Working Group – supported by the HEA - completed work on a pilot portal mapping company engagement and skills needs of SMEs across the Cluster region – based on 155 SMEs in the Biopharma and MedTech sector as a pilot.

HR Excellence in Research Logo – EU Commission
The EU Commission has awarded Athlone Institute of Technology (AIT) the prestigious award of “HR Excellence in Research”. The award recognises AIT’s commitment to achieve fair and transparent recruitment and appraisal procedures. It reflects the institute’s commitment to continuously improve its’ human resource policies in line with the European Charter for Researchers and the Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers. Over 1,200 institutions from 40 different countries have expressed their explicit support for the Charter and Code, with 233 having obtained the Commission’s “HR Excellence in Research” badge. AIT is the second institute of technology in Ireland to achieve the award, and joins WIT, NUI Galway, UCC, DCU, RCSI, UCD and UL as award holders.
Materials Research Institute

July 2015 saw the appointment of Dr Declan Devine to the position of Director of Materials Research Institute.

Fulbright Scholarship

MRI Principal Investigator, Dr. Luke Geever, AIT’s first recipient of a Fulbright Scholar award completed his Fulbright Scholar position at the CAOS in Harvard Medical School, Boston at the Centre for Advanced Orthopaedic Studies and the Rehabilitation Medicine Research Center at the Mayo Clinic, a non-profit medical practice and medical research centre based in Rochester, Minnesota, USA.

The Fulbright Scholarship study focuses on a highly relevant area of clinical and industrial significance - the development of innovative bioregradable smart polymer materials for medical device implant applications. Biodegradable polymers are becoming the materials of choice in the development of medical devices, including cardiovascular stents and fixation devices for bone repair, with demand for implantable medical devices forecast to reach over $50 billion in 2016. This prestigious award enabled Dr Geever to forge links within Harvard Medical School, the Mayo Clinic and at other leading research institutes throughout the USA. During the scholarship, Dr Geever who leads one of Ireland’s largest polymer research groups (Smart Polymers Research Group), undertook collaborative research with leading experts in the field of regenerative medicine in work that seeks to Expand the Clinical Applications of Novel Drug Eluting Biodegradable Polymers.
The Software Research Institute (SRI) has been successful in attaining a H2020 project in the field of cybersecurity. SRI will lead an 8 country, 10 partner consortium including the Technical University of Darmstadt, the University of Oxford and Irish SME Themailaundry over the course of the 36 month PROTECTIVE project. PROTECTIVE (Proactive Risk Management through Improved Situational Awareness) is designed to improve an organisation’s ongoing awareness of the risk posed to its business by cyber security attacks.

CONFIRM CENTRE FOR SMART MANUFACTURING
Since early 2016, AIT has been part of a HEI/RPO Consortium led by UL-Tyndall which has developed and submitted a €47m (SFI €25m, Industry cash €8m, Industry in-kind €14m) proposal focused on Advanced Manufacturing under SFI’s Research Centres Programme Call 2016. CONFIRM’s vision is to transform and grow Irish manufacturing by integrating intelligence within products, machines, production systems and supply chains. AIT is involved in or leading a significant number of the Centre’s proposed Work Packages and Targeted Projects. On 10th February the Consortium held a Workshop to collectively determine with industry partners the potential impact of Smart Manufacturing and Industry 4.0 to Irish Industry. The Consortium presented to an SFI Impact Panel on 2nd March.

Bioscience Research Institute
The academic year of 2015/2016 has been a successful and productive time for the Bioscience Research Institute (BRI). AIT through the BRI have qualified and formally joined an EU Technology Platform (FABRE) to focus future European (H2020 and beyond) funding calls in the Agri-food sector to topics of particular relevance to national and regional needs.

During 2015/16 BRI collaborated on a joint multi-disciplinary project – DAIRYWATER - with NUI Galway, University College Cork, Trinity College Dublin, and Teagasc. This project focuses on the development of innovative solutions for the efficient management of water consumption, wastewater treatment and the resulting energy use within the country’s dairy processing industry.

DAIRYWATER, funded by the Department of Agriculture, Food and Marine aims to develop and test new innovative technologies for treating wastewater effluent from dairy processing plants. The project addresses critically important needs, identified by industry and end-users including the potential for innovative biological, nano-material based and next-generation disinfection technologies for efficient management of Ireland’s dairy processing industry. The ultimate aims are to position Ireland at the forefront of global research and innovation in this important agri-food sector, as it strives to make the Irish dairy processing industry more efficient and environmentally sustainable by reducing carbon footprints, energy and water use.
**Environ16**

Significant BRI contributions were made to Environ16 with presentations delivered in the topical areas of nanoparticle and associated eco-toxicology and the development of pulsed light for aquaculture practice respectively.

Research projects conducted by Emily McFadden and Ana Luis Costos Ramos (Erasmus student from the University of Algarve, Portugal), under supervision of Professor Neil Rowan and Dr Allessia Stocca, resulted in conference acceptance for collaborative presentation with Steris Advanced Sterilisation Technologies in Vancouver, Canada on the subject of “Electron beam sterilisation of powdered infant milk formula.”

**CISD**

A number of new innovative products, have been successfully launched in 2015, through product design and development capabilities, with Conor Hayes and the CISD team.

**Dublin Design Studio** successfully reached its Kickstarter goal of €65,000 with Scriba, a revolutionary digital stylus. CISD has been responsible for material selection and finalised manufacture ready detailed design of the product, in collaboration with the company and manufacturing partners Hasbro.

**Scriba** is a pioneering new stylus designed to thicken line weight and change functions all with a simple squeeze. After developing Scriba to a well-defined ergonomic form including electronics, Dublin Design Studio approached CISD to bring the polymer components to manufacture. This involved a detailed design-engineering phase building a high quality 3D CAD model using complex surface modelling techniques, SLA prototyping and prototype injection moulding. As part of this design phase, a rigorous material selection and testing process was carried out to ensure the right amount of squeeze force was attained in conjunction with repeatability and reliability testing. By leveraging CISD’s expertise in Design for Manufacture and polymer materials analysis and testing, Dublin Design studio has been able to bring Scriba to manufacture with a functionally optimised and fully manufacturable polymer part design. Scriba was a finalist at the Irish Design Awards 2015 where it was highly commended, with product available on the market since Spring 2016.
**Allergy Lifestyle** launched its AER Kit, an Anaphylaxis Emergency Response case for children. The case is designed to hold all available adrenaline injectors and associated medicines with easy to read illustrated guidelines. The kit is water and heat resistant. CISD was responsible for the full design of the kit including graphics, sourcing and working with manufacturing partners Lucas Promotions to bring to manufacture.

**Strand Medical Devices** has launched its Dummy Tummy. A unique medical training device for Gastrostomy/LPGD. The device simulates the abdominal wall in thickness, texture and tactile response complete with accurately positioned stoma site. A specially designed transparent chamber allows for aspiration techniques to be performed and observed. CISD was involved in designing the transparent chamber and sourcing and collaborating with a manufacturing partner. They also produced numerous moulds for the silicon component for initial low volume production to quickly get to market.

**Magiflo**, launched on the market after a number of years of development, is a guttering system that can be installed on the roof of new buildings or can be used to replace old clogged up gutters. The Magiflo’s patented design keeps out debris whilst collecting much cleaner grey water in a rainwater harvesting system. CISD was involved from the beginning, bringing the product concept through design stages, prototyping and finally optimising for manufacture. Material testing and selection, ensuring critical performance issues were attained were also carried out.
OFFICE OF THE VICE PRESIDENT FOR STRATEGIC PLANNING AND INSTITUTIONAL PERFORMANCE

Mr. John McKenna commenced in the role of Vice President for Strategic Planning and Institutional Performance on 1st of July 2015.

Athlone Chamber of Commerce
The institute has recently sponsored the Athlone Chamber of Commerce Business Awards. The award ceremony was held in the Sheraton Hotel on the 16th of April 2016. Mr. John McKenna, Vice President for Strategic Planning and Institutional Performance, presented the Food and Drink Producers Award to Savoury Fare. During the presentation a Lifetime Achievement Awards was bestowed on Mr. James Magee of Athlone Extrusions. In his acceptance speech Mr. Magee praised the role of AIT in the region over the past 40 years and especially with regard to developing expertise in Polymer Engineering.

Regionals Skills Manager
AIT is now leading the educational component of the Midlands region and is working closely with partners in LOETB and LWETB along with Skillnets. An appointment of a project manager has been made and Ms. Lorraine Danaher has commenced the role of Midland Regional Skills Forum Manager. The role involves working closely with the local Education Educational Training Board together with regional employees and employer representatives. Ms Danaher will work with the education steering committee to build links to local enterprise with a view to identifying and supporting the skill base into the future. This is an initiative under the Government Action Plan for Jobs and is being funded by the Department of Education and Science.
Engagement with Roscommon County Council
The Institute through the Office for Strategic Planning & Institutional Performance and collaboration with Dr Mary McDonnell Naughton, lecturer in Nursing and Health Science have engaged with Roscommon County Council in relation to both an Age Friendly Initiative and Social Inclusion and Community Activation Programme in the Monksland area. Monksland is one of the fastest growing new urban areas in the country with little or no community infrastructure.

This partnership facilitated a piece of research to be carried out, which is expected to be published by 2018. The collaboration will foster engagement, and also inform Roscommon County Council, the Monksland Community and Roscommon Leader, in their endeavours to maintain a vibrant, attractive and sustainable area, which will continue to focus on social and economic growth, while addressing the deficit in provision of facilities for ‘Recreation and Amenity’ as well as ‘Community and Education’.

AIT granted authority to award PhDs in Software Engineering and Network Communications
In 2016, AIT was granted authority by Quality and qualifications Ireland (QQI) to award PhDs in the areas of Software Engineering and Network Communications. The new area within which AIT can now award PhDs is in addition to Polymer Engineering, Microbiology and Toxicology. The four domains that enjoy this level of accreditation makes AIT one of the very few Institutes of Technology in the country who have been delegated such extensive authority. AIT’s research strategy is to focus our research efforts in a small number of strategic platforms, aligned with regional needs and national research priorities.

DISTINGUISHED FELLOWSHIP
Athlone Institute of Technology (AIT) has conferred its highest honour, a distinguished fellowship to Dr Mary Guinan, a World Virology expert and Former Chief Scientific Advisor at the Centre for Disease Control, Atlanta Georgia. Dr Guinan is a source of true inspiration within the scientific world and a role model to all in Science. Given that her parents met on an emigrant boat on their way to pursue a new life in America she is an amazing example of what can be achieved with passion and hard work. Her father who came from Ballycumber, Co. Offaly worked in the New York subway system. Mary recalls in her newly published book “Adventures of a female medical detective: In pursuit of smallpox and Aids” the very difficult years of the Great Depression and how her parents however, made it clear that she would go to college despite the financial hardship. Dr Guinan’s enormous contribution to the scientific world is something to be revered and AIT was privileged to be part of her recent journey back to Ireland and to her roots in Ballycumber, Co Offaly.
FACULTY OF BUSINESS AND HOSPITALITY
Academic Collaboration and partnerships:
The Faculty is pleased to announce an agreement in principle with Dania Academy of Higher Education, Viborg, Denmark to transfer students from their two-year programme in Business Computing into year 3 of our Bachelor of Science in Business Computing. It is expected that they will attend AIT for one semester in year 2 under Erasmus, and return for year 3 as fee paying students. The contact with Viborg came about as a result of Mr Owen Ross’ attendance at the Businet conference in Malta in November 2015.

AIT has become a partner with ACCA on its Accelerate Programme. This is an initiative through which, students in their final year can become ACCA members for a discounted fee. To date, about forty students have registered interest in the programme.

Computing lecturer Mr Barry O’Loughlin has negotiated and agreed a progression agreement with Moate Business College (MBC) through which their level 6 students in Computing are eligible to progress to year 2 of AIT’s Bachelor of Science in Business Computing. The first students should transfer in September 2016.

The Bachelor of Business in Applied Accounting, run in Lusaka, Zambia, by our collaborative partner ZCAS (Zambia Centre for Accountancy Studies), has increased its enrolment in 2015-2016. Brendan Doyle, A/Head of Department Professional Accountancy, visited ZCAS in December 2015 on the annual QA visit, and reported that the programme and its management are progressing very satisfactorily.
Department of Hospitality Tourism and Leisure
Shauna Underwood, Tullamore, Co Offaly a first year student in Culinary Arts, won a silver standard award and was overall class winner at the Chef Ireland Decorative Gateau of Competitors Choice award on 16 February in CityWest, Dublin.
Pictured is a very happy Shauna with her mentor and AIT lecturer Kelly Gallagher.

FACULTY OF SCIENCE AND HEALTH
Online Programme launched: Ms Diane Patterson, Dr Gary Stack and Dr Aoife Guiry (lecturers in Pharmacy in the Department of Nursing and Health Care) launched the very exciting level 7 Clinical Pharmacy and Pharmaceutical Care online programme. This is a first for the Department of Nursing and Health Care. This programme uses Moodle and Adobe Connect to deliver lectures to students all over the country.

Hosting of National Competition: The National EAMC competition, a skills-based competition for Science/Analytical Chemistry students from all Institutes of Technology and Universities, was hosted on Friday 15th April, by the Department of Life & Physical Sciences.

Pharmaceutical Sciences Assessor: Mr Jim Roche, Lecturer in Pharmaceutical Sciences, has been invited by the Royal Society of Chemistry, to act as an assessor of Qualified Person. “Qualified Person”, as defined in EU Directives 2001/82/EC is somebody who plays a critical role in the quality assurance process for any company who manufacture and release a medicinal product. The QP is likely to be a registered chemist, biologist or pharmacist and will typically have membership of a professional body such as the Royal Society of Chemistry (RSC), Society of Biology (SOB) or Royal Pharmaceutical Society of Great Britain (RPSGB). To become a QP all quality professionals must have a broad exposure to the provision of dosage forms to the market and be recognised and appointed by the regulatory authority such as the Health Products Regulatory Authority (Ireland) or Medicines Health Care products Regulatory Agency (UK).

Celebrating the scientific contributions of Female Academics and Researchers: The scientific contributions of Ireland’s female academics and researchers have been honoured at a special reception in Áras an Uachtaráin, hosted by the President of Ireland, Michael D. Higgins and his wife Sabina. Representing AIT at the event were members of staff from the Department of Life and Physical Sciences.
Pictured left to right with the President and his wife are Ms Olive Kavanagh, Dr Antoinette Sweeney, Dr Cepta Brougham, Dr Noreen Morris, Dr Carol O’Donnell, and Dr Mary Booth. In his address to the invited assembly of women in science, President Higgins described them as “breaking new ground and paving the way for new generations of women who will also wish to use their talent and creativity to pursue careers in science, technology, engineering and maths, and play their unique role in crafting a better world.” The President’s address was inspiring and optimistic about the future for young women who choose to pursue careers in science and technology.

Intertrade Irelads Fusion Programme:
AIT continues its leading involvement in Intertrade Irelads Fusion programme. Enda Fallon recently completed projects with NI Soft and Car Park Services both based in Belfast. NI Soft are the leading provider in the UK and Ireland of outage planning software for power stations (including nuclear). NI Soft has detailed domain knowledge within the power generation sector. The extreme health and safety demands of such an environment place strict requirements on software system design. NI Soft’s domain knowledge is being used by AIT to influence its course design; in particular its choice of tools, languages and software methodologies taught to students. CPS services are the largest provider of car park services in NI. The Fusion project focused on the development of mobility enabled services to enhance the parking experience for CPS customers. Through the industrial advisory board process, CPS provided input to the relevance of the recently approved, BSC in Software Development (Mobile Apps and Connected Devices).

FACULTY OF ENGINEERING AND INFORMATICS
The Faculty of Engineering and Informatics facilitated the regional CanSat competition for 2nd level students (transition year and upwards) in association with the European Space Agency (ESA) and ESSERO Ireland, as an initiative to encourage school students to consider a career in science and engineering.
A CanSat is a simulation of a real satellite, built inside an empty soft drink can. Each team developed a CanSat – Arduino based electronic circuitry housed in a drinks can, which takes measurements and transmits back to a computer. Three local schools took part: Athlone Community College, Marist College and St Aloysius College. The Marist College won the competition, seeing them through to the National final on 15th April in Birr Castle. The Irish national winner will represent Ireland in the European competition in June 2016.
DEPARTMENT OF LIFELONG LEARNING

Network meeting: On the 15th April, the Department of Lifelong Learning, together with Tullamore and District Rotary club, hosted a luncheon networking meeting, between the students of the Certificate in Entrepreneurship course being delivered in Tullamore, those who are members of the Tullamore and District Rotary Club, along with members from the Local Enterprise Office and Offaly Local Development Company. In excess of 30 attended and it was a fantastic event with many of the Rotary members offering to act as mentors and indeed to meet with the students in the coming weeks in order that they may discuss their respective business ideas, while also offering the students advice and potential leads and contacts.

Below is a picture of some of those present, Students, AIT staff and Rotary Club members.

Midland Business Awards: In March, Dr Michael Tobin was invited to be a Judge for the Business Awards on behalf of the Tullamore Chamber. This culminated with Dr Tobin delivering an address at the Tullamore Chamber on Saturday 16th April, where he spoke about the value of entrepreneurship, champions and positive attitude being demonstrated in an effort to motivate other potential entrepreneurs to take the risk of establishing a business. Over 300 were in attendance.

LEARNING AND TEACHING

Learning and Teaching Unit - Promoting excellence in learning, teaching and assessment, thereby enhancing the learning experience of all students.

A key strategic goal of the Institute is: “To sustain and develop an inclusive learning community that empowers learners to be successful in a dynamic environment”

All activities of the Learning and Teaching Unit are aligned to achieving this objective, informed by findings in the ISSE, National Forum enhancement themes and the Digital Roadmap. By 2016, 51 staff have completed at least one special purpose award at level 9 thereby contributing to the Institutes Strategic Plan 2014-2018 objective of increasing the number of staff with a pedagogical qualification. In keeping with this objective, the Learning and Teaching Unit devised and implemented a 2 day staff induction process, which was subsequently approved by the Executive Management Team (EMT) for implementation annually with all new appointees. The Learning and Teaching unit was awarded funding by the National Forum for the Enhancement of Teaching and Learning for the What works and Why? Project:


TECHNOLOGY ENHANCED LEARNING

The restructuring and establishment of three Faculties and changes to the reporting from Banner has led to greater efficiency in deploying learning analytics and the reporting of usage by lecturers and students. This now becomes the baseline data for future reporting. The 2016 data indicates that the virtual learning environment is used across all academic areas to provide a blended learning experience for students across all programmes.
ACADEMIC WRITING CENTRE

As part of a joint application with our cluster partners to the HEA’s Strategic Innovation and Development Fund (SIDF) 2013, AIT was successful in securing funding towards establishing an Academic Writing Centre, to address key objectives under the heading of enhanced student learning supports. The project, while serving a vital role in improving the standard of academic writing skills of our students, also increases engagement with our cluster partners; Dublin City University, Dundalk Institute of Technology, and Maynooth University, in relation to sharing resources and leveraging complementary expertise across the cluster. Following a period of planning and collaboration, The Academic Writing Centre opened in November as a joint initiative of Student Resources, the International Office and the Teaching & Learning unit. The Centre falls under the remit of the Student Resource Centre and has a new staff member in place as the Academic Writing Centre Coordinator, Ms. Geraldine Kiveney. The centre, staffed by experienced lecturers, offers free one-to-one or small group tutorials to students in various aspects of academic writing. These include assignment structure, mechanics of writing, developing a thesis statement, critical reading and awareness. In attending the centre, students will receive support and learning geared towards improving their writing skills. Staff work with the student rather than the text, equipping students with skills for the future. Thus, the Academic Writing Centre is not a proof reading or editing service. Rather, the centre aims to develop a more self-confident, critical and independent writer.

At the end of semester two, usage figures for the Academic Writing Centre show a high demand for the service across all disciplines. A total of 666 students from all stages of study accessed the various services provided. 47 workshops and 19 in-class sessions were held for students, addressing all aspects of academic writing. 385 students were reached through these sessions, while 148 students were assisted through our one-to-one and small group tutorials.

In addition to written work, 133 students dropped in with various queries such as Moodle, Turnitin and Microsoft Word concerns.
Disability & Learning Support Service
Registrations with the service Academic year 2015-16

A total of 313 students registered with the Disability and Learning Support Service during the academic year. Included in this figure were 17 Apprenticeship students and 10 students from Lifelong Learning. Full time student registrations are 7% of the total student population. Full time student numbers by gender were 154 female and 132 male. By Faculty the figures break down as: Business & Hospitality: 89; Engineering and Informatics: 33 and Science and Health: 164.

AIT International Athletics Grand Prix
AIT’s ambitions for the International Grand Prix from the beginning, was to bring the very best of National and International athletics talent to Athlone and to create a world class athletics event on an International stage. The International Grand Prix has continued to grow from strength to strength and each year the line-up of elite athletes gets stronger. In 2016, we achieved an impressive ranking of 14th in the world (out of 600) for indoor athletic track meets by IAAF. The third annual AIT International Athletics Grand Prix garnered significant coverage in national and regional media and featured prominently in international social media conversations. It was broadcast live on Irish TV, as well as having a global web feed to ESPN. This media coverage was followed up a week later with a one-hour highlights package, which aired on Setanta Ireland, Premier Sports UK and Pan-Africa – Fox Sports 2. In addition, to broadcast and print media, the Grand Prix had a significant social media footprint over the course of three months, supported with promoted posts on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram. It was noteworthy that several of the athletes posted about their experience at the AIT International Grand Prix on their own social media platforms, including the American sprinter D’Angelo Cherry, who was very active across Instagram and Twitter and tweeted “It was an honor to set a stadium record and compete in Ireland. I can’t wait to see you guys next year.”
AIT Students’ Union
Amber Flag Award
Students’ Union President Kevin Ronan and Vice President for Welfare Kate Butler collected the Amber Flag for the Promotion of Positive Mental Health on campus at an event in the Rochestown Park Hotel. The award was presented by Suicide Aware ambassador, Alan Quinlan.

Student Sport Ireland Election
Students’ Union President Kevin Ronan was elected as Hon. Vice Chairperson of Student Sport Ireland (SSI). SSI is the governing body for third level sport in Ireland. Kevin is pictured below with Paul Davis NUI Maynooth SSI Hon. Treasurer and Carmel Lynch (formerly IT Carlow) Hon. Chairperson.

Tobacco free Campus
AIT were requested to give a presentation to the National Tobacco Control Partners meeting on 22nd March. AIT were congratulated on progress to date, as we remain the first third level college in Ireland to introduce a tobacco free campus policy. Recommendations included greater marketing of AIT as a health promoting college. The tobacco free campus committee continue to work on initiatives to increase compliance of this policy. We encourage all staff and students to continue to support and implement this policy.

Guest Lectures
Eddie O Sullivan, former Ireland international rugby coach, addressed our sport management students in the Douglas Hyde theatre. Eddie delivered a great session where he talked about a variety of topics and answered questions from our students.

Marty Morrissey, RTE Sport Journalist, presented to our sport management students in March 2016. Marty interviewed by AIT senior lecturer Sean Connell, spoke about his career, the GAA, sports tourism, journalism techniques and in addition to serious quality content, there were as expected plenty of laughs!
SPORT HIGHLIGHTS

MENS VOLLEYBALL:
AIT Men’s Volleyball had a superb season finishing runners-up in the Student Sport Ireland League and winning the Plate Competition at the Intervarsities.

Rugby:
AIT Men’s Rugby Club had another successful season winning the All Ireland Colleges Division 1 Cup for the third season in a row with a much changed team from last season.

The second team had a spirited season and played a major part in the senior success with record numbers at training and were only just beaten by UCC away in their semi-final.

An All-Ireland defeat in the final was a good achievement from a very keen Freshers outfit who had a bye in the first round, accounted for UL on their 4g pitch next and then played really well against NUIM at home in the semi-finals. James Foley was an inspiring captain in a team full of leaders both on and off the field. The commitment and ability of these players augurs well for the future of AIT Rugby.

Jordan Conroy played on the full Irish 7’s team against Spain recently and is on the Irish Students 15-a-side squad to play England.

EQUESTRIAN:
The Equestrian Club had a fantastic 2015-2016 with a team going to the Tetrathlon for the first time ever and performing very well. Hannah Wentges brought home a 4th place for her efforts in the Show Jumping ring and Shauna O’Shea and Aoibhe O’Boyle also performed well.

AIT sent a squad of thirteen riders to the Intervarsities, winning the Team Show Jumping event with Hannah Wentges, Shauna O’Shea and Hannah Doherty in the saddle. Hannah Wentges came 1st in the individual Show Jumping and Hannah Doherty came 2nd. Aaron Greenan took home a 3rd place in the Dressage element of the competition and the Dressage team of Andrea Martin, Aaron Greenan and Emily Nielson took home 5th place for their combined effort.

Onto the Prix Caprilli, where AIT came 3rd overall as a combined college effort beating Trinity College Dublin for the first time ever, recording its best ever place and bringing home the largest number of ribbons in the club’s history.

MENS BASKETBALL:
The Men’s team, promoted to Division two, were extremely unlucky to miss out on a place in the semi-finals – losing two games by a combined four points. For the first time, the college team was entered into the local Shannonside League playing fourteen games against teams from Donegal, Sligo, Leitrim, and Longford. The team finished the season winning the Plate competition which was a great reward for all the hard work.

WOMENS BASKETBALL:
The Ladies team promoted to Division two, and although drawn against both finalists in the pool stages, showed great progress as the season developed. The Ladies also qualified for the Varsities for the second season in succession and competed strongly in a group that included the eventual finalists UL and IT Carlow.

ATHLETICS:
AIT Athletics Club has had another record-breaking year in 2015-2016. The club kicked off its competitive season at the Irish Universities Road Relay Championships held on the old south campus of NUI Maynooth, on 14th November. Medallists in this event for the last 2 years, our Men’s A team finished 4th of 29 teams and was the first IT home. The Men’s B team finished 14th of 29 teams. AIT Ladies finished 22nd of 26 teams.

The IUAA Indoor T&F Championships was held in the AIT International Arena on 12th February providing the college with the opportunity to showcase its magnificent facilities. This was another successful outing for the college with
AIT ladies finishing 4th of 18 Colleges and Universities. Medallists included a gold and silver for Amy McTeggart in the Combined Events and High Jump respectively, bronze for Vicky Harris in the 200m and Dearbhail Foley in the Pole Vault. Our Men’s team finished 7th of 22 Colleges and Universities with a gold medal for Andrew Heney in the High Jump and silver for Ian Rogers in the Pole Vault. Our Men’s and Women’s teams combined for 4th place overall.

The IUAA Cross Country Championships in Sligo on 5th March was another successful outing for AIT AC with the men’s team scoring their highest ever position at these championships with team silver ahead of UCD, UL and UCC and behind DCU. This is the 3rd straight year the men have medalled at these championships. Liam Brady won individual bronze medal. Our Ladies team finished as the top IT in the championships, led home by Regina Dolan, and will continue to build on this going into next year.

AIT Athletics competed at the Irish Universities Track & Field Championships in Santry, Dublin on 15th and 16th April and finished 4th team overall behind DCU, UL and UCC. AIT won the Tier 2 Trophy. This was the highest team finish by AIT in the history of these championships, while AIT was the top Institute of Technology at this championships for the second year in succession. This was also the largest team ever fielded by AIT at an intervarsities championships.
### Consolidated Statement of Income and Expenditure

Year ended 31 August 2016

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Consolidated 31/08/16 €000's</th>
<th>Institute 31/08/16 €000's</th>
<th>Restated Consolidated 31/08/15 €000's</th>
<th>Restated Institute 31/08/15 €000's</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Income</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State Grants</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>17,209</td>
<td>16,422</td>
<td>16,422</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tuition Fees and student contribution</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>16,603</td>
<td>16,421</td>
<td>16,421</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research Grants &amp; Contracts</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4,118</td>
<td>3,926</td>
<td>3,984</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student Support Funding</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>537</td>
<td>530</td>
<td>530</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Income</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>5,658</td>
<td>6,302</td>
<td>2,822</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amortisation of Deferred Capital Grants</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>2,897</td>
<td>3,015</td>
<td>2,867</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interest Income</td>
<td></td>
<td>29</td>
<td>78</td>
<td>78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Income</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>47,851</td>
<td>44,314</td>
<td>46,694</td>
<td>43,124</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Expenditure</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Staff costs</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>33,882</td>
<td>32,944</td>
<td>32,163</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Operating Expenses</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>9,375</td>
<td>9,371</td>
<td>8,527</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Depreciation</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>3,413</td>
<td>3,400</td>
<td>2,884</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Expenditure</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>46,678</td>
<td>44,198</td>
<td>45,715</td>
<td>43,574</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Surplus for the year before appropriations</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>281</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The Consolidated Statement of Income and Expenditure includes all gains and losses recognised in the year. Notes 1-28 form part of these financial statements.

Signed on behalf of the Governing Body

Chairman, Mr. Frank Ryan

Date 11 July 2017

President, Prof. Clarás O Catháin

Date 11 July 2017
## Consolidated and Institute Statement of Financial Position

**Year ended 31 August 2016**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Note</th>
<th>Consolidated 31/08/16 €000's</th>
<th>Consolidated 31/08/15 €000's</th>
<th>Institute 31/08/16 €000's</th>
<th>Institute 31/08/15 €000's</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>13</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fixed Assets</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Property, plant &amp; equipment</td>
<td>90,414</td>
<td>91,476</td>
<td>76,527</td>
<td>77,118</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Current Assets</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inventory</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Receivables</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cash and Cash Equivalents</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Less Payables: amounts falling due within one year</td>
<td>(7,146)</td>
<td>(6,672)</td>
<td>(6,762)</td>
<td>(6,669)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Net current assets</td>
<td>3,410</td>
<td>2,985</td>
<td>2,960</td>
<td>2,941</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total assets less current liabilities</td>
<td>93,824</td>
<td>94,461</td>
<td>79,487</td>
<td>80,059</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Less Payables: amounts falling due after more than one year</td>
<td>(405)</td>
<td>(626)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total net assets</td>
<td>93,419</td>
<td>93,835</td>
<td>79,487</td>
<td>80,059</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deferred Capital Grants</td>
<td>78,563</td>
<td>79,360</td>
<td>76,328</td>
<td>77,016</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Capital Development Reserve</td>
<td>124</td>
<td>124</td>
<td>124</td>
<td>124</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unrestricted Reserves</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Income &amp; Expenditure Reserve</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>93,419</td>
<td>93,835</td>
<td>79,487</td>
<td>80,059</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Notes 1-28 form part of these financial statements.

Signed on behalf of the Governing Body

Chairman, Mr. Frank Ryan

President, Prof. Ciarán Ó Catháin

Date 11 July 2017
### Academic Year 2015/16 (1 September 2015 - 31 August 2016)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Governing Body Member</th>
<th>Expenses</th>
<th>Fees (interviews etc.)</th>
<th>Total Paid</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Farrell Tom</td>
<td>228.16</td>
<td>2,100.00</td>
<td>2,328.16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gilmore Pat</td>
<td>555.79</td>
<td>150.00</td>
<td>705.79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kinsella Natasha</td>
<td>427.74</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>427.74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leonard Laura</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Madden Paul</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>300.00</td>
<td>300.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Madden Paul</td>
<td>300.00</td>
<td></td>
<td>300.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Magner Denis</td>
<td>364.96</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>364.96</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mulvey Kieran</td>
<td>757.39</td>
<td>300.00</td>
<td>1,057.39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>O'Toole Pat</td>
<td>107.73</td>
<td>300.00</td>
<td>407.73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rattigan Liam</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>150.00</td>
<td>150.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rattigan Liam</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ryan Colette</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ryan Frank</td>
<td>1,518.86</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1,518.86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shanagher Kathleen</td>
<td>428.31</td>
<td>1,800.00</td>
<td>2,228.31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Talty Geraldine</td>
<td>83.64</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>83.64</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>