


Research policy and strategy		
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Research policy and strategy

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Revision History

Revision	Date	Revision Description DCRT#	Originator
01	11 February 2005	New Document	Diarmuid O'Callaghan
02	11 May 2005	Revisions based on comments of postgraduate sc of Academic Council	Diarmuid O'Callaghan
03	14 June 2005	Amendments from Academic Council meeting 14 June 2005	Diarmuid O'Callaghan
04	1 August 2008	Title change of Director to President	Registrar

1. Purpose

The purpose of this document is to present Institute research policy and strategy, and assign responsibilities within the institute for various components of research policy.

2. Scope

This policy applies to all research-active staff of the Institute and any students proposing to conduct research intending to lead to a research degree at the Institute.

3. Definitions

Research	Investigation undertaken in order to gain knowledge and understanding
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4. Reference

	Institute strategic plan
	Regional Technical Colleges Act (1992) as amended
4FAD06	PG1: Application for admission to postgraduate degree programme
3CD07	Operational details for registered postgraduate students (Postgraduate student handbook)

5. Research policy

Research activities play an important role in maintaining an environment in which effective third-level teaching and learning processes occur. Research is regarded as an essential component of the activities of the Institute, and is important to the further development of the Institute. The Institute has identified as strategically important the establishment of a viable research community which will enhance the subject areas in which the Institute currently offers taught academic programmes (see current Institute strategic plan).

The Institute is committed to

- Providing education opportunities to support the principal function of the Institute as required under Section 5 (1) c of the Regional Technical Colleges Act (1992). Specifically, in the case of research activities “.....*subject to such conditions as the Minister may determine to engage in research, consultancy and development work and to provide such services in relation to these matters as the governing body of the college considers appropriate....*”
- Providing opportunities to progress to the next level of academic learning. As such, the Institute has a strong commitment to providing relevant educational opportunities for NQAI level 8 graduates to progress to NQAI level 9 (Masters degree) and NQAI level 10 (PhD degree). Academic programmes leading to Masters degrees and PhD degrees by research are considered an important part of this programme provision.

To support this research provision, the Institute is committed to:

- Fostering an environment which places value upon knowledge and understanding and in which the pursuit of knowledge and understanding is reflected in teaching and learning.

- Promoting and supporting research relating to the understanding and exploitation of technology.
- Encouraging research into areas of new human knowledge and understanding.
- Disseminating new knowledge and understanding, promoting public understanding and providing advice to the public across a range of academic disciplines.
- Encouraging research which contributes to National development.
- Encouraging development of intellectual property.

In order to give effect to the Institute research policy the Institute undertakes to:

- Identify relevant sources of research funding at National and International level, disseminate details and provide resources to staff to help acquire funding
- Establish a research forum
- Design and implement appropriate postgraduate research student training programmes
- Assign an administrative point of contact for postgraduate research students and research-active staff
- Encourage collaborative research with other institutions in the region, by fostering the development of inter-institutional linkages
- Encourage collaborative research with industry partners
- Establish effective methods to assess the quality and strategic importance of research activities
- Monitor research priorities in the light of national and international needs
- Encourage staff to participate in formulation and implementation of Institute research policy and in the setting of Institutional research priorities
- Include aptitude and interest in research in the interview process for academic staff
- Offset teaching loads for research-active staff supervising postgraduate students.
- Encourage attendance at conferences, particularly where a presentation is being made to the conference
- Encourage leave of absence for research activities
- Encourage publication of research
- Provide support and guidance to staff endeavouring to build and maintain productive, research programmes

6. Indicators of research output include:

Recognised indicators of research output include:

- Research publications
 - o International refereed journals and books;
 - o Invited International and National conference papers;
 - o Technical and research reports;
 - o Research seminar papers;
 - o Citations/uptake of research by international and national sources, including impact on policy; professional journals).
 - o Internal Institute publications (ITB journal)
- Research Masters and PhD degrees.
- Level of funded research activity.
- Patents and other 'spin-offs'.

7. Responsibilities

Responsibility for research policy, strategy and activities lies at several levels within the Institute.

The Responsibilities of the Institute through its Governing Body

It is the responsibility of the Institute to provide:-

- A nurturing and stimulating intellectual environment for researchers to allow opportunity for postgraduate researchers to develop critical, analytical and synthetic skills
- Training in research methods, supervision methods and emerging technologies as they relate to research
- Adequate facilities, efficient administration, understandable regulations and effective grievance, complaints and appeal procedures
- Professional supervision
- Nationally and Internationally accepted qualifications

Responsibilities of Schools

It is the responsibility of the Head of School to:-

- Determine the strategically important research areas for the School
- Promote an equal opportunities research culture.
- Determine the balance between research and teaching in each Department and plan the provision of and approval to use school resources for research / consultancy
- Advise the senior management team on the number of postgraduate students who can be effectively accommodated.

- Facilitate staff undertaking higher degrees by research in terms of resource provision.
- Liaise with the senior management team regarding research strategy, management and resource allocation
- Ensure continuity of supervision is provided for in the event of staff changes.
- Ensure that general Institute policies are adhered to by researchers, research assistants and postgraduate students
- Advertise and provide information about research opportunities to postgraduate applicants.

Responsibilities of academic Departments

It is the responsibility of each academic Head of Department to:-

- Determine the workload of a staff member and appropriate involvement in research or research supervision
- Arrange appropriate staff development for all academic staff in the Department to promote best practice in research supervision in the disciplines of the Department
- Set up arrangements for the supervision of postgraduate students within Institute norms.
- Satisfy itself as to the appropriateness of the proposal before submission to Academic Council subcommittee for approval (See PG1: Application for admission to postgraduate degree programme (4FAD06).
- Ensure that proposed research topics are within the supervisor's field of competence.
- Recommend thesis committee members as appropriate, particularly in the cases of less-experienced supervisors, external research partnerships and where the subject area is of a highly complex nature or falls between disciplines.
- Liaise with the Head of School and senior management team regarding research strategy, management and resource allocation
- Select and approve postgraduate students and contract staff for research
- Provide each research student with adequate facilities to enable them to carry out their tasks
- Report on any breach of agreed procedures
- Monitor the progress of postgraduate students and take remedial action when problems arise
- Oversee the preparation of the final thesis and its submission and evaluation according to Institute procedures (See Operational details for registered postgraduate students (Postgraduate student handbook) (3CD07)

Responsibilities of the principal research supervisors

It is the responsibility of the research supervisor to:-

- Agree the research topic with their Head of Department and the research student and advise on its suitability for the level of postgraduate award sought
- Agree that the project is within their field of expertise and agree to be available for the period of the project
- Ensure that the project is achievable within the Department's physical and financial resources
- Liaise with the student, the Head of Department and other academic staff.
- Arrange regular meetings and seminars / tutorials with the postgraduate research student and agree these with the Head of Department.
- Provide guidance about standards expected and about requisite techniques and methodologies.
- Draw up and agree a list of targets and milestones with the postgraduate student. Use these targets to monitor progress.
- Request written work as appropriate and return such work, with constructive criticism, in a reasonable time.
- Ensure that the student is made aware of any inadequacy in progress or of failure to reach an acceptable standard of work.
- Agree alternative supervisory arrangements with the Head of Department if absent for a period
- Prepare such reports as required by Institute management or funding bodies
- Be mindful of their duty of care towards the student
- Actively assist postgraduate student to publish, attend conferences, deliver papers or join professional associations
- Be fully conversant with relevant Institute policies and procedures (See Operational details for registered postgraduate students (Postgraduate student handbook) (3CD07)
- Assist the student in the preparation and submission of the final thesis and in preparing for a viva voce examination, where relevant
- Advise the student on the development potential of their work, intellectual property, patents, licenses and copyright.

Responsibilities of research student

It is the responsibility of each research student to:-

- Agree a plan of action, including targets, with their supervisor
- Maintain the progress of their work in accordance with this plan including in particular the presentation of written material as required in sufficient time to allow for comments and discussion before proceeding to the next stage.
- Take the initiative in arranging regular meetings, and raising problems or difficulties with their supervisor
- Discuss with their supervisor the type of guidance and comment they find most helpful.
- Take note of and respond to criticism of submitted work made by the supervisor.
- Be aware of a mechanism to bring matters to the attention of their supervisor. If they feel that this course of action is not appropriate or open to them, they should consult the Head of Department or Head of School, or other appropriate officer.

Responsibilities of the Registrar

It is the responsibility of the Registrar to:-

- Oversee the implementation of the Institute policies and procedures relevant to postgraduate research through Academic Council
- Liaise with the senior management team regarding research strategy, management and resource allocation
- Administer selection, admission, registration and enrolment procedures for postgraduate students.
- Arrange, in conjunction with the appropriate Head of School, for the evaluation of postgraduate research proposals, as appropriate, by suitably qualified experts prior to their agreement by the Research and Postgraduate Studies subcommittee of Academic Council
- Keep records of all administrative and financial arrangements for postgraduate students
- Make arrangements in consultation with relevant academic departments for external examiners for viva voce and thesis examinations and any appeals
- Arrange the conferring of awards
- Lodge a copy of successful Masters and Doctoral theses in the Institute library

Responsibilities of the Head of Development

It is the responsibility of the Head of Development to:-

- Oversee the implementation of the Institute's research policy and the management of research in the Institute.
- Liaise with the senior management team regarding research strategy, management and resource
- Identify and provide information about sources of funding for research and potential partners for collaborative activities.
- Act as the authorised Institute signatory on applications for external funding and on all contracts resulting from successful bids.
- Monitor the progress of funded projects and assist in their financial management.
- Prepare an annual report on research and postgraduate studies for the Academic Council and Governing Body.
- Advise on contracts, patents, copyrights, royalties, licenses, confidentiality, intellectual property rights and set in place systems for the commercialisation of research results.
- Assist Schools in the dissemination of research results and ensure that successes in the field of research are acknowledged widely and publicly.
- Co-ordinate, through Development Office staff, the appointment process for postgraduate students on funded programmes, including advertising, recruitment and induction

Responsibilities of the Secretary/Financial controller

It is the responsibility of the Secretary/Financial controller to:-

- Liaise with the Development office and the senior management team
- Agree the financial scope of research projects, and ensure that actual financial goals are measured against projected goals
- Initiate financial procedures including project codes and reporting methodology
- Monitor the financial progress of funded projects, and provide regular financial information on project performance
- Ensure compliance with approved financial procedures
- Provide professional support, through the personnel office, for the recruitment, selection and employment of contract staff for projects and substitute lecturing staff, where required
- Ensure that personnel policies of the Institute are made clear to and implemented by contract staff

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