



Institute of Technology, Sligo

Scheme 2015 – 2018

Under Section 11 of the Official Languages Act 2003

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1 Introduction/Background

1.1 Introduction/Background

This scheme was prepared under Section 11 of the Official Languages Act 2003 (hereinafter referred to as the Act) by IT, SLIGO. Section 11 provides for the preparation by public bodies of a statutory scheme detailing the services they will provide:

- Through the medium of Irish,
- Through the medium of English, and
- Through the medium of Irish and English

Public bodies must also outline the measures to be adopted to ensure that any service not provided by the body through the medium of the Irish language will be so provided within an agreed timeframe.

1.2 Guidelines for the Preparation of a Scheme

This scheme has been drawn up, having regard to the guidelines published by the Minister for Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht.

On 26th November 2013, a public notice was placed in The Sligo Champion under Section 13 inviting representations in relation to the preparation of the draft scheme under Section 11 from any interested parties. No representations were made by members of the public.

On the 15th January 2014 a notice was placed on the campus staff email portal inviting any staff interested to a meeting to discuss ideas to support the Irish language at the Institute. A small number of staff attended this meeting and

discussed how Irish language services and the use of Irish in the Institute might be improved.

On Thursday 27th February 2014 an email was sent via the Students Union inviting students to forward suggestions regarding services through Irish or the use of the Irish language to the Librarian of the institute. To date one student has responded with suggestions for promoting Irish on campus.

1.3 The Content of the Language Scheme

The services provided in IT, SLIGO are currently through the medium of English. The Institute has a limited number of staff with verbal competency in Irish and an even smaller number with written competency. The priorities of the scheme are to:

- Gauge and monitor the level of demand for services in the Irish language
- Create an awareness among staff of the content and purpose of the scheme
- Provide training for staff to develop competency in the Irish language
- Comply with the regulations of the Act
- Ensure effective implementation of the Scheme and that commitments given are delivered upon

1.4 Commencement Date of Scheme

The scheme has been confirmed by the Minister for Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht and will commence with effect from 16 February 2015. The scheme will remain in force for a period of three years from this date or until a new scheme has been confirmed by the Minister pursuant to Section 15 of the Act, whichever is the later.

1.5 Overview of IT, SLIGO

1.5.1 Vision

To be a Technological University driving the social and economic development of the Connacht- Ulster region, and leader in online learning.

By 2020, we will be characterised by:

- **Graduates** distinguished by how they apply knowledge in the workplace – locally, nationally, internationally – and a commitment to lifelong learning
- **Engagement & Participation** that is open to and meets the needs of local industry and community
- **Research** recognised internationally in niche areas where IT Sligo has chosen to excel
- **Internationalisation** of our campus through greater mobility of students and staff, and enhanced portability of our qualifications
- **Staff** characterised by their support for the student, commitment to the mission of the Institute and a dedication to grow, learn and develop and to provide a high quality service
- **Collaboration** with other HEIs, professional bodies, industry partners, particularly where demonstrably more can be achieved through collective action and knowledge sharing.

1.5.2 The Institute

Since its formation in 1971 as a Regional Technical College (RTC), IT Sligo has transformed from a small college offering two year certificate courses to less than 100 students to a respected HEI providing programmes to over 6,000 students, stimulating and supporting the development of the North West region, and preparing graduates for the international world of work. Through this expansion, the Institute has made higher education accessible in the North West where historically there has been a limited tradition of access.

IT Sligo is set on a modern, state-of-the-art 70-acre campus providing students with the highest quality learning environment and recreational facilities. The three schools of Business and Social Sciences, Engineering and Design, and Science offer a range of programmes leading to qualifications from Level 6-10 on the National Framework of Qualifications (NFQ). The campus has been transformed over the past 5 years through a €35 million capital development programme which includes the addition of the following facilities:

- Refurbishment and upgrading of the learning environment to reflect modern pedagogic needs
- A dedicated Student Services facility that caters to the needs of a growing and diverse body of students
- The Yeats Library accommodating 700 spaces with 13 seminar rooms for group study
- Expansion of sports and recreational facilities on campus including 3 playing pitches, a synthetic running track and enhancement of the Knocknarea Arena to accommodate audiences of 1,500
- In addition, the following facilities were completed in 2014:
 - A Science Building to include an 80-station foundation laboratory, 11 specialist laboratories, 3 online learning laboratories and additional classrooms. This new building will add a further 4,300 m² to cater for the growing number of science students
 - A 600 seat restaurant

1.5.3 Customers and Clients

The Institute's principal customers are its students to whom it has a particular duty of care. It also interacts with other educational institutions and agencies and the general public. Its key client and customer base comprises the following, but this list is not exclusive:

- Higher Education Authority (HEA)
- Department of Education and Skills
- Quality and Qualifications Ireland (QQI)
- Institutes of Technology Ireland
- Irish Research Council
- Sligo Chamber of Commerce
- Education and Training Boards (formerly Vocational Education Committees)
- County Councils
- Enterprise Ireland
- IDA Ireland
- Fáilte Ireland
- The Arts Council
- Engineers Ireland
- The Teaching Council
- West/North West Regional Cluster (In)
- BMW Regional Assembly.
- SOLAS (formerly FÁS)

1.5.4 Functions

Function	Department
President	Communications
	Projects
Registrar's Function	Student Affairs
	Research
	Education Development and Quality
	Library
	Centre for Online Learning
Secretary/Financial Controller	Human Resources
	Finance
Development and Business Operations	Estates
	Information Technology
	Technology Transfer and Innovation
School of Engineering and Design	Civil Engineering and Construction
	Computing and Creative Practices
	Mechanical and Electronic Engineering
School of Business and Social Sciences	Business
	Social Sciences
	Marketing, Tourism and Sport
School of Science	Life Sciences
	Environmental Science

2 Assessment of Extent to which services are already available through Irish

2.1 General Assessment of level of Irish language services at IT, Sligo

The primary function of the Act is to ensure better availability and a higher standard of public services through Irish.

The main function of IT, Sligo is to provide quality education programmes and at present all programmes are delivered through English.

The Institute interacts with students, staff and members of the general public through its administration and through various services. Areas include the Admissions Office, Exams Office, Student Services, IT Services and Yeats Library. Virtually all of these services are currently provided through English. There are minor exceptions such as the multilingual (including Irish) interface on the Library Quick Check self service loans machine.

The Institute produces a number of statutory documents. Currently the Annual Report and Financial Accounts are published bilingually. The Institute, from time to time, places advertisements on sites such as publicjobs.ie which may have a requirement for a bilingual advertisement.

There is a small core group of staff who have a basic working knowledge of the language and who are interested in working with and through it. A wider group has a generally positive attitude to the language. A student Gaeilge society was attempted although not sustained and a number of Library events have been organised for Seachtain na Gaeilge. At various times in the past Irish language classes have been organised.

The position in relation to service provision/activities and level of services in Irish by individual departments within the Institute is set out below.

2.2 President's Office

2.2.1 Communications

The Communications Manager is responsible for internal and external communication programmes and media relations

Irish Language Provision: The Communications Manager currently provides no services through Irish

2.2.2 Projects

The Projects Manager currently has a specific role in managing the Institute's relationship with the Connacht Ulster Alliance

Irish Language Provision: The Projects Manager currently provides no services through Irish

2.3 Registrar's Function

2.3.1 Student Affairs

The Student Affairs Department is responsible for student recruitment, including the Institute's relationship with the Central Applications Office. This position also has overall responsibility for student services, including health, access etc.

Irish Language Provision: Student Affairs currently provides no services through Irish

2.3.2 Education Development and Quality

This Department has overall responsibility for the examinations process.

Irish Language Provision: Education Development and Quality currently provides no services through Irish

2.3.3 Library

The Library supports the teaching, learning and research activity of the Institute through the provision of information resources and services, learning spaces and

information literacy training. The service is provided in the Yeats Library Building and also online via the library website and Moodle space.

Irish Language Provision:

- The Library contains a good collection of Irish language and Celtic Studies books
- The Library mounts exhibitions including Irish Language material
- The Quick Check Self Service Loans machine features a multilingual interface (including Irish)
- The Library has limited capacity to answer queries and deal with correspondence in Irish.

2.3.4 Centre for Online Learning

COL manages and develops the online learning operations of the Institute, providing a range of undergraduate and post-graduate courses to distance learners in Ireland and internationally. COL also makes MOOCs (Massive Open Online Courses) available.

Irish Language Provision: Centre for Online Learning currently provides no services through Irish.

2.4 Secretary/Financial Controller

2.4.1 Human Resources

The HR Office is responsible for staff recruitment, staff training and development and superannuation

Irish Language Provision:

- Job advertisements are bilingual where this is required by online sites such as publicjobs.ie

2.4.2 Finance

The Finance Department is responsible for Institute accounts

Irish Language Provision:

- Statutory Accounts are published bilingually

2.5 Development and Business Operations

2.5.1 Estates

The Estates Office is responsible for the physical campus, including buildings, grounds, utilities, cleaning, maintenance and signage.

Irish Language Provision:

- The Estates Office is responsible for the campus signage system which is bilingual Irish/English

2.5.2 Information Technology

The IT Department is responsible for IT hardware and software, networks and network security and the Institute Website

Irish Language Provision: IT Services currently provides no services through Irish

2.5.3 Technology Transfer and Innovation

The Technology Transfer and Innovation Department is responsible for the Innovation Centre, home to a range of startup companies. It is also responsible for liaising between the Institute and Regional Enterprises.

Irish Language Provision: Technology Transfer and Innovation currently provides no services through Irish.

2.6 School of Engineering and Design

The school delivers programmes at undergraduate and post-graduate level through the Departments of Civil Engineering and Construction, Computing and Creative Practices and Mechanical and Electronic Engineering.

Irish Language Provision: School of Engineering and Design currently provides no services through Irish

2.7 School of Business and Social Sciences

The school delivers programmes at undergraduate and post-graduate level through the Departments of Business, Social Sciences, Marketing, Tourism and Sport

Irish Language Provision: School of Business and Social Sciences currently provides no services through Irish

2.8 School of Science

The School delivers programmes at undergraduate and post-graduate level through the Departments of Life Sciences and Environmental Science.

Irish Language Provision: School of Science currently provides no services through Irish.

3 Enhancement of Services to be Provided Bilingually

3.1 Introduction

IT Sligo does not predict a direct demand for course provision in Irish. However, it has formed the Connacht Ulster Alliance with Galway Mayo Institute of Technology and with Letterkenny Institute of Technology with a view to forming a Technological University. It also participates with these institutions and with NUI Galway in the Western Regional Cluster. All of these institutions have a track record of providing services to Gaeltacht areas and IT Sligo would be happy to explore the possibility that it may participate jointly in programmes delivered to Gaeltacht areas in the future.

3.2 IT Sligo Irish Language Workgroup

As noted in Section 2.1 above, there is a small core group of staff interested in working through Irish and on Irish related projects. It is proposed that this group be formed into an Irish Language Workgroup which will meet regularly to progress the proposed improvements in Irish language service outlined below. Meetings of this group will be held through Irish as much as possible.

While the analysis in Chapter 2 was based on the Institute's Administrative hierarchy of Schools and Departments, the following proposals will, in general be cross-departmental and will be based on three themes:

- Means of Communication with the Public
- Staff Training, Education and Development
- Changing Perspectives

3.3 Means of Communication with the Public

The Institute's communication with the public is largely via the following media and at present is through the English language.

- Prospectus
- Application forms/Brochures/Information leaflets

- Miscellaneous publications
- Website
- Email
- Letter
- Oral Communication
- Public relations.

The following commitments are being made in respect of this language scheme.

3.3.1 Prospectus

Having regard to the current constraints on resources the Institute does not expect to produce the entire prospectus bilingually during the lifetime of this scheme.

Section headings and programme titles contained in the prospectus will be produced bilingually. Material particularly aimed at the international market will continue to be delivered in the language appropriate for the market.

Timescale: 2016/2017 prospectus edition

3.3.2 Application forms/Brochures/Information leaflets

Direct application forms for undergraduate and postgraduate students will be issued bilingually. A programme will be initiated to produce brochures and information leaflets bilingually, beginning with the library. Consultants' reports and dedicated technical reports will be published in the language in which they were originally presented.

Timeframe: At the next re-print of application forms

3.3.3 Miscellaneous Publications

3.3.3.1 Graduation Booklet

The graduation booklet is published in time for the graduation ceremony, mainly listing students and their award. The following sections will be bilingual

- Introductory pages
- Titles of courses and programmes

Timeframe: By the end of year 2 of the scheme

3.3.3.2 Connect Magazine

Connect is a magazine from the Institute published annually. One article per issue will be published in Irish.

Timeframe: By the end of year 2 of the scheme

3.3.4 Website

The Institute Website is dynamic and subject to ongoing change. It is important to avoid content in Irish becoming out of date in comparison to related content in English. It is also the case that, while multiple staff contribute content in English to the site, maintaining Irish content will be the responsibility of a very small number or possibly a single member of staff drawn from the Irish language Workgroup. For this reason, the approach to Irish language content on the website should be realistic and emphasise ongoing sustainability. It is proposed that a body of summary information about the Institute be prepared, incorporating links to the principle sections of the web-site and that this be accessible from a “Gaeilge” link on the main page. Members of the Irish language Campus Group should receive training in the use of the Institute’s content management system and a small team of individuals should be rostered to review and update the page of information in Irish.

Timeframe: End of Year One of the Scheme

The Library website includes a catalogue search. An additional link will lead to a search screen with system text in Irish.

Timeframe: End of Year Two of the Scheme

3.3.5 Email

IT Sligo doesn't currently have an email disclaimer. When one is introduced, it will be bilingual Irish/English.

Timeframe: Year 3 of the scheme

All Institute staff will be provided with a standardised answer to allow a response to email queries in Irish and a list of the names of members of the Irish Language Workgroup to whom queries may be forwarded.

Timeframe: Year 1 of the scheme

3.3.6 General Correspondence

The institute will nominate a dedicated staff member, or members as appropriate, to be responsible for responding in the same language when a person communicates in writing through Irish which is a statutory obligation. Suitable training will be provided to the nominated staff member/members.

Timeframe: Year 1 of the scheme

3.3.7 Oral Announcements

The Institute will ensure that pre-recorded oral announcements comply with the Official Languages Act 2003.

3.3.8 Reception Operation

Reception staff will be trained to respond to queries in Irish in person or by phone as follows:

- They will be provided with a list of staff on the Irish Language Workgroup from different Institute functions who are prepared to deal with queries in their area through Irish
- Reception staff will be provided with a list of basic phrases for acknowledging and re-directing queries in Irish.

Timeframe: Year 3 of Scheme

3.3.9 Public Relations

Press releases in relation to the Irish language will be published bilingually and simultaneously.

Timeframe: Immediate

3.4 Translation and Other Support Services for Irish

The Institute has at least one staff member prepared to carry out translations of short texts such as recruitment advertisements. More substantive documents such as annual reports, which are required to be translated under the Act, will be sent to commercial translation companies. An RFT will be run to select a translation company

Timeframe: Translation Contract in Place. Second RFT Year 2 of the Scheme to cover 2016/17

3.5 Staff Training, Development and Support

Prior to undertaking the training, development and support activities outlined below, it is proposed to run a survey of all staff at the Institute with a view to identifying opportunities for enhancing the use of Irish in the Institute. Staff with a practical working knowledge of the language and a commitment to use it in a work context will be of particular importance in this regard and it is hoped to create the Irish Language Workgroup from among these staff.

3.5.1 Training, Development and Support for Irish Language Workgroup

It is the Irish Language Workgroup who will put in place most of the initiatives outlined in Section 3.3. The following supports will be provided:

- A regular meeting of the group to be held through Irish as much as possible.
- A space on the Institute Moodle system, with sections targeted at the Irish Language Workgroup to make members aware of useful online services, documents etc. and to provide a discussion forum. The working language of these sections will be Irish.
- In house training on available online dictionaries, basic web content management, phone messaging system, etc.
- Awareness raising regarding resources and organisations which support practical work in the Irish language
- Access to online and print publications in Irish
- Access to self-taught packages and grammars to improve fluency and correctness of language
- Access and funding support to pursue appropriate medium or advanced level courses provided locally or online

Timeframe: It is proposed to put supports in place and develop procedures during Year 1 of the Scheme

3.5.2 Additional Training and Development Supports

The following supports will be provided with the aim of fostering a positive attitude to Irish in the Institute:

- Efforts will be made to provide a basic Irish language class to build the “cúpla focal” into a working knowledge of simple oral and written Irish.
- The Moodle space referred to in Section 3.5.1 above will include bilingual and English language sections containing material on the culture and background of the Irish language and information on events during Seachtain na Gaeilge and at other times.
- Seachtain na Gaeilge: Irish language events will be organised at the library and every effort will be made to involve as many language enthusiasts on campus as possible.
- Introduction to Irish Language Culture Weekly Seminar: It is proposed to run a lunchtime, drop in seminar once per week in the library during the academic year featuring the following:
 - Interesting points about the Irish language (for example: the verb “to be” vs the “copail”; initial mutation; verb first etc.) These will be viewed more as interesting features rather than practical grammar with a view to fostering a fresh perspective on the language.
 - An aspect of Irish language history
 - A sample of Irish language literature in translation

Note: Classes, Seachtain na Gaeilge events and the proposed weekly seminars may also be open to students

Over time it is hoped that these initiatives may help to develop the interest and commitment of more staff and prompt them to improve their competency and fluency in a practical way, either by pursuing a course or by using self-taught materials, to the extent that they might join the Irish Language Workgroup of fluent speakers referred to above. At that point they could begin to play an active role in delivering Irish language services.

Timeframe: It is proposed to have these supports in place from Year 2 of the Scheme

3.6 Changing Perspectives among the General Staff

One group which might not be thought of immediately in relation to Irish are the foreign students. These come from a variety of countries, both European and non-European. They are given a certain amount of introduction to general Irish society and culture as part of their course and it would seem a natural progression to introduce those interested to a greater element of material on the Irish language. Since Irish has a strong presence on the Internet and groups of dedicated learners and practitioners active in many countries, some of these students may already be aware of the language, if only in a vague way. For those who are not, they may be surprised to learn that a language other than English is spoken in the Ireland and some may be interested in attending the lunchtime seminars mentioned in Section 3.5.2 above.

Other initiatives which will be considered in this context include:

- Occasional lectures on Minority Languages: Attitudes to the Irish language and to the Act might be insular. Attempts to revive Irish may be seen as a negative aspect unique to Ireland and are sometimes portrayed as a useless draw on the country's resources. It is proposed that lectures on minority languages worldwide, especially in European countries, might show that preserving a minority language is a worthwhile societal and national aim.
- Events involving fluent Irish speakers who are not from Ireland: There is an increasing cohort of people from different countries around the world, including some immigrants living in Ireland, who have developed an advanced proficiency in Irish. Organising an event involving people such as this would help to show the Irish language in a new light.

Timeframe: Two lectures during the period of the scheme

IT, SLIGO will be conscious of its obligations under the Act when recruiting staff. All new recruits will be advised of the various opportunities and initiatives outlined above.

4 Monitoring and Revision

4.1 Monitoring and Revision

The Executive of the Institute will keep the effective operation of the scheme under review. The day-to-day monitoring function will be carried out primarily by the Irish Language Workgroup who will provide a bi-annual report to the Institute Senior Management Committee and the Institute Executive including the following information:

- Summary of progress to date on each commitment given in Chapter 3.
- Summary of translation tasks and costs
- List of queries received and answered in Irish
- List of bilingual forms

A final report at the end of the scheme, written by the Librarian on behalf of the Irish Language Workgroup will assess the extent to which the scheme overall has been successfully implemented and will set out parameters for a following scheme.

5 Publicising the Scheme

5.1 Publicising the scheme

The contents of the scheme, along with the commitments and provisions of the scheme, will be publicised to the general public by means of:

- Press release
- Advertising of provisions
- Circulation to appropriate agencies and public bodies through email notification
- Publication on the institute website.

Internally the scheme will be promoted as follows:

- A copy of the scheme will be posted on the Institute Library website and a link circulated to all staff as soon as possible after approval.

A copy of this scheme has also been forwarded to Oifig Choimisinéir na dTeangacha Oifigiúla.

The English language version is the original text of this scheme

6 Appendix I: Public Notice

Sligo Champion 26th November 2013



IT Sligo
An Institiúid Teicneolaíochta, Sligeach

**OFFICIAL LANGUAGES ACT 2003
PUBLIC CONSULTATION ON A DRAFT
SCHEME BY
INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY, SLIGO**

For further information and to make a submission
please see our website at www.itsligo.ie

**ACHT NA dTEANGACHA OIFIGIÚLA 2003
COMHAIRLIÚCHÁN POIBLÍ AR
DHRÉACTSCÉIM TEANGA DE CHUID
AN INSTITIÚID TEICNEOLAÍOCHTA, SLIGEACH**

Chun aighneacht a dhéanamh agus tuilleadh eolais
a fháil féach ar ár láithreán gréasáin www.itsligo.ie

7 Appendix II: Summary of Commitments under this Scheme with Timeframe

