WATERFORD INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY

LANGUAGE SCHEME

2014 - 2017

Under Section 11 of the Official Languages Act 2003

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Section 1 Introduction and Background

This scheme was prepared by Waterford Institute of Technology under Section 11 of the Official Languages Act 2003 ("hereinafter referred to as the Act"). 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.

The scheme sets out the measures to be adopted to ensure that any service not provided through the medium of Irish will be so provided within the agreed timeframe.

1.1   Guidelines for the Preparation of a Scheme

Section 12 of the Act provides for the preparation of guidelines by the Minister for Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht and their issue to public bodies to assist in the preparation of draft schemes. This scheme has been drawn up in accordance with these guidelines.

1.2   Consultation Process

In accordance with Section 13 of the Act, Waterford Institute of Technology published notices inviting representations, submissions, suggestions or comments from interested parties.

The scheme sets out the targets WIT has set itself and indicates priority areas. Responsibility for monitoring and review will rest with the Senior Management of the Institute.

This scheme has been informed by all the submissions received and by the views and suggestions put forward by all stakeholders. The Institute appreciates the time and effort put in by all concerned in this process.

1.3 Commencement Date of Scheme

This scheme has been confirmed by the Minister for Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht and is commenced with effect from **06 October 2014**. It will remain in force for a period of 3 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.

Section 2 Overview of Waterford Institute of Technology

2.1 The Institute

WIT is an Institute of Technology located on four campuses in Waterford (Cork Road, College Street, the Applied Technology Building and Carriganore). In accordance with the terms of Sections 29 and 30 of the Qualifications (Education and Training) Act, 1999, Waterford Institute of Technology currently has delegated authority from Quality and Qualifications Ireland (QQI), formerly the Higher Education and Training Awards Council (HETAC), to make awards for taught programmes at levels 6, 7 and 8 in all areas of study, at level 9 in most areas, and at level 10 in the School of Science.

The Institute offers a wide range of programmes of study in Business, Engineering, Science, Humanities, Hotel and Catering, Education and Professional Development, and Nursing and Health Sciences. It had approximately 8,200 full-time and part-time students in 2013-2014 and 743 full-time staff (whole-time equivalent). Through its Development Unit it supports postgraduate studies as well as international students. Through its Research Support Unit (RSU) the Institute provides support for researchers who are engaged in funded research projects. The Institute also supports, on a commercial basis, innovation, enterprise, research, consultancy and regional development.

The principal aim of the Institute is to make courses of high educational quality available to its students through the medium of English (and through the medium of Irish in specific cases, and as demand increases).

2.2   Waterford Institute of Technology Mission Statement

Waterford Institute of Technology will apply excellence in teaching, learning and research within an inclusive student-centred environment to foster graduates of distinction who are ready to take or enhance their leadership role in business, the professions, industry, public service and society. The Institute will manage its hinterland as a Learning Region by empowering knowledge generation and knowledge transfer and is committed to the educational development of the region in a way that is reflective of its national and international aspects. The Institute will contribute to the economic, social and cultural development of the South East region and beyond.

2.3   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 Department of Education and Skills

- Higher Education Authority

- Department of Health

- Department of Children and Youth Affairs,

- Quality and Qualifications Ireland (QQI)

- The Institution of Engineers of Ireland

- TEAGASC

- Other Institutes of Technology

- Other Higher Education Institutes

- Second-Level Schools

- Education and Training Boards (formerly VECs)

- Local Authorities

- Industrial Development Authority (IDA)

- Fáilte Ireland

- Waterford Chamber of Commerce and Industry

- Trade Unions

- IBEC

- Enterprise Ireland

- SOLAS (formerly FÁS)

- Heritage Council

- South East Tourism

- Kildalton Agricultural College

2.4 WIT Management and Organisational Structure

Function	Department
President	Office of the President Strategic Planning
Secretary/Finance Office	Finance Human Resources Secretariat to Governing Body Capital Projects Office Estates Office
Registry	Academic Administration and Student Affairs Computer Services Student Life and Learning Quality Promotion Marketing and Communications Educational Services Library
Research and Innovation	Research Support Industry Services & Technology Transfer Postgraduate Studies Strategic Projects & Alliances Manager
Schools	**Departments**
School of Business	Department of Accountancy and Economics Department of Management and Organisation Department of Graduate Business Studies
School of Lifelong Learning and Education	Department of Adult and Continuing Education Department of Quality and Lifelong Learning Literacy Development Centre Centre for Technology Enhanced Learning
School of Engineering	Department of Architecture Department of Engineering Technology Department of Construction and Civil Engineering Department of Trade Studies
School of Health Sciences	Department of Nursing Department of Health, Sport and Exercise Studies
School of Humanities	Department of Applied Arts Department of Creative and Performing Arts Department of Languages, Tourism and Hospitality
School of Science	Department of Computing, Maths and Physics Department of Chemical and Life Sciences International Office

Section 3 Summary of Services and Activities currently being provided in English only or bilingually

The main function to WIT is to provide quality education programmes. The primary function of the Official Languages Act is to ensure better availability and a higher standard of public services through Irish.

3.1   Services currently offered through Irish

Ard-Dioplóma i Léiriú Teilifíse/H. Dip. in Television Production (in cooperation with *Údarás na Gaeltachta and Nemeton Teo.*) has been offered since 2006.

Modules have been offered to full-time students as part of the Bachelor of Arts (Honours) since September 2009; these modules have also been taken as electives by students of Psychology and Architecture.

The Bachelor of Business Studies with Irish has been offered since September 2010. WIT will continue to offer modules in the Irish language and hopes to extend the availability of Irish as electives as the opportunity to do so arises as part of Programmatic Reviews in each of the Schools

Lunchtime Irish classes at 3 levels will continue to be offered free of charge to staff;

Irish has been promoted in the Institute through provision of conversation circles, cultural and social events during the year, (particularly during *Seachtain na Gaeilge*) and organised trips for staff and students to *Gaeltacht na Rinne*.

WIT has established *Bord na Gaeilge* in order to promote Irish in the Institute and to strengthen links with *Gaeltacht na Rinne*.

3.2   Services currently offered bilingually

The library is currently able to offer some of its counter services bilingually (depending on staff availability), and also has displays in Irish at key times during the year (e.g. *Seachtain na Gaeilge*).

3.3 Services currently offered through English

All other services are provided through the medium of English only

Section 4 Enhancing of Services to be provided Bilingually

4.1 Introduction

This Section sets out the position in relation to service provision/external interaction of the Departments and Functions within the Institute and externally with the general public. It outlines the measures to be taken to comply with the Act and gives the priority areas for action under this scheme.

4.2 The Secretary/Finance Office

4.2.1 Finance Office

The Finance Office is responsible for all procurement and payment and consequently advertises contracts, produces tender documents, pays invoices, salaries and prepares the annual accounts.

The Finance Office will

a. Ensure that all publications of reports including Financial Statements are published in Irish and English under the same cover.
b. Undertake to provide 33% of standard forms and communications in Irish and English before the end of 2014.

Due to the technical nature of tender documents these will be published only in English.

4.2.2 Human Resources

This department is responsible for advertising staff vacancies, producing application forms, job descriptions and arranging interviews. It is also responsible for staff welfare and discipline.

Human Resources will

a. provide application forms bilingually, if this is requested. It would not however, have the resources during this scheme to provide job descriptions in Irish except in specific cases (such as *léachtóirí le Gaeilge*) where Irish is a core requirement. Other job descriptions will be available in Irish in a future scheme.
b. In future schemes, offer interviews in Irish subject to advance notice by the interviewee of their language choice.
c. Ensure that Human Resource procedures will, subject to the framework of the agreed national recruitment procedures, meet the objectives of the scheme by putting appropriate recruitment, internal placement and redeployment policies in place over the period of this and subsequent schemes. It will liaise with the staff development unit in meeting the objectives.
d. Ensure that he staff development unit continues to provide Irish language classes to staff. Staff in key areas will be facilitated and encouraged to attend these classes.

4.2.3 The Estates Office

The Estates Office, *inter alia*, is responsible for signage.

- All new signage is bilingual, and the estates office will continue to update older signage, to ensure that WIT is compliant with the requirements of the regulations.

4.3   Registry

4.3.1 Academic Services

Registry is responsible for the recruitment, registration and assessment of students. To this end it advertises courses, organises school visits and produces the Prospectus.

-By the end of the first scheme, 50% of registration and examination support documentation, for examinations within the control of WIT, will be bilingual. It will be fully bilingual before the end of the next scheme.

4.3.2 Information Technology

By the end of the scheme,

-computer interactive support services and systems will be made available bilingually on a phased basis:

as new services are added

as old services are upgraded.

4.3.3 Student Services

A wide range of student services is provided under Student Life and Learning, these are:

the Access Office, the Retention Office, General Student Support Office, the Counseling Service, Institute Nurse and Health Promotion Service, The Careers Service, the Disability Office, and the Regional Educational Guidance Service for Adults (REGSA).

A Chaplaincy service is also available.

- At least one of the prayers during Mass will be in Irish.

4.3.4 The Library

This is one of the priority areas for developing bilingual services for students and staff.

- Initially information leaflets will be available bilingually and by the end of the scheme a staff member will be available to provide a one-to-one service in Irish at designated times (spread throughout the week). This will be made known to users.

4.3.5 Centre for Technology Enhanced Learning

- The Centre has recently installed the Irish language pack on Moodle and verified that it is working correctly. It has also provided directions for users on how to change their language preferences http://elearning.wit.ie/support/view/how-can-i-change-the-settings-for-the-preferred-language-to-irish#.U4MyEVhdV1Q).
- Users can now change their language preference in their profile area in Moodle to have the various menus and additional information provided by the system displayed in Irish.
- Files, resources, materials added to Moodle will still be displayed in the language of the document.

The Centre will continue to develop and monitor these services.

4.4 The Research and Innovation Office

4.4.1 The Industrial Liaison Unit

The Industrial Unit supports Industrial/Business training and consultancy, technology transfer and community development. It liaises with development agencies, trade and professional organisations and such representative groups.

- Should a training or consultancy service in Irish be required, staff with Irish will be assigned to the task.

4.4.2 Research

The Research Unit disseminates information regarding research programmes. It supports research proposals, researcher recruitment and it also monitors and manages start-up, progress and termination of programmes.

It supports the enhancement of research capacity.

- Should Irish be a desirable requirement of a research project, then Irish will be stated as a requirement in recruiting researchers for such projects within the framework of the agreed national recruitment procedures.

4.4.3 Enterprise and Incubation

The Enterprise and Incubation Unit encourages and promotes entrepreneurship throughout the Institute. It organises Enterprise Development programmes and manages the process of incubation.

4.5   The Schools

The Schools and other campus centres undertake the core activity of the Institute. Under a 'departmental and centre' structure, courses are provided in a wide range of disciplines under the broad generic headings of Science, Engineering, Business, Humanities, Education and Professional Development, and Health Science.

Most programmes of study are offered through English. Courses currently offered through Irish are the full time course *Ard Diploma i Léiriú Teilifíse*/H. Dip. in Television Production (in cooperation with *Údarás na Gaeltachta* and *Nemeton Teo.*), and since 2009 modules on the BA (honours) programme in the School of Humanities, which are also offered as electives to students of Psychology and students in the Department of Architecture. Students can also take a Bachelor of Business Studies with Irish. The situation will be monitored from year to year and

courses will be offered according to demand and depending on funding being available for course development (see also 4.1).

- The process of ensuring one-to-one Irish language support services through the school offices will begin during the lifetime of the first scheme but will not be completed until subsequent schemes are in place. This process will be progressed through an appropriate training, redeployment and recruitment policy.

4.6 Continuous Professional Development

The CPD Office supports the Institute's goal of ensuring that staff has every opportunity to acquire the skills, knowledge and expertise to carry out their duties effectively and to achieve their full potential.

Over the past 5 years a programme of Irish classes at different levels has been offered to all staff (academic, administrative and support), with good uptake across the institute. The CPD Office will continue to provide opportunities to staff to improve their Irish language skills, and will support provision of targeted training and specialist courses for staff in key areas of the Institute.

Section 5 Irish Language Scheme Commitments

5.1 Priorities under the first Scheme

In addition to the specific measures listed under each department (in section 4), Waterford Institute of Technology's first scheme undertakes to implement each of the following commitments. Unless otherwise stated, each commitment takes effects from the commencement of the scheme

1. To provide by the end of this scheme, information to the general public in English and Irish through the following channels:

a. **Brochures, application forms and information leaflets** will be published in both languages. Most will be under one cover, but some may be published separately. In the case of the Institute Prospectus, the introductory paragraph will be in Irish and English. Course detail will be presented in the language of course delivery. Brochures aimed at the international market will be published in English only. Consultants' reports and dedicated technical reports will be published in the language in which they were originally presented.

b. **Other Institute Publications**: During this scheme the Institute will make the following available in Irish and English: signage, internal information documents, internal publications or handbooks dealing with specific courses.

c. **Reception Services**: By the end of the first year of the scheme, staff in reception areas will be trained to say the name of the institute and basic welcome phrases in Irish. They will also be given the name of staff who can be contacted if a member of the public has a query in Irish. This member of staff will be able to deal without delay with queries that might arise.

d. **Telephone messages**: It is the policy of the Institute to ensure that every pre-recorded message will be delivered in Irish and English in accordance with the regulations. To this end, a course has been organised for staff during Professional Development week and is offered once a week to switchboard staff. The Institute will ensure that by the end of the first year of the scheme, the switchboard operator will be able to use the Irish and English name of the institute and be able to understand and use basic greetings in Irish. Training will be provided to enable calls in Irish to be transferred to someone who can deal with them through Irish.

e. **Corporate Press statements**: All press releases pertaining to the Institute's work in the Gaeltacht and/or Irish Language related matters will be issued simultaneously in Irish or bilingually. Where it is feasible, other press releases will be issued through Irish. Speeches or statements will be published in the language in which they were delivered. As the Institute operates within the Gaeltacht and close to a number of Gaelscoileanna, special attention will be paid to Irish on major occasions like conferring ceremonies, by presenting the main speeches either in Irish or in Irish and English, e.g. the President's address, speeches by members of the Governing Body, or others, e.g. QQI. This is on

condition that people who are not employed by Waterford Institute of Technology are willing and able to do this.

    f. **General web site information**. General information about WIT will be provided through the medium of Irish and English, with the exception of the following links which will be in English:

- Links for the International public,
- Links that are technical or specialist in nature
- On-line study programmes (except for *An Ghaeilge*)
- Links to new programmes (except for *An Ghaeilge*)

2. Public Meeting Policy. The Institute does not hold public meetings in the Gaeltacht and conducts all its public meetings in English. However, every effort will be made to have key events (e.g. graduation) conducted through Irish and English.

3. Gaeltacht Placenames. The official placenames of Gaeltacht areas, [as declared by the Minister in the Placenames (Ceantair Ghaeltachta) Order 2004], will be used by the Institute for official purposes.

4. To establish a working group to monitor the operation of the scheme, and to prepare a subsequent scheme;

5. To conduct a survey among staff to establish the current capacity to provide services through the medium of Irish;

6. To heighten staff awareness of the scheme through induction and by regular communication;

7. To continue to offer Irish language classes to Institute staff;

8. To design and offer specific training programmes to meet the needs of frontline staff;

9. To extend the availability of Irish as electives to students across courses where it is not currently offered;

10. To provide the following documentation through the medium of English and Irish:
    - Standard forms in the Secretary/Financial Controller's Office
    - Registration and Examination Support documentation
    - Information leaflets in the Student Life and Learning Office

11. To develop services to students by the use of bilingual documentation and one-to-one services for users of the library (from end of year 1 of the scheme).

12. To develop services to students by making the Student Life and Learning student information handbook and general information leaflet available bilingually (from end of year 1 of scheme).

13. To provide a one-to-one information service through Irish at designated times in the Student Life and Learning office. This service will be offered at the reception desk but will not form part of each individual service provided by the office. This is dependent on a volunteer agreeing to offer the service and to taking part in related training. (The service to be offered by the end of the scheme).

14. To put appropriate redeployment schemes in place to ensure that services can be offered as required.

15. To conduct interviews for new staff through the medium of Irish, where the candidate(s) indicate that this is their preference.

16. To ensure that computer workstations will be configured to support entry, display and printing in Irish and English. WIT's Virtual Learning Environment, Moodle, will facilitate teaching in either English or Irish (by the end of the scheme.

Section 6 Improving the Institute's Irish Language Capability

6.1 Implementation of the Scheme

Interest in learning and using Irish has grown in recent years, and WIT has a small number of staff who have sufficient language skills to be actively involved in implementation of the scheme. Interested staff members will be identified and will work in conjunction with *Bord na Gaeilge* to ensure successful implementation. During the early stages of the scheme, documents (annual reports, brochures, etc.) will be translated by external contract.

6.2 Recruitment

The requirements of the Institute in meeting its obligations under the Official Languages Act will inform the Institute's recruitment, particularly in key areas such as secretarial, reception and cases where Irish will be a specific requirement (e.g. *léachtóireacht i nGaeilge*). The following measures will be put in place by the Human Resources Office so that an adequate number of staff with proficiency in the Irish language is recruited and retained within the Institute in order to meet demand:

   a. As part of its recruitment policy the Institute will, subject to demand and within the framework of the agreed national recruitment procedures and Employment Control Framework (ECF), publicly advertise competitions for staff to work through Irish, when suitable people are not available through general entry-level competitions.
   b. Appropriate placement of staff with such proficiency will be implemented throughout the Institute where demand arises. This policy will optimise the availability of services through Irish. Complementing this, staff with a working knowledge of Irish will be offered re-deployment across the various divisions to support the commitments set out in this scheme.
   c. All new recruits will be advised of development opportunities to improve their competence in Irish.

6.3   Training and Staff Development

The Institute has an ongoing commitment to provide appropriate training and supports the development of all staff through the CPD office (see 4.6). The Continuous Professional Development Office and the Human Resources Office will work together with *Bord na Gaeilge* to:

a. Seek volunteers across the Institute to provide services and help implement the scheme and provide such staff with necessary resources (e.g. Irish dictionaries, on-line resources);

b. Discuss training preferences and specific needs with interested staff and establish a development plan to implement the commitments of the Scheme;

c. Provide for development and design of additional in-house courses at different levels in the Irish language. The emphasis will be on speaking and listening skills, with emphasis on written Irish where required. The courses will be tailor-made to suit the workplace with emphasis, for example, on administrative terms. Courses will be offered, as heretofore, during lunchtime;

d. Consider establishing in-house courses (e.g. for reception and other dedicated functions) with other agencies such as the HSE, Education and Training Boards, etc.;

e. Increase awareness of the language by making it visible across each campus, on plasma screens, noticeboards, etc., and by encouraging staff and students to become involved in *ciorcal comhrá;*

f. Include language awareness and awareness of the WIT scheme as part of its annual induction for new staff;

g. Provide accreditation as appropriate for courses undertaken.

Section 7 Monitoring & Revision

The Senior Management Group within the Institute will keep the effective operation of the scheme under review.   Progress will be recorded in the Annual Report. The day-to-day monitoring function will be carried out primarily by Heads of Department who are responsible for the implementation of the scheme within their own areas. They report on a regular basis to their Head of School/Function. Heads of Departments will liaise with *Bord na Gaeilge*.

Section 8 Publicising of Agreed Scheme

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

- Press Release;

- Official Launch of the scheme;

- Advertising of provisions;

- Circulation to appropriate agencies and public bodies;

- Website.

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

The English language version of this scheme is the official version.