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CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

This scheme - GMIT's second language scheme - was prepared under Section 15 of the Official Languages Act 2003 ("hereinafter referred to as the Act") by GMIT. The Act 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

and 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.

1.1 Guidelines for 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 following consultation with students, staff and representative stakeholders.

The Institute published a public notice under Section 13 (a) of the Official Languages Act inviting representations in relation to the preparation of the draft scheme from any interested parties.

This scheme has been informed by these submissions and views and suggestions put forward by staff and students. A *grúpa Gaeilge* was established to help develop this process. In addition all staff and other stakeholders were contacted and invited to make a submission. Submissions received were taken into account in developing this second scheme. The Institute appreciates the time and effort put in by all concerned in this process.

This scheme is predicated on all of the commitments in our previous scheme being implemented. In the event of commitments within that scheme not having been fully implemented to date, this matter has been dealt with by the Office of An Coimisinéir Teanga.

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

1.2 The Content of the Language Scheme

The services provided are currently still largely through English. The Institute has a limited number of staff with verbal competencies in Irish and an even smaller number with written competency.

Therefore, GMIT's priorities for this scheme are to:

1. Further enhance staff competency in Irish.
2. Increase the awareness among all staff of the content and purpose of the scheme.

3. Extend to other areas a limited one-to-one service, which has begun under Scheme 1 in specific areas and which can be built upon in subsequent schemes.
4. Consolidate plans to extend graduate competency in Irish in selected areas.

1.3 Commencement Date of the Scheme

This scheme has been confirmed by the Minister for Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht. The scheme will commence with effect from the 22 April 2013 and shall 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.

1.4 Overview of GMIT

1.4.1 The Institute

GMIT is an Institute of Technology located on four campuses. It has delegated authority to make its own awards at levels 6 – 9 (i.e. from Higher Certificate to Masters) and at level 10 in certain designated areas. It offers a wide range of programmes of study in Business, Engineering, Science, Humanities, Tourism & Arts, Furniture Design & Technology and Nursing & Health Sciences. It has students on fulltime, craft, ACCS and part-time programmes of study and has in excess of 600 staff. It supports, on a commercial basis, Innovation, Entrepreneurship, Research, Consultancy and Regional Development.

1.4.2 Mission Statement

The GMIT Mission

At GMIT we develop life-long learning opportunities through our teaching and research, by supporting regional development consistent with national higher education policy.

The GMIT Vision

- Learning is and will be the core activity of the Institute, bringing students, staff and the region together to share, apply, test and create knowledge;
- GMIT will continue to develop as a regional organisation with an international focus committed to the personal and professional enrichment of its students, the needs of its regions, national priorities and global opportunities;
- GMIT will both shape and respond to the perspectives and expectations of its stakeholders and will work in collaboration with them to meet their needs;
- GMIT will be an organisation characterised by its flexibility, creativity, responsiveness and a capacity to adapt.

1.4.3 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:

- Students and their parents/guardians
- Employees of GMIT
- Governing Body
- Department of Education & Skills
- HEA
- Government Departments and Affiliates
- QQI
- Other Institutes of Technology
- Other Higher Education Institutes
- Second-Level Schools
- Vocational Education Committees
- Local Authorities and other Public Sector Bodies
- Professional Bodies
- IDA
- Údarás na Gaeltachta
- Fáilte Ireland
- Galway Chamber of Commerce and Industry
- Trade Unions
- IBEC
- Enterprise Ireland
- FÁS
- Heritage Council
- Galway Film Centre
- Ireland West Tourism
- Mountbellew Agricultural College
- Forum for Letterfrack
- Connemara West
- Europus Teo.

The customer service standard commitments adopted by GMIT in relation to delivery of services to our customers shall apply to those services, whether delivered in the Irish language or in the English language.

1.4.4 Functions and Departments

| Function Area | Department |
|----------------------|--|
| Academic Affairs | Academic Services |
| | MIS |
| | Library |
| | Student Services |
| | Centre for Educational Development (CED) |
| | Castlebar |
| | Business, Humanities & Technology |
| | Nursing & Health Sciences |
| | Lifelong Learning |

| | |
|--|--|
| Letterfrack College of Tourism & Arts | Furniture Design & Technology Centre for the Creative Arts & Media Culinary Arts Applied Languages & Humanities Service Industries Heritage & Tourism |
| Business | Management Accounting & Information Systems |
| Engineering | Building & Civil Engineering Mechanical & Industrial Engineering Electronic Engineering |
| Science | Physical & Life Sciences Mathematics & Computing |
| Finance | Finance Human Resources ICT Services Buildings & Estates Commercial Services Lifelong Learning GMIT Catering Company |
| Research & Enterprise | Research & Enterprise Development Incubation |
| International | International Activities |

1.5 Assessment of extent to which Services are Already Available through Irish

The objective of this second scheme is to continue the delivery of these commitments and build on the progress achieved across GMIT over the period of the last scheme. It sets out a commitment on behalf of the Institute and its staff to develop the extent to which services are currently available through Irish and it identifies areas for future enhancement.

The new scheme also builds on the principles of Quality Customer Service and will continue to ensure that persons who wish to conduct their business in Irish are facilitated.

Progress will be monitored and reported on in the GMIT Annual Report.

The main function of the Institute is to provide quality programmes of education to its students and this will continue to be the case for the foreseeable future. The vast majority of these programmes are offered through English, with two programmes being offered exclusively through Irish, namely:

- Ard-Diplóma i nGaeilge Fheidhmeach agus Aistriúchaí
- MSc i nGaeilge Fheidhmeach agus Aistriúchaí

These courses are run in partnership with Europus Teo and supported by Údarás na Gaeltachta.

CHAPTER 2 PROVISION OF GENERAL INSTITUTIONAL SERVICES/ACTIVITIES

This chapter sets out the official languages regime operated by the Institute in relation to the general provision of its services. Chapter 3 sets out the position in relation to service provision/activities by individual divisions within the Institute.

2.1 Means of Communication with the Public

By the end of the scheme the Institute's communications with the general public regarding general information relating to its services will continue to be made available in both English and Irish by means of:

- Brochures, application forms & information leaflets
- Publications
- Website – general, static information
- Speeches or statements will be made available in the language(s) in which they are delivered.
- Press releases relating to the Irish language, or related topics, will be published in Irish or bilingually, as appropriate.

2.2 Fully Bilingual Services

It is the Institute's policy that significant progress will be made in providing fully bilingual services through the medium of Irish and English by the end of the scheme in the following areas:

2.2.1 Website

In the upcoming redevelopment of our website, GMIT will continue to publish bilingually general information relating to its services on the website. The following components of the website will remain in English only:

- Components aimed at an international audience
- Components of a technical specialist nature
- Web-based programmes of study (except Irish language programmes which will be available through Irish).
- Components relating to existing or new programmes (other than those available through Irish).

The Institute will ensure that all documents, including information leaflets and brochures that are produced in Irish or bilingually, will be made available on the Irish version of the website at the same time as the English version of such documents.

2.2.2 Interactive Services

The Institute does not currently operate any interactive services. Should any new interactive services be introduced during the course of this scheme, they will be introduced, where feasible, bilingually simultaneously.

2.2.3 Computer Systems

As new computer systems are installed, they will be compatible with the Irish language and any current computer systems will be updated to cater for same during planned upgrades or maintenance work.

2.2.4 Learning Management System

The Learning Management System, accessible by students from any internet connection on or off campus, provides online learning (course resources, activities, assessments, etc). Both lecturers and students can change the interface of the system to Gaeilge where available. The multilingual aspect of the system is promoted and demonstrated to staff at training. This facilitates staff in generating content as Gaeilge as required and this process is now in place.

2.2.5 Student Portal and Language Portal

The student portal (student.gmit.ie) contains student-related information on a range of topics including the academic calendar, IT services, student services, etc. All information of a general nature under these headings will be published bilingually from the time this website is redeveloped. The same is true of the Language Portal.

2.2.6 Links to Resources

By the end of the first year of this scheme, the GMIT website will have a section entitled "Gaeilge ag GMIT/The Irish Language at GMIT" where information will be provided on:

- Scéimeanna na Gaeilge
- Links to useful Irish language resources
- Irish language classes/social groups available for staff/students

2.2.7 Brochures, Application Forms and Information Leaflets

On an ongoing basis, all new brochures, application forms and general information leaflets will be published bilingually. Most will be under the same cover though larger publications may be published simultaneously in Irish and English. In the case of the Institute Prospectus the general information sections will be in both English and Irish. Programme details will be in the language of delivery. Brochures aimed at an international market will be in English only. Consultant reports and dedicated technical reports will be published in the language in which they were originally presented.

2.2.8 Reception/Switchboard Operation

Receptionists/switchboard operators are the first points of contact with the public. It shall be the policy of GMIT to ensure that standard Quality Customer Service (QCS) practice applies in this area, which is that from the beginning of the scheme:

- Reception/switchboard staff will give the name of the Institute in Irish.
- They are at least familiar with the basic greetings in Irish.
- Suitable arrangements are in place so that they can put members of the public in touch, without delay, with the office or officer responsible for offering the service required through Irish, where available.

As the Institute operates in a catchment area with a strong Gaeltacht, vibrant Gaelscoileanna and community based Gaeilge groups, it will continue to give appropriate prominence to the Irish language at key events such as the graduation ceremonies by having part of key addresses, such as that of the President, Chairperson of the Governing Body and such others as HETAC representatives, given in Irish or bilingually. This is subject to the proviso that such persons outside the employment of GMIT will be competent to do so.

CHAPTER 3 SUMMARY OF SERVICES/ACTIVITIES PROVIDED BY DIVISIONS

3.1 Introduction

This Chapter sets out the position in relation to service provision/external interaction of the Departments within the Institute and with the general public. It lists the measures it is taking to comply with the Act and gives the priority areas for action under this scheme.

3.1.1 Priority for this Scheme

The priorities for this scheme are:

1. To continue to enhance the Institute's ability to provide services in Irish and English
2. To continue to raise staff awareness of the scheme through induction and regular communication
3. To continue to enhance staff competency in Irish through training and development
4. To continue to develop services to students through bilingual documentation and an extension of a one-to-one verbal service in newly designated areas
5. To continue to extend the number of courses whose graduates may carry out their work competently through Irish.

3.2 Registrar's Office

3.2.1 Academic Services

The Registrar's Office is responsible for the recruitment, registration and assessment of students. To this end it advertises courses, organises school visits and produces the Prospectus. Online support information for students on academic affairs will be available bilingually following the redevelopment of our website. School visits to the Gaeltacht and to Gaelscoileanna in non-Gaeltacht areas will continue to be provided through Irish.

3.2.2 Library

A bilingual service is available in the library at designated times. The 'Library Guide' will continue to be bilingual, as will forms/leaflets on membership, photocopying and book requests.

3.2.3 Student Services

A wide range of student services covering the areas of Health, Counselling, Careers, Access, Disability, Mature Students, Learning Support and Chaplaincy are provided on a full-time basis. From the beginning of the scheme, a staff member will be available to provide a bilingual service in the areas of Access and Disability.

3.2.4 Centre for Educational Development (CED)

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

In line with the requirements of the Act, the CED will provide opportunities to staff to enhance their ability to provide a service through Irish.

3.3 Finance Office

3.3.1 Buildings and Estates

The Buildings and Estates unit produces tender documentation for building and maintenance contracts, manages building works, maintenance, caretaking, Health & Safety administration, car parking and other associated activities. It is responsible for signage pertaining to these functions. From time to time, general static information may be published on the GMIT website for the benefit of staff, students and the public and such general information will be published bilingually.

3.3.2 Commercial Services

The Commercial Services unit is responsible for all Institute commercial activities including space rental training, consultancy and technology transfer. 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, if available. The Commercial Services unit is also responsible for Lifelong Learning and the GMIT Catering Company. The Lifelong Learning unit advertises courses and organises information evenings for potential students and companies. The GMIT Catering Company is responsible for running the Cafeteria, which is open to both staff and students. Standard menus will continue to be bilingual.

3.3.3 Finance

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. It will comply with the agreed advertising procedures and will continue to ensure that its standard forms are bilingual.

3.3.4 Human Resources

This department is responsible for advertising staff vacancies, producing application forms, job descriptions and arranging interviews. It will provide job descriptions in Irish in specific cases, such as *léachtóirí i nGaeilge*, where Irish is a core requirement. Human Resource procedures will, subject to the framework of the agreed National recruitment procedures, continue to 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 continue to liaise with the Centre for Educational Development in meeting the objectives.

3.3.5 IT

Computing Services can provide a bilingual service as required. IT training can be offered through the medium of Irish, subject to demand and adequate notice to prepare training notes.

As new computer systems are installed, software with multilingual functionality will be chosen, where possible, but this is always weighed against the need to choose the best IT solution for our given requirements.

3.4 Research & Enterprise

This office disseminates information relating to 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. The Enterprise and Incubation unit encourages and promotes entrepreneurship throughout the Institute. It organises Enterprise Development programmes and manages the process of incubation.

3.5 Colleges & Schools

The Colleges, Schools and other campus centres undertake the core activity of the Institute. Programmes are provided in a wide range of disciplines under the broad generic headings of Science, Computing, Engineering, Business, Tourism, Humanities, Creative Arts & Media, Furniture Design & Technology and Nursing & Health Sciences.

Currently, there is no evidence of a demand from school leavers for courses through Irish that would justify the investment required for such courses. However, this situation will be monitored annually and additional courses introduced as demand warrants and subject to funding being available for course development. The demand for short-strand courses, such as the Special Purpose award, and for postgraduate courses, such as the Higher Diploma/MSc, has increased as a result of the Official Languages Act and the Institute will consider developing similar courses in association with other organisations.

The process of ensuring one-to-one bilingual verbal support services through the school offices will not be completed until subsequent schemes are in place. However, should a student wish to conduct his/her business through Irish, access will be provided to this service through the college/school office.

3.6 Summary of Plan for Implementation

In summary, by the end of the scheme all functional areas will publish the following support documentation bilingually:

- Brochures
- Information Leaflets
- Prospectus – general information
- Web Site – general static information
- Irish Language Press Releases, as appropriate.

The Institute does not hold public meetings in Gaeltacht areas. However, any targeted meetings held in schools in the Gaeltacht or in Gaelscoileanna outside the Gaeltacht will be held in Irish.

CHAPTER 4 ADDITIONAL ENHANCEMENT OF SERVICES

4.1 Enhancement of Services to be Provided Bilingually

GMIT will continue to respond to all national initiatives suggested by the HEA.

4.2 Training and Development

The Institute has an ongoing commitment to provide appropriate training and supports the development of all its staff. It established a *Coiste Gaeilge* to work on implementing the Act and on preparing the scheme.

- The Coiste will continue its work with the CED and the Human Resources Department to:
- Seek volunteers across the Institute to provide services & help implement the scheme and provide such staff with resources (e.g. Irish dictionaries, etc).
- Discuss training preferences with interested staff and put in place development programmes within the context of the GMIT Strategic Plan.
- Evaluate conversational Irish classes which take place within the Institute (e.g. evening classes run by the Lifelong Learning unit, and informal conversational classes).
- Subject to demand and developmental budgets, develop & design additional in-house courses at different levels in the Irish language. The emphasis will be on speaking and listening skills, with attention also given to written Irish. The courses will be tailor-made to suit the workplace with emphasis, for example, on administrative terms. The possibility of running some courses during the day and at lunchtime will be explored.
- Consider establishing in-house courses (e.g. for reception and other dedicated functions) with other agencies such as the HSE, VEC, etc.
- Include language awareness as part of its annual induction for new staff.
- Provide accreditation as appropriate for courses undertaken.

4.3 Gaeltacht Placenames

The official placenames of Gaeltacht areas will continue to be used by the Institute for official purposes [in line with the Placenames (Ceantair Ghaeltachata) Order 2004].

CHAPTER 5 MONITORING AND 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 and reporting on a regular basis to their Head of College/School/Function.

CHAPTER 6 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
- Inclusion of the scheme on our website.

The Institute will take every opportunity to promote and publicise the services it provides through Irish by:

- directly informing customers on a pro-active basis of the option of dealing with the Institute through Irish, for example, by displaying notices at reception areas indicating the Irish language services that are available and by prominently listing these on the Institute's website;
- including footnotes in selected guidelines, leaflets and application forms indicating that these documents are available in Irish, unless presented bilingually;
- giving equal prominence to Irish and English language materials.

The English language version of this scheme shall be the original version of the scheme.

A copy of this scheme will be forwarded to Oifig Choimisinéir na dTeangacha Oifigiúla on approval.