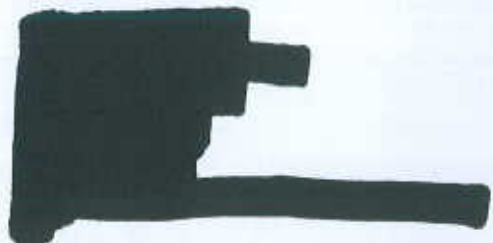


An Roinn Oideachais agus Scileanna  
Ardoideachais - Beartas agus Scileanna  
Sráid Mhaoilbhríde  
Baile Átha Cliath 1  
D01 RC96



Department of Education and Skills  
Higher Education - Policy and Skills  
Marlborough Street  
Dublin 1  
D01 RC96



5<sup>th</sup> December 2016.

### Re: FOI request 2016 / 415



I refer to the request, received on 1<sup>st</sup> November 2016 which you made under the Freedom of Information Act 2014 for -

*records held by this Department relating to the potential university status for Waterford Institute of Technology, to include documents relating to proposed mergers with other ITs and briefing notes for the Ministers between 1<sup>st</sup> June 2014 and present.*

The timeframe for the material was subsequently revised to 1<sup>st</sup> January 2016 to the date of the FOI request.

I have now made a final decision on your request on 5<sup>th</sup> December 2016, as outlined in the attached schedule. I have withheld one document and part of another document under Section 42 (j) of the Freedom of Information Act 2014 –

*(j) a record given by an FOI body to a member of the Government or a Minister of State for use by him or her for the purposes of any proceedings in either House of the Oireachtas or any committee of either or both of such Houses or any subcommittee of such a committee (including such proceedings in relation to questions put by members of either such House to members of the Government or Ministers of State (whether answered orally or in writing)),*

I have also redacted personal email address from two documents under Section 37 of the Act.

You have sought access to the records electronically and I consider this an appropriate form of access in this case. Accordingly, a copy of the records is now attached to this email including the schedule to these records.

#### **Right of appeal**

You may appeal this decision. In the event that you need to make such an appeal, you can do so by writing to the Freedom of Information Unit, Department of Education and Skills, Marlborough Street, Dublin 1. Your correspondence should include a fee of €30 for processing the appeal. Payment should

be made by way of personal cheque or postal money order made payable to the Accountant in the Department of Education and Skills. Please note the Department of Education and Skills no longer accept cheque payments from business users. For further information regarding payment methods for business users, please email [foi@education.gov.ie](mailto:foi@education.gov.ie)

You should make your appeal within 4 weeks from the date of this notification, where a day is defined as a working day excluding, the weekend and public holidays. However, the making of a late appeal may be permitted in appropriate circumstances. The appeal will involve a complete reconsideration of the matter by a more senior member of the staff of this body.

**Publication**

All non-personal FOI requests will be recorded on an FOI disclosure log which will be published on the Department of Education and Skills website in due course.

Should you wish to discuss the above, please contact me by telephone at 01 8892147.

Yours sincerely,



Tim Cullinane,  
Higher Education Officer