



Oifig an Aire Oideachais agus Scileanna
Office of the Minister for Education and Skills

John Hennessy
Chair
Higher Education Authority
Brooklawn House
Crampton Avenue
Ballsbridge
Dublin 4

16. July, 2013

Dear John

I refer to my letter of 30th May, in which I outlined the national priorities of Government and the key system objectives for higher education that are to provide the basis for the new system performance and governance framework to be implemented.

As you know, as part of that framework, the Higher Education Authority is to report back to me on an annual basis on the performance of the system overall. A set of high level system indicators for 2014-2016 has now been agreed that relate to each of the key system objectives previously conveyed. These high level indicators have been developed in consultation with your agency and with other government departments and agencies and are set out in full in the document attached to this letter. Also outlined are the structures, mechanisms and policy and legal instruments that need to be put in place or further developed to deliver successful performance in the system against national priorities.

I expect that the annual system report will use these indicators and provide contextual analysis on their status so as to both monitor system performance and contribute to further system development. Policy advice from the Higher Education Authority will also be set out against this background.

The next step in the implementation of the performance framework is for the Higher Education Authority to now enter into a set of individual institutional performance compacts with Irish higher education institutions which will reflect each institution's



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contribution as part of a new higher education system designed to respond to the needs of Ireland's economy and wider society in the coming years. A key element in the overall approach will be the implementation of performance funding in the sector.

While this is a complex and demanding agenda, I know that the Higher Education Authority will be able to meet the challenges ahead, working in partnership with my Department. As part of our shared ambition to improve the governance of the system overall, my Department will be developing a new memorandum of understanding between the Department and the Higher Education Authority. Reporting and liaison structures will be agreed shortly within the context of that work.

I would like to thank you and the members of the Higher Education Authority for your ongoing contribution to the development of the Higher Education system in Ireland.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Ruairi Quinn', written in a cursive style.

Ruairi Quinn, T.D.

Minister for Education and Skills