



Rialtas na hÉireann  
Government of Ireland

# CUMASÚ

Empowering through learning

## Action Plan for Education 2019

### Quarter 1 Progress Report

Prepared by the Department of Education and Skills  
[www.education.ie](http://www.education.ie)

## Introduction

Action Plan for Education 2019 sets out the priorities for the Department of Education and Skills and its agencies and aegis bodies for the year. This annual plan sits with the wider action plan framework, is driven by the goals and ambitions set out in our Statement of Strategy 2019-2021.

In March this year we published our Action Plan for 2019. The annual action plan sets out over 200 actions specifically targeted to achieve our goals:

1. Shape a responsive education and training system that meets the needs and raises the aspirations of all learners.
2. Advance the progress of learners at risk of educational disadvantage and learners with special educational needs in order to support them to achieve their potential.
3. Equip education and training providers with the skills and support to provide a quality learning experience.
4. Intensify the relationships between education and the wider community, society and the economy.
5. Lead in the delivery of strategic direction and supportive systems in partnership with key stakeholders in education and training.

The Action Plan for Education 2019 highlights the significant strategic reform programme under way in education and training. It recognises the importance of critical business functions to ensure business continuity and quality of service. The publication of an annual plan within a broader strategic framework enables us to respond in an agile way to the demands of the challenging and complex environment in which we operate while maintaining a strategic focus on sustainable reform.

To ensure an informative and transparent process, our progress during the year will be monitored through published quarterly reports. This is the first such report for 2019. It outlines progress made on actions and subactions due for delivery in quarter 1 of 2019. While providing details on the achievements made during this period, the report also provides an update on actions where significant progress has been made, but where it has been necessary to adjust the target date.

## Overview

### Actions due for delivery by end quarter 1, 2019

The Action Plan for 2019 contained 28 actions and subactions due for delivery by the end of quarter 1, 2019. Of these, **24** have been achieved, giving a completion rate of **86%**.

Actions achieved in the first quarter of the Action Plan for Education 2019 include:

**Goal 1: Shape a responsive education and training system that meets the needs and raises the aspirations of all learners**

- Launch of a consent framework for deployment by the higher education institutions
- Commence the longitudinal study of the Digital Learning Framework and its implementation in Schools

**Goal 2: Advance the progress of learners at risk of educational disadvantage and learners with special educational needs in order to**

- Initiate the development of an evaluation framework through which outcomes of students with special educational needs are measured
- Implement Brexit related changes to the student support architecture

## **support them to achieve their potential**

### **Goal 3: Equip education and training providers with the skills and support to provide a quality learning experience**

- Begin to implement the new model of Special Educational Needs Inspections in post-primary schools
- Commence the 18 month cluster programme "Excellence through Collaborative Leadership and Management Scheme"

### **Goal 4: Intensify the relationships between education and the wider community, society and the economy**

- Publish "ICT Skills Action Plan 2019-2022"
- Commence the establishment of new Music Education Partnerships as part of the national expansion of Music Generation

### **Goal 5: Lead in the delivery of strategic direction and supportive systems in partnership with key stakeholders in education and training**

- Launch the "Innovation in the Department of Education and Skills" Initiative (IDEAS) within the Department with two distinct streams: Secretary General's Challenge and the IDEAS Bank
- Develop a model of demand for post-primary schools by analysing patterns of transfer from primary to post-primary

## **Other key developments during quarter 1 include:**

- Technological University Dublin was formally established, with an emphasis on programmes at Levels 6 (higher and advance certificates) up to Level 8 (honours bachelor degree) on the National Framework of Qualifications, and on industry focused research. Its regional development mission and focus on research, innovation and knowledge-transfer will enable it to forge close links with business, enterprise and local and regional communities.
- The Student Assistance Fund has been increased by €1m for Professional Master of Education students.
- A new undergraduate programme in DCU, which enables deaf and hard of hearing people who use Irish Sign Language (ISL) to enter primary teaching, was launched.
- More than 330 graduate and post-graduate places available for teachers for professional development programmes in Special Education for 2019/202 were announced.
- €23 million was allocated in funding under the new Higher Education Innovation and Transformation Fund. The fund was launched in 2018 as part of the modernisation and reform of the funding model for higher education.
- A competitive call to all higher education providers for Springboard+ 2019 course proposals was issued; €34.4m has been allocated for Springboard+ 2019, which will provide for up to 9,000 places on a broad range of courses.
- As part of the Action Plan for Teacher Supply, a new teacher sharing scheme for post-primary schools was announced. Beginning September 2019, it will allow schools to share teachers in priority subjects.
- There has been an increase in the number of students taking higher level subjects at Senior Cycle especially Irish, English and Mathematics, as a result of the new grading system.
- There has been a 25% increase in the use by teachers and young people of resources and supports available through Webwise, part of the Department's support services, to help with safe and responsible use of the internet.

- €6m in funding was announced for Creative Youth, an initiative of the all-of-Government Creative Ireland Programme, which aims to enable the creativity of children and young people.
- An earlier date for Round One CAO offers was announced following changes to the system for Leaving Certificate examination appeals.
- An Energy Efficiency Upgrade Pilot Programme for Schools was announced, with 17 schools nationwide selected for energy efficiency works under a government-funded retrofit scheme.
- The trial of a new School Inclusion Model commenced, in order to provide the right supports at the right time to students with additional needs.
- The application process for a new Summer Works Scheme opened. This will enable school authorities to carry out small and medium scale works to improve and upgrade existing buildings and facilities.

### Goal 1: Shape a responsive education and training system that meets the needs and raises the aspirations of all learners

Action/Subaction	Actions/subactions for Quarter 1	Achieved/Not achieved	Comment
<b>3</b>	<b>Support the welfare and well-being of higher education students</b>		
	<b>3.1</b>	Complete the drafting of a consent framework for deployment by the higher education institutions	Achieved
<b>10</b>	<b>Implement the "Digital Strategy for Schools 2015 -2020" to enhance teaching, learning &amp; assessment</b>		
	<b>10.1</b>	Commence the longitudinal study of the Digital Learning Framework and its implementation in Schools	Achieved

### Goal 2: Advance the progress of learners at risk of educational disadvantage and learners with special educational needs in order to support them to achieve their potential

Action/Subaction	Actions/subactions for Quarter 1	Achieved/Not achieved	Comment
<b>16</b>	<b>Implement the DEIS Plan in order to close the gap in performance between DEIS and non-DEIS schools, increase retention rates of DEIS students, and increase the progression rates of DEIS students into Higher Education and Further Education and Training</b>		
	<b>16.1</b>	Conduct further analysis to examine other variables known to be strong predictors of educational disadvantage in the context of resource allocation under the DEIS Plan	Not achieved Further analysis underway with Technical Group to meet in Q2
<b>23</b>	<b>Initiate the development of an evaluation framework through which outcomes of students with special educational needs are measured</b>	Achieved	
<b>24</b>	<b>Implement Brexit related changes to the student support architecture</b>	Achieved	

25		<b>Implement strands of the “National Plan for Equity of Access to Higher Education 2015-2021”, and oversee the delivery of the targets for Higher Education Institutions so that Higher Education becomes more representative of the population in general</b>		
	25.1	Commence the development of an action plan for increasing Traveller participation in Higher Education	Achieved	

### Goal 3: Equip education and training providers with the skills and support to provide a quality learning experience

Action/Subaction	Actions/subactions for Quarter 1	Achieved/Not achieved	Comment
28			
	<b>Support the implementation of Síolta (the national quality framework) and Aistear (the early childhood curriculum framework) via the National Síolta Aistear Initiative, in partnership with DCYA, Better Start and the NCCA</b>		
	28.1	Introduce a new model for delivery of mentoring and training supports under the National Síolta Aistear Initiative through the establishment of the new National Síolta Aistear Implementation office in Better Start	Achieved
32			
	<b>Undertake a planned programme of inspection and advisory visits in schools and alternative education settings</b>		
	32.1	Begin a programme of Child Protection and Safeguarding Inspections in primary and post-primary schools	Achieved
	32.2	Begin to implement the new model of Special Educational Needs Inspections in post-primary schools	Achieved
37			
	<b>Support the further enhancement of professional qualifications and standards within the Early Learning and Care sector</b>		
	37.1	Publish award Criteria and Guidelines for Initial Professional Education in undergraduate programmes for Early Years Practitioners	Achieved
42			
	<b>Develop the work of the Centre for School Leadership (CSL) in accordance with agreed targets</b>		
	42.1	Commence the 18 month cluster programme "Excellence through Collaborative Leadership and Management Scheme"	Achieved
	42.2	Introduce team coaching for school leadership teams building on the	Achieved

		introduction of one to one coaching for school leaders in February 2017		
49		<b>Improve the impact of Further Education and Training programmes and schemes</b>		
	49.1	Publish the Review of the Youthreach programme	Not achieved	The Youthreach Review has been finalised and the SOLAS response is currently being finalised, to enable joint publication in Q2

#### Goal 4: Intensify the relationships between education and the wider community, society and the economy

Action/Subaction	Actions/subactions for Quarter 1		Achieved/Not achieved	Comment
55		<b>Establish an implementation task force within the Department to drive the proposed reforms arising from the career guidance review</b>		
	55.1	Publish the Indecon Report on the review of career guidance	Achieved	
58		<b>Ensure that the Higher and Further Education systems meet the skills needs of students, the economy, and society</b>		
	58.1	Publish ICT Skills Action Plan 2019-2022	Achieved	
62		<b>Promote creativity in our learners through the implementation of the Creative Youth Plan</b>		
	62.1	Commence the rollout of pilot Local Creative Youth Partnerships	Achieved	
	62.2	Commence the establishment of new Music Education Partnerships as part of the national expansion of Music Generation	Achieved	

#### Goal 5: Lead in the delivery of strategic direction and supportive systems in partnership with key stakeholders in education and training

Action/Subaction	Actions/subactions for Quarter 1		Achieved/Not achieved	Comment
66		<b>Monitor the implementation of the Department's "Statement of Strategy for Education 2019-2021" and the "Action Plan for Education 2019"</b>		
	66.1	Promote the use of sectoral indicators to demonstrate the effectiveness of major activities under each of high-level goals of the "Statement of Strategy"	Achieved	
67		<b>Rollout of actions in response to the 2017 "Civil Service Employee Engagement Survey"</b>		

	<b>67.1</b>	Organise manager behaviour focus groups in the Department and compile a summary report of findings for submission to DPER	Achieved	
	<b>67.2</b>	Rollout of pilot mentoring programme for Assistant Principal Officers and a pilot "Buddy System" for new recruits	Achieved	
<b>77</b>		<b>Continue reform of Higher Education Funding Model</b>		
	<b>77.1</b>	Develop Higher Education Performance Fund	Achieved	
	<b>77.2</b>	Implementation of fund for Leadership and Capacity Building in Higher Education Institutions	Not achieved	The fund for leadership and capacity building is in place for the Institutes of Technology. Work is continuing to implement in the University sector. A programme was approved, with funding to commence in Q2
<b>80</b>		<b>Progress the Governance modernisation programme of work for Education Centres</b>		
	<b>80.1</b>	Introduce a standardised financial statement template for the Education Centres which is in accordance with financial reporting standards	Achieved	
<b>90</b>		<b>Foster a culture of innovation in the Department</b>		
	<b>90.1</b>	Launch the "Innovation in the Department of Education and Skills" Initiative (IDEAS) within the Department with 2 distinct streams: Secretary General's Challenge and the IDEAS Bank	Achieved	
<b>91</b>		<b>Provide greater strategic direction in the Department's governance, management and use of data</b>		
	<b>91.1</b>	Produce Corporate Data Governance and Data Management Frameworks setting out clear roles and responsibilities for using data	Not achieved	Frameworks for Corporate Data Governance and Data Management have been developed, and publication is scheduled for Q2
<b>92</b>		<b>Improve the interpretation and analysis of the department's data holding and the evidence base for planning purposes</b>		
	<b>92.1</b>	Publish county-based preliminary enrolments along with county-based press releases	Achieved	
	<b>92.2</b>	Develop a model of demand for post primary schools by analysing patterns of transfer from Primary to Post primary	Achieved	
<b>93</b>		<b>Subject to the approval of the Government, publish the Retention of Records Bill 2019 and submit it for consideration by the Oireachtas</b>	Achieved	