STATUTORY INSTRUMENTS

S.I. No. 262 of 2008

_____

QUALIFICATIONS (EDUCATION AND TRAINING) ACT 1999
(SECTION 31(5)) (RECOGNITION OF THE CHARTER OF GALWAY-
MAYO INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY) ORDER 2008

(Prn. A8/1030)

S.I. No. 262 of 2008

QUALIFICATIONS (EDUCATION AND TRAINING) ACT 1999
(SECTION 31(5)) (RECOGNITION OF THE CHARTER OF GALWAY-
MAYO INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY) ORDER 2008

I, BATT O'KEEFFE, TD, Minister for Education and Science, in exercise of
the powers conferred on me by section 31(5) of the Qualifications (Education
and Training) Act 1999 (No. 26 of 1999) hereby order as follows:

Citation
1. This Order may be cited as the "Qualifications (Education and Training)
Act 1999 (Section 31(5)) (Recognition of the Charter of the Galway-Mayo
Institute of Technology) Order 2008".

Definition
2. In this Order, "Act of 1999" means the Qualifications (Education and
Training) Act 1999.

Recognition of GMIT Charter
3. The draft of a charter as submitted by the Governing Body of the Galway-
Mayo Institute of Technology to the Minister for Education and Science for the
purposes of recognition under section 31(5) of the Act of 1999 (and as set out
in the Appendix hereto) is hereby recognised.

L.S.
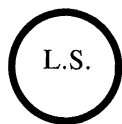
GIVEN under my Official Seal,
    10 July 2008

BATT O'KEEFFE.
    Minister for Education and Science.

*Notice of the making of this Statutory Instrument was published in
"Iris Oifigiúil" of* 18*th July*, 2008.

APPENDIX

CHARTER OF GALWAY- MAYO INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY

IN ACCORDANCE WITH SECTION 31 OF THE

QUALIFICATIONS (EDUCATION AND TRAINING) ACT 1999

Table of Contents

1.1 Introduction

Galway-Mayo Institute of Technology (GMIT) was legally designated as an Institute of Technology on 28 January 1998 when the Minister for Education and Science changed the name the Regional Technical College, Galway, by order. The College was originally established in 1972 under Section 38 of the Vocational Education Act 1930. With the enactment of the Regional Technical Colleges Act 1992 on 1 January 1993, the Regional Technical College, Galway became an autonomous institution of higher education, subject to the policies, operational programmes and budgets approved by the Minister for Education and Science, with a legal framework to engage in activities such as research, consultancy and commercial partnership. The relevant legislation is now contained in the Institutes of Technology Acts 1992 to 2006. Galway-Mayo Institute of Technology is a multi-campus institution with operations on the Dublin Road in Galway City, Cluain Mhuire in Galway, Castlebar, Letterfrack, and joint courses with the Agricultural College, Mountbellew, Co. Galway.

Galway-Mayo Institute of Technology was granted delegated authority to confer its own awards at Higher Certificate (Level 6), Ordinary Degree (Level 7), Honours Degree (Level 8), Masters Degree (Level 9) by Taught mode and also Master Degree and Doctoral Degree (Level 10) in Aquatic Science and Mechanical Engineering by Research mode.

1.2 Mission, Vision and Core Values

a) GMIT Mission Statement

At GMIT we will develop life-long learning opportunities through our teaching and research and by supporting regional development.

b) 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 the region, 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;

- As a publicly-funded organisation GMIT will be accountable for its implementation of national policy and funded on its ability and capacity to meet national targets. It will augment its public funding through its entrepreneurial activities and all income generated will be used to enhance services to our students.

c) GMIT Core Values

GMIT is proud of its identity and role as an Institute of Technology. It is proud of its people and achievements and has a confidence in its ability to meet the challenge of the future.

The core values, which underpin our mission, are:

- Developing a learning community working to challenging and clear standards of achievement and accountability,

- Promoting the professional orientation of all our programmes of study so that they give our students a passport to the workplace,

- Facilitating access and progression through our multicampus, multi-disciplinary and multilevel award structures,

- Supporting the development of an organisation embracing and promoting change, challenge, innovation and entrepreneurship,

- Sustaining openness, flexibility and collaboration through the promotion of team-based working and partnership,

- Enhancing the climate of mutual and reciprocal respect in the organisation;

- A commitment to ethical and responsible behaviour.

1.3 Functions of the Institute

The functions of the Institute are specified in Section 5 of the Regional Technical Colleges' Act as amended by the Institutes of Technology Act 2006 and other Acts.

> The principal function of a college shall, subject to the provisions of this Act, be to provide vocational and technical education and training for the economic, technological, scientific, commercial, industrial, social and cultural development of the State with particular reference to the region served by the college (Section 5).

1.4 Academic Freedom

The college, in performing its functions, has:

> the right and responsibility to preserve and promote the traditional principles of academic freedom in the conduct of its internal and external affairs.

> A member of the academic staff of a college shall have the freedom, within the law, in his or her teaching, research and

any other activities either in or outside the college, to question and test received wisdom, to put forward new ideas and to state controversial or unpopular opinions and shall not be disadvantaged, or subject to less favourable treatment by the college, for the exercise of that freedom (Section (5)(*a*) of the Regional Technical Colleges Act 1992 and insisted by section 7 of the Institutes of Technology Act 2006,

1.5 Governing Body

The Institute has a Governing Body appointed in accordance with section 4 of the Regional Technical Colleges' (Amendment) Act 1994 as amended.

The functions of the Governing Body are as specified in section 5 of the Regional Technical Colleges'Act 1992 as amended by the Institutes of Technology Act 2006 but within the constraints of the college's budget:

(*a*) to manage and control the affairs of the college, and control and administer land and property of the college,

(*b*) to appoint the President and such other staff as it thinks necessary for the purposes of the college, and

(*c*) to perform such other functions as are conferred on it by this or any other Act.

In performing its functions a Governing Body shall:

(i) comply with such policy directions as may be issued by the Minister for Education and Science from time to time, including directions relating to the levels and range of programmes offered by the college,

(ii) have regard to the promotion and use of the Irish language as a language of general communication and promote the cultivation of the Irish language and its associated literary and cultural traditions,

(iii) have regard to the attainment of gender balance and equality of opportunity among the students and staff of the college and shall, in particular, promote access to education in the college by economically or socially disadvantaged persons, by persons who have a disability and by persons from sections of society significantly underrepresented in the student body,

(v) ensure as far as it can that the college contributes to the promotion of the economic, cultural and social development of the State and to respect for the diversity of values, beliefs and traditions in Irish society.

(vi) have regard to the statutory responsibilities of other education providers,

(vii) make regulations providing for the membership and terms of office of the Academic Council subject to a three year term and eligibility for reappointment,

(viii) Determine fees and charges but subject to ministerial conditions.

(x) Prepare and submit to HEA each year on or before 1 March (as such other date as HEA may approve) in such format as HEA approve, a statement of the proposed expenditure and expected income of the Institute for the financial year,

(xi) to carry out all the reserved functions specified in the Institutes of Technology Act 2006.

1.6 President

The Governing Body appoints the President of the Institute who controls and directs the activities of the Institute and controls and directs the staff of the Institute in the implementation of such activities and is responsible for the efficient and proper management of the Institute.

1.7 Strategic Development Plan

In accordance with Section 21(C)(1) of the Regional Technical Colleges Act 1992 as amended by section 22 of the Institutes of Technology Act 2006, the Institute has a strategic development plan that sets out the aims of the Governing Body for the operation and development of the Institute and its strategy for achieving those aims, and for carrying out the functions under the Act. This plan is reviewed and revised every five years.

1.8 Academic Council

The Institute has an Academic Council, appointed by the Governing Body,

> to assist in the planning, co-ordination, development and overseeing of the educational work of the institute and to protect, maintain and develop the academic standards of the courses and the activities of the college (Section 10 Regional Technical Colleges' Act 1992).

1.9 Research

Subject to such conditions as the HEA may determine the Institute is committed to 'engage in research consultancy and development work and to provide such services in relation to these matters as the Governing Body of the college considers appropriate' (Section (5) RTC Act 1992).

1.10 Delegated Authority

The Institute has the power to confer academic awards by virtue of the authority delegated to it from the Higher Education and Training Awards Council under Section (29) of the Qualifications (Education and Training) Act 1999.

1.11 Equality of Opportunity

The Institute pursues its mission within a framework of equality of opportunity and social justice, underpinned by a commitment to the concept of lifelong learning in the furtherance of the social, economic and cultural development of the region and of the State.

1.12 Promotion of the Irish Language

The Institute, in pursuance of its mission, has in place arrangements with regard to the preservation, promotion and use of the Irish language and for the preservation and development of the culture of Ireland.

1.13 Members of the Institute

a) the members of the Governing Body,

b) the members of the Academic Council,

c) the members of the staff,

d) the registered students of the college,

e) the graduates of the college,

f) such other persons as the governing body may appoint to be members.

Membership of the Institute shall continue until the Governing Body otherwise declares.

2.0 Contribution to the Tertiary Education System

2.1 Approach to Meeting the Needs of Students

A strategic objective of the Institute is the flexible provision of life-long education to an increasingly diverse student body. The Institute is responsive to the changing demographics of our region, of the country, and the increasing ethnic diversity of the population. The Institute will attract and value students from a wide diversity of backgrounds, promote equal educational opportunities, and facilitate access from under-represented sections of society. The Institute provides a broad range of academic programmes in business, computing, engineering, art and design, forestry, humanities, science, social studies, nursing, hotel and catering studies, tourism, agriculture and languages as well as a strong and growing continuing education programme that meets the needs of lifelong learners.

Programmes are aligned within the national qualifications framework. They are offered on a credit accumulation modular system designed to enable students, full and part-time, to achieve accredited awards at a pace and manner which suits their needs.

In the systematic building of a student focused learning organisation GMIT is committed to the following principles:

- Facilitating students whose expectations are higher and more defined by recognising the importance of learner convenience, accessibility, quality of service, cost and multiple accreditation pathways,

- Engaging with a more diverse student body in terms of age, abilities, interests, experiences and capacity to engage in education,

- Employing flexibility and innovation in programme design, delivery and assessment,

- Providing a distinctive professional education having regard to the knowledge, skills and competence required for each level of award,

- Providing an educational process that is individualised and divergent rather than uniform and convergent,

- Enabling new and different modes of programme delivery including on-line facilities, ICT and multi-media,

- Supporting the acquisition of pedagogic skills and techniques by academic staff,

- Building an educational infrastructure that provides seamless and permeable access and accreditation for life-long learning,

- Facilitating greater connectivity between the worlds of learning and of work,

- Developing of diverse but linked skillsets for staff and students to enculturate and facilitate student-led learning,

- Providing opportunities for social and cultural development,

- To help students realise their potential.

2.2 Support Services Provided include:

- Orientation Programmes

- Learning Supports

- Disability Support

- Mature Learner Support

- Counselling

- Careers Advisory Service

- International Student Support

- Financial Advice

- Student Health Centre

- Recreation Centre/Facilities

- Clubs and Societies

- Accommodation information and related services

2.3 Approach to Collaboration with Other National and International Education Institutions

GMIT is committed to developing collaborative relations with other tertiary providers.

The following are examples of such collaboration:

- Joint research

- Strategic Innovation Fund (SIF) Projects

- Applied Research Enhancement (ARE) Projects

- Strand 3 of the Technological Research Development

- Pilot site for implementation of Banner, Aggresso, Core (MIS systems for the sector)

- Lionra

- PRTLI

- Formal collaborative agreements with selected foreign educational institutions.

2.4 Research Ethos

The objective of the GMIT Research Strategy is to integrate research, teaching and regional development as well as developing a critical mass of research capacity in targeted areas. At the Galway Mayo Institute of Technology, research is deemed to be an integral component of the academic learning activity. Research is contractually included as one of the potential work tasks of academic staff. Dedicated space is provided in strategic research areas together with space for applied research in the Incubation Centres at Galway and Castlebar.

The Institute has developed a Research Strategy, which is reviewed and updated on an ongoing basis. Within this strategy and in line with the Institute's overall strategic plan a special emphasis is laid on the regional development dimension.

The following research structure is in place

- A Research Office under the Development function,

- A Research Strategy group,

- A research sub-committee of the Governing Body,

- A research sub-committee of the Academic Council,

- School based research committees.

a) In pursuing its research mission, the Institute is committed to:

- Developing a number of strong research centres focused on regional and national developments,

- Increasing the number of staff who are research active,

- Promoting collaborative arrangements, innovative research, and technology-transfer aimed at improving economic performance, social well-being and sustainable development, both regionally and nationally,

- Placing, where appropriate, a high priority on the commercialisation of intellectual property,

- Maintaining strong partnerships with national research and industry agencies,

- Maximising the growth of external research funding from government, industry, the EU and international sources,

- Ensuring all research is conducted in accordance with the Institute's protocols and ethical standards,

- Providing a supportive environment to facilitate research,

- Integration of teaching and research,

- Responding to identified national providers as outlined in the Strategy for Science, Technology and Innovation.

3.0 Institute Arrangements for Consultation and Co-operation.

3.1 Within the Institute

a) Policy Statement:

The objective of the GMIT staff strategy is to enable all employees to continue their professional development in support of students' learning and regional development. The Institute is committed to consultation and co-operation with staff, students and their representatives in all matters where it is reasonable to expect this to occur. This is achieved in accordance with the European Framework on Information and Consultation. The aim of the consultation is to enable the Institute, its staff and its students to share views on developments, proposed changes or situations that might arise and on the options being considered.

b) Principles

- To provide fair and transparent processes for consultation and co-operation within the Institute,

- To allow for open communication and discussion between parties in the processes of consultation and/or co-operation,

- To support informed decision-making in the Institute.

c) Process

While recognising the wealth of mechanisms available to support consultation, the process of consultation normally includes:

- Provision of appropriate information by the Institute to enable those being consulted to develop an informed response,

- An agreed timeframe for these matters to take place,

- Regular meetings of the Common Partnership Forum,

- Monthly meetings with staff representatives,

- Monthly staff meetings in Departments, Schools, and various Institute committees,

- Meetings, once a semester, at School/Department level with class representatives,

- Monthly meetings by executive board members with representatives of the Students' Union,

- Governing Body representation,

- Institute participation in external bodies,

- Campus Liaison Committee in Castlebar, which meets three times a year.

The Institute will participate in discussions and consider any submissions and recommendations made in relation to significant change in work practices with a view to reaching agreement. Notwithstanding this, the final decision relating to any change shall be the responsibility of the Institute management.

3.2 With the community (including commercial and industrial interests) in the region served by the Institute.

a) Policy Statement

An objective of the GMIT Strategic Plan is the promotion and development of a learning region by stimulating economic and cultural innovation and by promoting social cohesion. GMIT is committed to developing and nurturing strong collaborative and mutually beneficial links with business, industry, relevant professional bodies, local communities, schools, other tertiary institutions, research organisations as well as local and central government.

b) Principles

The Institute is committed to consulting with its external stakeholders to ensure the following:

- The continuing relevance of its programmes to national and regional needs,

- The alignment of its programme provision for the economic, technological, scientific, commercial, industrial, social and cultural development of the State, with particular reference to the region served by the Institute.

c) Process

Consultation with external stakeholders regarding the performance of the Institute's functions include the following, inter alia:

- Such agricultural, commercial, technological, scientific, industrial, educational, social and cultural groups in the region served by the Institute, or nationally, as might have views on particular issues or developments in the programmes, research or other activities of the Institute,

- Relevant stakeholders are consulted at the design stage of new programmes, and are involved in programme validation processes,

- Stakeholders, including commercial and industrial interests, are represented on programmatic reviews on a quinquennial basis to review programmes and their quality having regard to changing needs,

- The Institute decides which groups or individuals should be consulted in particular cases,

- A variety of consultation methods are employed: panels of business people, entrepreneurs, industrialists and other professionals so as to check opinions regularly in a flexible and quick manner,

- Sufficient time is allowed for consultation,

- The Institute provides feedback after consultation,

- Each School/Centre has a Business Advisory Committee, which meets twice a year,

- Appropriate industry personnel are strongly represented on the list of external examiners.

4.0 Criteria for Determining Demand for Particular Programmes of Education and Training

4.1 Demand for Particular Programmes

The criteria used by the Institute for determining the demand for particular programmes of education and training and levels of award include the following:

- Forecasted skills needs,

- Forecasted job opportunities,

- Demographic changes,

- Regional and national economic, social and cultural developments,

- Learner demand,

- Progression opportunities,

- Employer demand,

- Changes in technology,

- Changes in pedagogy,

- Developing Regional, National and European Union policies.

4.2 Evaluation Process

a) New programme development may be stimulated by response to any of the criteria listed above. All new programmes are recommended by an internal review panel, an external evaluation panel and approved by the Academic Council and Governing Body.

In developing new programmes the Institute consults widely and as appropriate with employers, national and regional agencies, industrial development agencies, sectoral groupings, and community groups. It makes use of needs analysis and market research surveys.

b) The Institute ensures that each new programme developed is in accordance with its Strategic Plan, and the knowledge, skills and competence for the appropriate level on the National Framework of Qualifications, through meeting the standards determined by the Higher Education and Training Awards Council, (HETAC) for particular awards, together with a clear progression route to facilitate lifelong learning.

c) In designing programmes, the Institute endeavours to facilitate access for disadvantaged groups, develops alternative pathways to awards, and responds to changing needs, as well as providing continuing professional development opportunities.

4.3 List and Details of Programmes

The list and details of the Institute's programmes, full-time, part-time, evening and distance learning, as well as the awards and levels, can be viewed on the GMIT website at: www.gmit.ie

4.4 Teaching and Research Facilities

The Institute, with funding from the Department of Education and Science, procures land and provides buildings and facilities according to its needs. Its needs are determined primarily through examining foresight studies (as published by State agencies), demographic trends and taking account of its own experience through communication and feedback from its own community. As the need arises a Master Plan exercise is undertaken which results in space requirement projections for the intermediate and longer terms (12 to 20 years). The short-term requirements are determined by referring to the Institute Strategy and the Academic Plan.

In addition to academic space (for teaching, learning and integral activities such as research) the Institute provides sports, recreation and socialising facilities, car and bus/coach parking areas, cafeterias and many other associated service areas including a range of students services, shopping and banking facilities. Library study areas, including special project rooms and information technology areas are housed with up-to-date equipment. Provision is made for the use of facilities by Institute clubs and societies. Increasingly the Institute facilities are made available, subject to conditions, to non-member users.

Central areas are provided for holding receptions and such events. Meeting rooms (including Board Rooms) are provided for specific purposes.

Dedicated space is provided for research purposes. Generally such space is provided as close as possible to the Academic School in which the research theme falls. This better facilitates the integration of teaching and research. Research space provision is currently predominantly in the areas where the Institute has

delegated authority to present awards at the highest levels, namely Mechanical Engineering and Marine/Aquaculture. Emerging areas include Tourism and Energy. The Institute policy is to continue adding space in identified areas to meet the emerging requirement.

Incubation space is provided at both Galway and Castlebar in order to promote indigenous spin-off companies in advanced technological areas. The incubation units have dedicated applied research space.

4.5 Lifelong Learning

GMIT is committed to providing lifelong learning opportunities across the range of programmes offered in Art and Design, Business, Computing, Engineering, Hotel and Catering Management, Nursing, and Science. They focus largely on personal and professional development and are accreditated from levels 6 to 10. The Institute also offers short non-accreditated courses. Modes of delivery include part-time access to full-time programmes, part-time evening programmes, distance learning, in-company provision, and outreach programme. GMIT is committed to collaborating with other providers to offer better lifelong learning opportunities to people in our region.

5.0 Statement on Quality Assurance

a) Principles

- Galway-Mayo Institute of Technology, consistent with the principle of institutional autonomy, accepts that it has primary responsibility for the quality of its provision and its assurance and that this provides the basis for accountability of the academic system within the national quality framework.

- In framing its quality assurance procedures, Galway-Mayo Institute of Technology is mindful of the Standards and Guidelines for quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area, as applied to higher education institutions, and of the Higher Education and Training Awards Council (HETAC).

- The Institute is committed to a culture that recognises the central importance of quality assurance in its work and to the continuous enhancement of procedures to assure the quality of its provision.

b) Procedures

The Institute has agreed its Quality Assurance Procedures with the Higher Education and Training Awards Council as required under section 28 of the Qualifications (Education and Training) Act 1999. These procedures include:

- evaluation on a quinquennial basis, or as otherwise determined from time to time by the Council, of the programme of education and training concerned, including evaluation by persons who are competent to make national and international comparisons in that respect,

- evaluation by learners of that programme, and

- evaluation of services related to that programme

Where a programme of education and training is organised or procured, in whole or in part, by another provider (the first mentioned provider) and is provided, in whole or in part, by the Institute (the second mentioned provider), a memorandum of understanding will be completed agreeing Quality Assurance Procedures and this shall be submitted by the first mentioned provider to the relevant awarding body established under the Act.

Where a programme of higher education and training is organised or procured, in whole or in part, by the Institute and is provided, in whole or in part, by any other provider, the Institute will consult with such other providers before making a request for delegation of authority to make awards in respect of that programme.

The Institute will, in designing its programmes and in making awards, comply with the standards determined by the Higher Education and Training Awards Council. In assessing learners for the purpose of complying with the standards determined by the Higher Education and Training Awards Council, the Institute has established procedures for the assessment of learners, which are fair and consistent and for the purpose of compliance with standards determined by the Council. The Institute strives to improve its assessment techniques and endeavours to provide its staff with the widest inventory of assessment strategies from which to select relevant assessment instruments.

6.0 Access, Transfer and Progression

The Institute is committed to implementing procedures for access, transfer and progression as determined by the National Qualifications Authority of Ireland under section 8(2)(*d*) of the Qualifications (Education and Training) Act of 1999 as part of the implementation of the National Framework of Qualifications.

The Authority has currently defined procedures under four themes:

- Credit accumulation and transfer and the recognition of prior learning

- Transfer and progression routes

- Entry arrangements

- Information provision.

The Institute has, since its establishment, attempted to provide equality of access to its programmes for all learners. To this end, the Institute has devised agreed policies to facilitate the following:

- Applications from school leavers following the traditional Leaving Certificate

- Applications from school leavers following the Leaving Certificate Vocational Programme

- Applications from learners with FETAC Level 5 awards

- Applications from mature learners

- Applications from learners with disability

- International applicants (through the common agreed IOTCEF process)

- Progression routes from Level 6 to level 7 and Level 7 to Level 8.

In addition, the Institute, mindful of its regional role and its specialist facilities, has devised special entry procedures for particular groups, including:

- Applications from learners from disadvantaged backgrounds

- Foundation Programmes for those who require them

- Direct entry, with appropriate exemptions, for those with relevant work experience.

7.0 Irish Language

GMIT has had a strong commitment to the promotion of the Irish language since its inception and has offered a programme in Irish since 1974 as well as offering Irish as an elective on most programmes. The Institute is also strongly committed to the presentation and development of Irish culture. It also complies with its obligations under the Official Languages Act 2003.

8.0 Consultation Process

As required under section 31 (4) of the Qualifications (Education and Training) Act 1999, Galway-Mayo Institute of Technology consulted the following in the preparation of this charter:

- The National Qualifications Authority

- The Higher Education and Training Awards Council

- All Trade Unions in the Institute

- The Students' Union in the Institute

- Executive Board

- Academic Council

- Governing Body.

Approved by the Governing Body

of

Galway Mayo Institute of Technology

February 21 February 2008.

€4.57