ACTION PLAN FOR EDUCATION

2018

Quarter 4 Progress Report

Rialtas na hÉireann
Government of Ireland

Introduction

The Action Plan for Education 2016-2019 sets out our Statement of Strategy with a high-level ambition for Ireland's Education and Training system, of becoming the best education and training service in Europe by 2026.

In February this year we published our Action Plan for 2018. Derived from the 2016-2019 strategy and plan, the annual action plan sets out nearly 300 actions specifically targeted to achieve our goals to:

1. Improve the learning experience and the success of learners

2. Improve the progress of learners at risk of educational disadvantage or learners with special educational needs

3. Help those delivering education services to continually improve

4. Build stronger bridges between education and the wider community

5. Improve national planning and support services

The Action Plan for Education 2018 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 fourth such report for 2018. It outlines progress made on actions and subactions due for delivery in the final quarter of 2018. 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. Where appropriate, measures associated with the performance indicators for each Goal have been included.

Overview

Actions due for delivery by end quarter 4, 2018

The Action Plan for 2018 contained 149 actions and subactions due for delivery by the end of quarter 4, 2018. Of these, 112 have been achieved, giving a completion rate of 75%.

Actions achieved in the fourth quarter of the Action Plan for Education 2018 include:

Goal 1: Improve the learning experience and success of learners	• All post-primary schools have been offered a full day of Continuing Professional Development (CPD) support in the area of wellbeing • Work is advanced with Science Foundation Ireland on a roll out of an national awareness campaign around increased uptake of STEM subjects • A number of STEM clusters funded by external partners to strengthen links between schools, business, industry and the research community has commenced • A digital repository of learning resources and curricular materials to support STEM teaching has been created on www.scoilnet.ie/stem • Consultations on the Senior Cycle Review have taken place between the NCCA and various stakeholders • A Pilot has commenced on e-hub facility in sample of post-primary schools to extend the range of subject choices through the medium of Irish to digitally connected Gaeltacht schools

	• Forás, a language development pilot programme was launched in post-primary Gaeltacht schools • A package of additional supports was issued to Gaeltacht island post-primary schools including the establishment of Coláiste Naomh Eoin an independent post-primary school • The number of higher education students availing of mobility opportunities under Erasmus+ has increased
Goal 2: Improve the progress of learners at risk of educational disadvantage or learners with special educational needs	• An evaluation of the existing School Support Programme is underway • Challenge visits to schools participating in the DEIS strand of the Schools Excellence Fund have been completed • Piloting of the SEN inspection model for post-primary schools is complete
Goal 3: Help those delivering education services to continuously improve	• The Síolta Quality Assurance Programme validation process was managed for settings which have completed the programme • CPD opportunities for Síolta validators were established • The Department continues to support "Droichead", the national induction process for all newly qualified teachers (NQTs) in collaboration with the Teaching Council • Continuous and professional development (CPD) was provided to support the primary languages curriculum, and Leaving Certificate physical education and computer science • A pilot programme in management, leadership capability and upskilling in LoTs is underway • An evaluation of the Youthreach programme has been conducted
Goal 4: Build stronger bridges between education and the wider community	• The Department has partnered with Enterprise Ireland on the national roll out of the Skills for Growth audit tool for enterprise • New Skillnets initiatives a range of innovative new programmes have been developed through collaboration with the IDA including EXPLORE Programme, Skills to meet emerging/future skills needs • A mechanism has been developed in the new higher education funding model to incentivise flexible learning opportunities • The Department continues to contribute to the UN monitoring reports in relation to Ireland's first National Sustainable Development Goals Implementation Plan 2018 -2020 • A new innovation and transformation fund for higher education was launched with funding allocated to successful projects
Goal 5: Improve national planning and support services	• A Data Governance and Support and Data Protection Unit was established in the Department • A high level set of indicator set has been published to demonstrate the effectiveness of major activities under each of the high-level goals of the Action Plan for Education • Payroll and pension services were provided to 120,000 teachers and school staff in all schools • A suite of bespoke corporate governance training courses has been developed for DES staff

- Preparations have advanced for procurement of the PPP Programme to expand capacity in Institutes of Technology
- An upgrade of the ICT systems for the higher education Shared Services HR/Payroll system took place

Other key developments during quarter 4 include:

- A number of sections of the Education (Admissions to Schools) Act, 2018 commenced.
- The Schools Excellence Fund in school leadership was expanded to fund up to 250 schools to work together on innovative projects to improve school leadership.
- Significant changes to the process of Leaving Certificate examination appeals was announced, substantially cutting the time involved in the appeals process.
- Additional female – specific senior academic posts will be created under a new Senior Academic Leadership initiative for the Higher Education sector. This was followed by the launch of the Gender Equality Action Plan to find innovative ways to resolve teacher supply numbers.
- A Teacher Supply Action Plan was launched followed by regional teacher supply focus groups to provide opportunities for principals, teachers and parents to respond to the Plan and to contribute new ideas on how to improve teacher supply.
- A pilot of the P-TECH (Pathways in technology) school was launched. P-TECH is designed to integrate third-level modules and work place experiences alongside second level schooling in order to enable students to earn a third-level qualification.
- A significant budget increase from €1 million to more than €2.3 million was announced in relation to Gaeltacht Education.
- More than €40 million in funding will be made available for the Summer Works Project in 2019 for 300 primary and post-primary schools and a major package of investment worth €29 million in minor work grants for primary schools was announced under Project Ireland 2040.
- A mid-term review of the National Strategy on Education for Sustainable Development 2014 – 2020 was launched by at the National Forum on Sustainable Development (ESD).
- €300,000 will be shared by 3 successful Education and Training Boards (ETBs) as part of the local Creative Youth Partnerships pilot initiative under Pillar 1 of Creative Youth.
- The fourth Wellbeing and Life skills survey was launched, and will be used to provide data on a number of important issues within schools, such as physical activity, healthy eating and anti-bullying.
- Professor David Fitzpatrick was named as the first President of TU Dublin, Technological University Dublin. TU Dublin became the largest Higher Education institution in the State with close to 28,000 students and over 3,000 staff when it was founded on the 1st January 2019.
- The Progress Review of the National Plan for Equity of Access to Higher Education was published.
- A number of measures to manage the impact of reform on the primary school sector have been announced following engagement with stakeholders at the Primary Education Forum and in other fora.
- A €1 million increase in the Student Assistance Fund (SAF) for Professional Master of Education (PME) students was announced.

Goal 1: Improve the learning experience and the success of learners

Objective 1.1 **Improve services and resources to promote wellbeing in our school communities to support success in school and life**				
Action/Subaction		**Actions/subactions for Quarter 4**	**Achieved/Not achieved**	**Comment**
3		**Implement the new Junior Cycle area of learning entitled Wellbeing, which will build on work to date in post-primary schools to support students' wellbeing**		
	3.1	Offer all post-primary schools Continuing Professional Development (CPD) support in the area of Wellbeing through the Junior Cycle for Teachers support service and monitor take-up and impact through a framework that will be developed to evaluate the impact of programmes of CPD for wellbeing	Achieved	
4		**Extend the roll out of teacher programmes to DEIS schools that build capacity to promote social and emotional competence, resilience and school connectedness in all learners**		
	4.1	Continue the roll out of the Incredible Years Teacher Classroom Management programme to all DEIS primary schools. Specifically, complete the final 3 modules of the 6-module programme with 463 teachers and commence continued delivery of the programme targeting an additional 735 teachers	Achieved	
	4.2	Provide training for teachers in the delivery of resilience-building programmes that reduce anxiety and promote coping skills and school connectedness in learners, targeting 500 teachers in DEIS primary and post-primary schools	Achieved	
6		**Deliver training to 600 teachers in 300 post-primary schools on the revised 'NEPS Critical Incidents: Guidelines and Resources for schools', by end of 2018**	Achieved	
7		**Work closely with the Department of Health and other Departments to implement the recommendations of the National Taskforce on Youth Mental Health, the Youth Mental Health Pathfinder Project and the Connecting for Life Strategy (2015-2020)**	Achieved	

Objective 1.2 **1.2 Deliver a "Step-Change" in the development of critical skills, knowledge and competences to provide the foundations for participation in work and society**				
Action/Subaction		**Actions/subactions for Quarter 4**	**Achieved/Not achieved**	**Comment**
10		**Support actions to deliver the revised and new literacy and numeracy targets to 2020 to improve the standards of literacy and numeracy for the general cohort of learners with particular focus on our lowest and highest achieving students and closing the gap in DEIS schools. This will be achieved through actions including numbers 12, 16.1, 22, 25, 36 and 41**	Achieved	
11		**Review the structure of, and the time allocation in, the Primary School Curriculum to ensure that the allocation reflects learners' requirements in new foundation skills that they will need for a changing society**		
	11.3	Develop an overview of a redeveloped primary curriculum taking account of the findings from the consultations on curriculum structure and time and Education about religions and beliefs (ERB) and Ethics	Achieved	
12		**Introduce and implement new subjects and courses on a phased basis to provide learners with greater subject choices**		
	12.4	Continue the development of the new primary Maths curriculum	Achieved	
	12.5	Publish short research papers, commence work with schools and share examples of coding in a primary curriculum	Achieved	
	12.6	Publish specifications for phase 5 Junior Cycle subjects (Technology Subjects, Religious Education, Jewish Studies and Classics)	Achieved	
13		**Progress delivery of the STEM Education Policy Statement and Implementation Plan to achieve a step change improvement in the STEM education experience and outcomes for learners from early years to post-primary**		
	13.3	Develop a policy for the provision of STEM curricular materials for teachers, in consultation with support services and other relevant parties	Achieved	
	13.15	Work in partnership with business/industry, cultural and educational institutions to promote innovative STEM CPD	Achieved	
	13.16	Commence implementation of a 3 year STEM education awareness campaign,	Achieved	

		building on an audit of current awareness raising initiatives, aimed at achieving the goals of the STEM Education Policy Statement such as 20% increased uptake of Leaving Certificate Chemistry, Physics, Technology and Engineering and 40% and increased uptake of STEM subjects by females by 2026.		
	13.17	Support cluster innovation in STEM involving outside partners enhancing partnership between schools and business and industry and the research community	Achieved	
	13.18	As part of the partnership with business and industry explore the potential for Transition Year related programmes to be contributed to by business and industry, the development of Transition Units and better placement opportunities	Not achieved	Work on this action has commenced, further interactions with business and industry is required to explore the potential for Transition Year students
	13.19	Increase learner access to co-curricular and out-of-school learning opportunities through engagement with providers of STEM activities and supports for schools	Achieved	
	13.20	Identify good practice activity in schools (e.g. role models) for increasing female participation in STEM with a view to an increase of 40% female participation in STEM by 2026	Achieved	
	13.21	Create a digital repository of learning resources and curricular materials to support STEM teaching and learning, based on guidance developed	Achieved	
	13.22	Develop guidance to support the establishment of online communities of practice, following the outcome of the Digital Learning Framework Trial	Achieved	
	13.23	Review options for the provision of ICT technical support in schools	Achieved	

Objective 1.3 **Increase subject choice for learners in Senior Cycle to equip them with the skills and knowledge to participate in a changing world**				
Action/Subaction		**Actions/subactions for Quarter 4**	**Achieved/Not achieved**	**Comment**
14		**Progress development and implementation of Leaving Certificate subject specifications**		
	14.5	Finalise new specifications for Leaving Certificate Art, Applied Mathematics and Classical Studies	Not achieved	Two of three specifications are finalised. The Leaving Certificate Classical Studies specification is due in Q2 2019

15		**Review senior cycle programmes (including Leaving Certificate Applied) and vocational pathways in senior cycle to create a senior cycle that places the learner at the centre of the educational experience. That experience will enable learners to be resourceful, to be confident, to participate actively in society, and to build an interest in and ability to learn throughout their future lives**		
	15.3	Commence consultation on the Senior Cycle Review Discussion Paper (NCCA) following its publication	Achieved	

Objective 1.4 **Improve the transition of learners at critical stages in the education and training system**				
Action/Subaction		**Actions/subactions for Quarter 4**	**Achieved/Not achieved**	**Comment**
17		**Assess how the pre-enrolment module on POD works in order to enhance our understanding of the transition to primary school**	Achieved	
18		**Advance work on the transitions process to support students in the transition from second-level into higher education and Further Education and Training**		
	18.1	Publish research on impact in schools of changes to the Leaving Certificate Grading System	Achieved	
	18.2	Monitor and report on the progress of HEIs in reducing the number of entry routes into Higher Education	Achieved	

Objective 1.5 **Increase the use of ICT in teaching, learning and assessment so that learners are equipped with the necessary skills to meet the challenges of a rapidly changing learning environment**				
Action/Subaction		**Actions/subactions for Quarter 4**	**Achieved/Not achieved**	**Comment**
19		**Implement the Digital Strategy for Schools 2015 -2020 to realise the potential of digital technologies to enhance teaching, learning and assessment so that Ireland's young people become engaged thinkers, active learners, knowledge constructors and global citizens to participate fully in society and the economy**		

	19.4	Scope a set of actions for the review of the Digital Strategy for Schools	Achieved	
	19.5	Support ICT in schools through improved broadband services (in collaboration with the Department of Communications, Climate Action and Environment), grants for ICT equipment, and advice and support materials (primarily though the PDST Technology in Education and other support services)	Achieved	
20		**Implement the 2018 actions in the Technology-Enhanced Learning in Further Education and Training Strategy 2016-2019**	Achieved	
21		**Advance actions in Goal 3 to strengthen the use of ICT in teaching and learning in Higher Education Institutions (HEIs), to deliver better outcomes for students**	Achieved	
22		**Advance language curriculum (Irish and English) developments across primary and post-primary schools**		
	22.4	Publish the new Primary Language Curriculum/Curaclam Teanga na Bunscoile for senior classes online	Not achieved	The curriculum will be published online in Q2 2019

Objective 1.6 **Enable learners communicate effectively and improve their standards of competence in languages**				
Action/Subaction		**Actions/subactions for Quarter 4**	**Achieved/Not achieved**	**Comment**
23		**Implement the Policy on Gaeltacht Education 2017-2022 on a phased basis**		
	23.5	Commence pilot work on e-hub facility in sample of post-primary schools to extend the range of subject choices through the medium of Irish to digitally connected Gaeltacht schools	Achieved	
	23.6	Develop proposals to support the introduction of a pilot bilingual bridging programme in a Gaeltacht post-primary school	Achieved	
	23.7	Develop proposals for the introduction of measures to address the challenges faced by island schools to support and improve their educational provision	Achieved	
24		**Implement Languages Connect, Ireland's Strategy for Foreign Languages in Education 2017 - 2026 to promote a society where the ability to learn and use at least one foreign language is taken for granted, because of its inherent value for individuals, society and the economy**		

	24.5	Increase in Erasmus uptake	Achieved	
	24.9	Develop subject modules and classroom resources which will be used as part of the Transition Year (TY) Content and Language Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) pilot due to take place in 2019	Not achieved	Owing to the delay in recruiting additional staff, this action will be delivered in Q4 2019

Measures of progress and success for Goal 1 in Quarter 4:

Indicator	Target/indicator (year)	Reading/Measurement as at end Q4 2018
School clusters work together to promote the teaching and learning of STEM subjects	10 clusters, involving at least 30 schools participating (2018)	Support personnel assigned to each cluster. An evaluator shall be engaged for the Schools Excellence Fund - Digital and STEM
School clusters use art and creativity to address shared challenges and achieve better learning outcomes	21 clusters are in place, through the network of Teacher Education Centres	23 clusters have met to work on their projects.
Percentage of candidates presenting for a foreign language for Junior Certificate/ Cycle Examination	Percentage of candidates presenting for a foreign language for Leaving Certificate Examination 79% (2026), 74% (2022)	Baseline figure 2018 : Junior Certificate 87% Leaving Certificate 73%

Goal 2: Improve the progress of learners at risk of educational disadvantage or learners with special educational needs

Objective 2.1

Improve the learning experience and learning outcomes for learners impacted by disadvantage

Action/Subaction		Actions/subactions for Quarter 4	Achieved/Not achieved	Comment
25		**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 HE and FET**		
	25.1	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 Research is underway and the DEIS Technical Group is meeting again in early 2019 to examine what actions need to be taken

	25.2	Evaluate the level of teaching resources for schools participating in the SSP, to inform future policy in this area within the overall DEIS Monitoring and Evaluation Framework	Not achieved	The Department has established a Class Size Working Group to inform future policy in this area within the overall DEIS Monitoring and Evaluation Framework. Work will continue in Q1 2019 in order to finalise the scope of the evaluation
	25.4	Develop a new resource allocation model for application to all SSP schools, to include a more tailored system of resource allocation, within which there are more grades of disadvantage identified and resources allocated accordingly in response to the needs of individual schools	Not achieved	The DEIS identification model will be facilitated by the use of Eircode. The application of Eircode is being finalised and a new approach to supporting DEIS schools is to be implemented in Q1 2019
	25.5	Issue updated guidelines to schools in relation to the appropriate use of additional funds provided under the SSP to ensure that inputs are linked to outputs and outcomes, to generate data on resource allocation and to share knowledge and successful initiatives to support better practice. In addition, schools included in DEIS for the first time in the 2017/18 school year will be provided with information resources to support planning	Not achieved	The Department is finalising guidelines to issue to schools further clarifying the appropriate use of additional funds and with more detail on how to generate data and share knowledge and initiatives to support best practice. Further planning supports will also be included
	25.7	Collaborate with Tusla and Traveller Representative Groups on measures to improve Traveller engagement with education in the context of the National Traveller & Roma Inclusion Strategy	Achieved	
	25.8	Enhance guidance on school plans to improve arrangements by schools to support successful transitions at key stages throughout the education continuum (Early Years to Primary; Primary to Post-Primary; Post-Primary to Further and Higher Education). Restate the role of the Home School Community Liaison Scheme (HSCL) Co-ordinator to reference role in supporting transitions between ECCE settings and the formal school environment	Not achieved	Work in this area has advanced with a Home School Community Liaison Scheme (HSCL) Circular due to be published in Q1 2019
	25.9	Consider existing School Support Programme supports having regard to learning to date from the ABC sites, where relevant to the pupil cohort identified, with a view to the incorporation of that learning into current teaching and learning in schools	Achieved	

26		**Implement the DEIS Strand of the Schools Excellence Fund in participating DEIS schools**		
	26.4	Provide challenge visits to Tranche 1 and 2 DEIS schools participating in the DEIS Strand of the Schools Excellence Fund	Achieved	
29		**Develop a national policy on the Recognition of Prior Learning**	Not achieved	Work in this area has advanced with a scoping paper produced and an initial consultation with stakeholders was held. The Department is identifying most appropriate next steps
30		**Develop a cohesive Life-Course approach to tackling educational disadvantage to coordinate the interaction between measures to tackle educational disadvantage across the education continuum**		
	30.1	Publish a policy statement on interaction between measures to tackle educational disadvantage across the education continuum	Not achieved	A detailed draft has been prepared, consultations with relevant stakeholders are underway
31		**Assist Department of Children and Youth Affairs (DCYA) and TUSLA to examine the Programme for a Partnership Government commitment to increase the mandatory schooling age to 17**	Achieved	

Objective 2.2 **Target policies and supports for learners with special education needs to support their participation and progression across the continuum of education**				
Action/Subaction		**Actions/subactions for Quarter 4**	**Achieved/Not achieved**	**Comment**
32		**Undertake a comprehensive assessment of the SNA scheme to identify the most appropriate form of support options. This will help to enable students with special educational needs to fulfil their potential**		
	32.4	Inform schools of their SNA allocation (NCSE) before the end of the school year. All appeals will be resolved as soon as practicable following their receipt by the NCSE	Achieved	
	32.5	Bring forward proposals for implementation of the recommendations of the Comprehensive Assessment of the SNA scheme	Achieved	

33		**Develop the In-School Speech and Language Therapy Service to develop greater linkages between educational and therapy supports, to assist schools to develop their capacity to support children with speech and language needs in schools**		
	33.2	Develop an evaluative framework for the pilot of a new In-School Speech and Language Therapy Service, which is to develop greater linkages between educational and therapy supports, to assist schools to develop their capacity to support children with speech and language needs in schools	Achieved	
	33.3	Monitor the pilot being implemented in a number of schools of a new In-School Speech and Language Therapy Service, which is to develop greater linkages between educational and therapy supports, to assist schools to develop their capacity to support children with speech and language needs in schools	Achieved	
34		**Embed the Special Education Teacher model which provides a unified allocation model for special educational support teaching needs to each school, based on the school's educational profile, to ensure support is available for all pupils who require it**		
	34.1	Develop an evaluation framework for the Model for Allocating SEN Teaching Resources to mainstream schools, which assesses outcomes for children with SEN, to ensure that the resources that are being provided will secure the best possible outcomes	Achieved	
	34.2	Review the model for allocating Special Education Teachers to schools, to ensure that school profiles can be updated in 2018, to enable new allocations for 2019, to ensure that the resources that are being provided will secure the best possible outcomes	Achieved	
35		**Revise the SEN model of inspection for post-primary schools with the aim of embedding best practice models in teaching and learning**		
	35.2	Trial use of SEN inspection model in post-primary schools with a view to mainstreaming use of the model in 2019	Achieved	

Measures of progress and success for Goal 2 in Quarter 4:

Indicator	Target/indicator (year)	Reading/Measurement as at end Q4 2018
Special Education Teaching Posts	Over 13,400 Special Education Teacher posts in place (2018)	13,396 Special Education Teacher posts in place. Additional allocations will continue to be made for schools which have exceptional needs.
Special Needs Assistants	Up to 15,000 SNAs in place (2018)	14,973 SNA posts in place for 2018/19 school year.

Goal 3: Help those delivering education services to continuously improve

Objective 3.1

Increase the quality of Early Years to deliver a better learning experience for young children

Action/Subaction		Actions/subactions for Quarter 4	Achieved/Not achieved	Comment
36		**Support the implementation of Síolta (the national quality framework) and Aistear (the early childhood curriculum framework) through implementation of the National Síolta Aistear Initiative, in partnership with DCYA and the NCCA, to improve quality within the Early Years sector**		
	36.4	Coordinate the implementation of the central information system for registration and tracking of engagement with Síolta and Aistear in conjunction with National Voluntary Chidcare Organisations (NVCO) and City and County Childcare Committee partner organisations	Achieved	
	36.5	Coordinate the Síolta Quality Assurance Programme validation process for settings which have completed the Síolta Quality Assurance programme	Achieved	
	36.6	Develop and maintain aistearsiolta.ie-a resource for implementation of the Aistear and Siolta frameworks	Achieved	
37		**Coordinate national, regional and other CPD opportunities for Síolta Aistear Mentors**		
	37.2	Establish and coordinate specific CPD opportunities for Síolta Validators	Achieved	

	37.3	Coordinate the provision of training, mentoring and coaching supports delivered by Síolta Aistear Mentors to support implementation of both national frameworks within early years settings.	Achieved	
	37.4	Work with DCYA to develop national CPD infrastructure for early years practitioners	Achieved	

Objective 3.2 **Develop the continuum of teacher education to equip teachers with the right skills for 21st century teaching and learning and improve school leadership**				
Action/Subaction		**Actions/subactions for Quarter 4**	**Achieved/Not achieved**	**Comment**
41		**Continue the reform of initial teacher education (ITE) and teacher induction to ensure teachers are equipped with the right skills for 21st century teaching, learning and assessment**		
	41.3	Support the growth phase of "Droichead", the national induction process for all Newly Qualified Teachers (NQTs) in collaboration with the Teaching Council	Achieved	
	41.4	Make recommendations for the next phase of reform in Initial Teacher Education Provision following a review of progress to-date by an International Panel	Not achieved	Review of progress to date has been carried out and the next steps are under consideration
42		**Change the leadership and middle management structure and the functions carried out in schools by the holders of posts of responsibility**		
	42.1	Provide guidance for post-primary schools on agreed changes to the leadership and middle management structure of schools	Not achieved	A detailed draft has been prepared and consultations with relevant parties are underway
	42.2	Work with Education and Training Boards Ireland (ETBI) to develop a project which will encourage ETBs to adopt a more flexible and targeted approach to the deployment of principals and deputy-principals, in order to bring about agreed changes to the leadership and middle management structure of schools	Achieved	
43		**Provide dedicated professional support to teachers to support the implementation of curricular change and Department policy**		
	43.2	Provide CPD to support the Primary Languages curriculum, new and revised	Achieved	

		senior cycle subject specifications (including Leaving Certificate PE and Computer Science), and Junior Cycle reform		
45		**Continue to develop programmes for teacher professional learning to further enhance the teaching profession**		
	45.3	Implement a programme of work to enhance the governance of Education Centres	Achieved	
46		**Evaluate the impacts of CPD**		
	46.1	Develop a research based framework for the evaluation of CPD for teachers in the area of student wellbeing	Not achieved	This research project has been approved and is due to commence in 2019
47		**Regulate the teaching profession to further enhance the profession**		
	47.1	Develop regulations and primary legislation, as required	Achieved	
	47.2	Scope the policy implications of the proposals of the Teaching Council for the development of Cosán, as required	Not achieved	Engagement with the Teaching Council will continue in relation to the development of Cosán

Objective 3.3 **Improve quality, promote excellence and innovation, and increase autonomy for schools**				
Action/Subaction		**Actions/subactions for Quarter 4**	**Achieved/Not achieved**	**Comment**
49		**Undertake a planned programme of inspection and advisory visits in schools and education settings, and publish inspection reports in accordance with agreed arrangements for the various inspection models**	Achieved	
50		**Manage the monitoring of, and interventions in, poorly performing schools, through the School Improvement Group**	Achieved	
51		**Develop new forms of SSE, advisory visits and collaborative working to support leadership development**	Achieved	
52		**Develop and commence implementation on a pilot basis of the Schools Excellence Fund-Step Up project to advance collaborative working between post-primary schools, Inspectorate and JCT support service that will encourage self-evaluation and improvement in teaching and learning in selected priority areas**		
	52.3	Commence Phase 1 advisory visits by the Inspectorate and delivery of dedicated CPD for teachers by JCT in schools, under	Achieved	

		the Schools Excellence Fund-Step Up pilot project		
53		**Develop and implement a range of inspection arrangements to monitor the compliance of schools with the enhanced child protection and safeguarding requirements of the Department's "Revised Child Protection Guidelines 2017"**		
	53.4	Conclude consultation on specialised CPSIs and publish Guide to CPSIs	Achieved	
	53.5	Commence trial implementation of CPSIs in schools (to complement initial inspection arrangements commenced in Q1)	Achieved	

Objective 3.4 **Promote high quality learning experiences in Further Education and Training and Higher Education**				
Action/Subaction		**Actions/subactions for Quarter 4**	**Achieved/Not achieved**	**Comment**
54		**Initiate review of quality in Higher Education**		
	54.1	Launch a public consultation process, as the first phase of the review of quality in Higher Education	Not achieved	Further consideration to be given to key issues central to the review. This will require amendments to the discussion paper. This will assist in setting clearer parameters for the objectives of the review and engagement with stakeholders. A consultation process will be initiated in Q1 2019
	54.2	Terms of Reference for Review of quality in Higher Education finalised	Not achieved	This action can only be advanced following completion of action 54.1
	54.3	Review of quality in Higher Education commenced	Not achieved	This action can only be advanced following completion of action 54.2
55		**Support the development and embedding of digital capacity in the teaching and learning activities of HEIs, and in national policy and quality frameworks in a way that supports innovation for impact**		
	55.1	Develop a consistent digital experience for third-level students and engage with students and teachers to develop their digital skills and knowledge	Achieved	
	55.2	Develop a strong evidence base for enhanced third-level pedagogy through	Achieved	

		targeted research and development projects		
57		**Develop a management and leadership capability framework and upskilling programme for the Higher Education sector, starting with IoTs in 2018**	Achieved	
58		**Develop a pilot performance fund to incentivise higher education institutions to excel in key policy areas**	Not achieved	Proposals are to be finalised for the shape of the Performance Fund
59		**Implement the 2018 actions in the Further Education and Training Professional Development Strategy 2017-2019 (SOLAS)**	Achieved	
60		**Enhance quality assurance in ETBs**		
	60.2	Develop a new ETB sectoral approach and model for curriculum and programme development, assessment and validation	Achieved	
	60.3	Complete the pilot of the new ETB sectoral Model and Process of External Moderation/Authentication	Not achieved	Work in this area has advanced, with a working group being established. Work will continue in Q1 2019 in order to finalise the recruitment of authenticators
62		**Improve the impact of the PLC, Youthreach, Vocational Training Opportunities Scheme (VTOS) and Specific Skills Training (SST) schemes to ensure relevance to the labour market and effective progression for learners**		
	62.1	Conduct and complete evaluation of the Youthreach programme	Achieved	
	62.2	Commence evaluation of the VTOS/SST programmes	Achieved	
	62.3	Implement the 2018 components of the PLC work programme under the oversight of the PLC Programme improvement Advisory Committee including actions identified to commence implementation in the 2018/19 academic year (September 2018)	Achieved	

Measures of progress and success for Goal 3 in Quarter 4:

Indicator	Target/indicator (year)	Reading/Measurement as at end Q4 2018
Support principals through enabling them to access professional coaching	400 principals (2018)	555 Principals have engaged with the one-to-one Coaching Service since its introduction in February 2017. The Department has recently announced the introduction of team coaching which is now available to schools whose Principal has previously engaged with one to one coaching

Support schools through the annual school inspection programme	3,000 inspections conducted (2018)	1,352 school inspections and 2,527 probationary visits in 2018.
Increase impact of school inspections through publication of inspection reports on the Department's website and regional seminars	1,000 inspection reports published (2018)	992 inspection reports published.
Support schools in implementing the School Self-Evaluation process	800 advisory visits (2018) Commence regional seminars to support school self-evaluation	902 SSE advisory visits conducted. In addition, 160 primary and 35 post-primary SSE advisory visits carried out in schools participating in the Gaeltacht School Recognition Scheme.
Support future school leaders through post-graduate qualifications	200 aspiring school leaders (2018)	242 teachers are progressing from the first intake in September 2017 and are due to complete the programme before end Q1 2019. In September 2018, 271 teachers enrolled on the second intake.

Goal 4: Build stronger bridges between education and the wider community

Objective 4.2

Strengthen the role of parents and students, and deliver progress in providing greater school choice

Action/Subaction		Actions/subactions for Quarter 4	Achieved/Not achieved	Comment
64		**Introduce a stronger complaints procedure and charter for parents and students**		
	64.1	Progress the drafting of the Education (Parent and Student) Charter Bill in conjunction with the Office of the Parliamentary Council (OPC)	Achieved	
	64.2	Support the progress of the Education (Parent and Student) Charter Bill through the Oireachtas legislative process	Not achieved	Work on drafting will continue in conjunction with OPC with a view to finalisation, publication and progression through the Oireachtas as early as possible in 2019
65		**Advance the legislation in relation to school admissions to make enrolment easier for children and parents**		
	65.2	Following enactment of the Admissions Bill commence consultation with relevant Stakeholders on the detail of regulations as regulations move to drafting stage, subject to the Bill being passed by the Oireachtas.	Not achieved	A consultative document is being finalised and will be provided to relevant partners early in 2019 for their feedback

66		**Make progress towards increasing the diversity of school type, in order to offer parents more choice**		
	66.3	Finalise drafting and consultation on protocols for the Implementation Phase of the Schools Reconfiguration for Diversity process	Not achieved	Work has commenced on finalising the implementation phase protocols and consultations with relevant parties are underway with a view to completing in Q1 2019
	66.4	Agree detailed arrangements for transfer of patronage of schools, following consultation	Not achieved	Work has commenced on finalising the implementation phase protocols and consultations with relevant parties are underway with a view to completing in Q1 2019

Objective 4.3 **Enhance our capacity to meet national and regional skills needs**				
Action/Subaction		**Actions/subactions for Quarter 4**	**Achieved/Not achieved**	**Comment**
67		**Enhance our response to skills needs within the Early Years sector**		
	67.2	Develop and finalise an Early Years workforce plan to 2030, with DCYA	Not achieved	Work in this area has commenced, with an internal working group to be established to examine what actions need to be taken. Work will continue in 2019 in order to further develop the Early Years workforce plan with DCYA
68		**Develop innovative responses to skills gaps across key priority areas of the economy**		
	68.3	Roll out the Skills for Growth, audit tool for enterprise, nationally in 2018	Achieved	
69		**Oversee the work of the Regional Skill Fora nationally and monitor their level of engagement with enterprise**		
	69.2	Review quarterly progress reports to be completed by each Regional Skills Forum manager	Achieved	
71		**Develop a strategy to address ICT Skills Needs in the Higher Education sector. To address the demand for ICT graduates from domestic supply, to meet the skills needs of enterprise through mainstream and targeted initiatives including Springboard+**		
	71.1	Publish ICT Skills 2018-2026 action plan and implementation plan for 2018 to address demand for ICT graduates	Not achieved	Technology Skills 2022: Ireland's third ICT Skills Action

				Plan is being finalised and shall be published in Q1 2019
	71.2	Commence the implementation of actions from the ICT Skills 2018-2026 action plan	Achieved	

Objective 4.4 **Create a greater diversity of learning opportunities beyond school**				
Action/Subaction		**Actions/subactions for Quarter 4**	**Achieved/Not achieved**	**Comment**
72		**Strengthen the apprenticeship and traineeship systems through enhancing the range of programmes and increasing provision**		
	72.2	As set out in the Action Plan to Expand Apprenticeship and Traineeship in Ireland 2016-2020, provide a cumulative total of 25 new apprenticeships and 10 new traineeships to offer more choice for learners	Not achieved	17 new apprenticeships cumulatively at end of Q4. The Department will continue to implement actions in the Action Plan during 2019 with a particular focus on employer engagement. There will be ongoing support offered to relevant consortia via the Apprenticeship Council Secretariat, and a particular focus on employers and apprenticeship targets in 2019
74		**Continue to work with Skillnets to deliver enterprise-led training and continue to develop the model in accordance with the Skillnets Statement of Strategy 2016-2019**		
	74.2	Develop innovative programmes to meet emerging/future skill needs and critical skill shortages through collaborations with industry, FE providers, HEIs and agencies including the IDA	Achieved	
75		**Support skills development for those in employment through the FET Policy Framework on Employee Development**		
	75.2	Commence implementation of the FET Policy Framework on Employee Development	Achieved	
79		**Develop a new mechanism for the extension of weightings for part-time learning in the new higher education funding model to incentivise flexible learning opportunities**	Achieved	

Objective 4.6 Create a stronger focus on Entrepreneurship, Creativity and Innovation				
Action/Subaction		**Actions/subactions for Quarter 4**	**Achieved/Not achieved**	**Comment**
83		**Contribute to progressing the National Strategy on Education for Sustainable Development as a key component of Ireland's overall national strategy to deliver on the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)**		
	83.3	Contribute to Ireland's first National Sustainable Development Goals Implementation Plan 2018-2020	Achieved	
84		**Introduce a new System Innovation and Transformation fund for higher education to drive innovation across the sector**	Achieved	
85		**Develop a mechanism for recognising a wider set of knowledge transfer metrics, to drive research and innovation, in higher education funding allocations**	Achieved	
86		**Convene a fourth national forum on Education for Sustainable Development**	Achieved	

Objective 4.7 Work with enterprise to increase the number of researchers and institute a new programme of funding for Frontiers Research				
Action/Subaction		**Actions/subactions for Quarter 4**	**Achieved/Not achieved**	**Comment**
87		**Implement a strategy developed to attract world-leading researchers to Ireland in the context of Brexit. This strategy may include additional awards funded by the Irish Research Council for researchers or academics who relocate**		
	87.1	Publish strategy to attract world-leading researchers to Ireland in the context of Brexit	Not achieved	Work on this action is advanced and will continue in 2019 in order to finalise the scope of the Strategy.
	87.2	Begin to implement actions flowing from the strategy to attract world-leading researchers to Ireland in the context of Brexit	Not achieved	This action is dependent on action 87.1
88		**Increase the enrolment of postgraduate researchers and grow the number of programmes to support postdoctoral researchers, in partnership with enterprise/employers and in line with Innovation 2020 targets address economic demands**	Not achieved	Funding in 2019 will mostly fund the Irish Research Council's Laureate Awards which were awarded in 2018, and which can include post graduate and post-doctoral researchers.

Objective 4.8 Position Ireland as a desirable location for international students				
Action/Subaction		**Actions/subactions for Quarter 4**	**Achieved/Not achieved**	**Comment**
89		**Introduce the International Education Mark (IEM) to ensure a quality standard and best international practice for international learners in Ireland**		
	89.1	Progress the Qualifications and Quality Assurance (Amendment) Bill	Achieved	
90		**Implement the International Education Strategy 2016-2020, through the responsible High Level Working group to develop a comprehensive approach to education that prepares students, academics and staff to be active and engaged participants in an interconnected global world and attracts leading international student talent**		
	90.1	Conduct a cost benefit analysis of internationalisation to both Government and HEIs, in consultation with relevant stakeholders, and to include an assessment of how best to improve the impact on the economy from international education	Not achieved	Work is continuing on this action in consultation with the High Level Group on International Education
	90.2	Review the data on grant holders as a proportion of Erasmus+ students (or the proportion of those who undertake non-compulsory Erasmus+ programmes) with a view to enhancing data on disadvantaged students undertaking Erasmus+ mobility	Not achieved	Work on this action has commenced and will continue in 2019 in order to finalise the scope of the review

Measures of progress and success for Goal 4 in Quarter 4:

Indicator	Target/indicator (year)	Reading/Measurement as at end Q4 2018
Increased number of in-employment upskilling, through Skillnets	20% increase, to 55,000 places (2018)	55,000 participants cumulatively in Quarters 1, 2 , 3 and 4
Learners avail of the new apprenticeship opportunities	1,500 apprenticeship registrations (2018)	590 registrations on new apprenticeships cumulatively as at end Q4 2018
Increase the number of new registrations on craft apprenticeships	4,697 new registrations by end 2018	5,058 registrations on craft apprenticeships cumulatively as at end Q4 2018
As set out in the Action Plan to Expand Apprenticeship and Traineeship in Ireland 2016-2020, provide new apprenticeships to offer more choice for learners	A cumulative 25 new programmes (2018)	19 new apprenticeships cumulatively at end of Q4

Expand research through the new competitive Advanced Laureate Awards	24 awards made (2018)	The awards under this scheme in Q1 2018 are progressing - these are four year awards. The call for applications for the Advanced Laureate Awards, which are for established leading principal investigators who want funding to pursue ground-breaking, high-risk research, were announced in May 2018, with awards expected at the end of Q1 2019.
Creative Youth implemented in schools, as part of Creative Ireland	150 primary and post-primary schools take part in the pilot of the Scoileanna Ildánacha/Creative Schools Initiative (2018)	150 schools engaging in Creative Schools. Creative associates have now been assigned to participating schools. Associates are now working with schools to develop their Creative Schools plans.

Goal 5: Improve national planning and support services

Objective 5.1

Strengthen strategic oversight and focus on delivery for results

Action/Subaction		Actions/subactions for Quarter 4	Achieved/Not achieved	Comment
91		**Provide strategic direction and support in the governance, management and use of the Department's data**		
	91.1	Develop corporate user guidelines for the Department's Data Life Cycle	Not achieved	The guidelines are to be finalised and published in Q1 2019 via the new Data Stewards' Network
	91.2	Develop data support and compliance services to assist with the governance and management of the Department's data resources	Achieved	
92		**Advance legislative reform in the Higher Education sector**		
	92.2	Review and prioritise issues to be addressed in the Higher Education Reform Bill and finalise drafting of a general scheme	Not achieved	This piece of legislation has been subsumed by action 92.4
	92.3	Process in place to evaluate applications under the Technological Universities Act	Achieved	
	92.4	Produce a scoping paper, to inform future legislative updating of the HEA Act, 1971	Achieved	

93		**Commence review of the Free Fees scheme (Higher Education) as part of the reformed funding model for higher education**	Not achieved	Work has advanced on this action with the terms of reference agreed and the procurement process underway. The review will begin in Q1 2019
94		**Monitor the implementation of the "Action Plan for Education 2016 - 2019", addressing the challenges to be faced on the road to becoming the best education and training service in Europe**		
	94.1	Publish quarterly progress reports under the "Action Plan for Education" framework	Achieved	
	94.2	Promote the use of sectoral indicators to demonstrate the effectiveness of major activities under each of the high-level goals of the Action Plan for Education	Achieved	
95		**Deliver on Government-wide public service reform commitments as they relate to the education and training sector, and in line with best international practice**		
	95.1	Report in line with arrangements under “Our Public Service 2020”, the new public service reform plan, and the Programme for Government	Achieved	
	95.2	Provide for project management training across the Department and introduce programme management training as appropriate	Achieved	
98		**Support the operation of a high quality school system through the annual provision of teaching and financial supports to schools, based on agreed criteria and enrolment data**	Achieved	
100		**Complete the Estimates process**	Achieved	
101		**Implementation of strategic dialogue and new models of resource allocation in FET and HE will take account of institutions’ and ETBs’ engagement with regional skills structures, support for employers in identifying and meeting their skill needs and offering of flexible and part time provision**	Achieved	
102		**Provide payroll and pension services to teachers and school staff in all schools (except the ETB sector)**	Achieved	
103		**Progress the work programme to enhance and standardise the alignment of sectoral governance codes in line with DPER's Code of Practice**		
	103.2	Roll out corporate governance training courses, generated to enhance corporate governance skills within the DES	Achieved	

	103.3	Commence a programme of targeted rolling reviews of significant elements of Corporate Governance across the Higher Education Sector, ETBs and the Department's aegis bodies, in order to develop robust governance practices	Achieved	
	103.4	Develop a financial penalty for serious governance breaches in HEIs	Achieved	
104		**In the context of guidance on Period Critical Reviews from DPER, develop protocols and schedule for systematic review of DES agencies**		
	104.2	Initiate Period Critical Reviews in agencies	Not achieved	Work on this action is advanced and will continue in 2019 in order to finalise the scope of the review

Objective 5.2 **Deliver appropriate infrastructure for learning environments**				
Action/Subaction		**Actions/subactions for Quarter 4**	**Achieved/Not achieved**	**Comment**
105		**Support infrastructural development within the schools sector, through the roll out of the 2016- 2021 Construction Programme**	Achieved	
106		**Roll out the next phase of the Prefab Replacement Initiative, undertaking preparatory work in schools with older, purchased prefabs, to allow commencement of construction of permanent accommodation in 2019**	Achieved	
107		**Implement the 2016-2021 Capital Plan in respect of Higher Education. This includes confirmation of priorities for the subsequent period and progress on the Higher Education PPP programme**		
	107.1	Continue to advance preparations for procurement of the PPP Programme to expand capacity in Institutes of Technology	Achieved	
	107.2	Develop a framework for ensuring that capital allocations are aligned with the Department's strategies and priorities for the HE and FET sectors, driving our national and regional ambitions	Achieved	
108		**Improve the quality of internet connectivity for schools in line with technical developments and available resources**	Achieved	

Objective 5.3 **Improve the quality of the national support services and shared services**				
Action/Subaction		**Actions/subactions for Quarter 4**	**Achieved/Not achieved**	**Comment**
109		**Strengthen DES management systems through shared services**		
	109.2	Engage with the Financial Management Shared Services Centre in the Design, Build & Test phase of Financial Management Shared Services Project	Achieved	
110		**Improve the quality of services across the sector through the introduction of shared services**		
	110.4	Begin the phased implementation of Finance shared service for ETBs.	Achieved	
	110.5	Commence operation of the Payroll Shared Service for ETBs	Not achieved	Work is underway, and it is anticipated that this project will come on-stream on a phased basis commencing in Q2 2019
	110.6	Further develop the Education Sector Procurement hub and the sectoral procurement initiatives to maximise the benefits of centralised procurement for all parts of the sector from schools through to Higher Education Institutions	Achieved	
	110.7	Promote the potential benefits of Small Business Innovation Research (SBIR) for the Department and wider sector and explore potential applications for the Department and the wider sector	Achieved	
	110.8	Upgrade ICT systems for Higher Education HR/Payroll to support the shared service agenda	Achieved	
114		**Provide safe, efficient and cost effective school transport services for eligible children**	Achieved	
115		**Lead industrial relations negotiations on behalf of the Department and the education and training sector and provide industrial relations and employment law advice to the Minister, Departmental colleagues and sector employers**	Achieved	
116		**Manage EU cofinanced programmes and exploit cofinancing opportunities**		
	116.1	Designate the Managing and Certifying Authorities for the Programme for Employability, Inclusion and Learning 2014-2020 (PEIL) co-financed by the EU through the ESF and the YEI	Achieved	

	116.2	Publish Mid-Term Evaluation of Programme for Employability, Inclusion and Learning 2014 - 2020 (PEIL)	Achieved	
	116.3	Submit Payment Applications to Commission in line with Regulatory Requirements	Achieved	
117		**Manage the Department's Human Resources effectively**		
	117.2	Provide staff training and development opportunities, including the continued roll out of Underperformance/Disciplinary Code training across managerial grades and liaising with the new Civil Service Learning and Development Centre	Achieved	
119		**Improve business processes within the Department using the Business Process Improvement Lean Six Sigma methodology**	Achieved	
120		**Further develop the Department's response to the potential impact of Brexit on our education system and to the delivery of the Action Plan for Education 2016- 2019**	Achieved	
121		**Oversee, with partners, the implementation of the "Shared Education" objective under the EU PEACE IV Programme (2014-2020) in the target region of Northern Ireland and the six border counties**	Achieved	

Measures of progress and success for Goal 5 in Quarter 4:

Indicator	Target/indicator (year)	Reading/Measurement as at end Q4 2018
Provide safe, efficient and cost effective school transport services for eligible children.	Transport approximately 114,000 children on a daily basis (2018)	116,729 children transported in total compromising of 104,100 children on mainstream services to primary and post-primary schools and 12,629 children on Special Educational Needs transport services.