

9th EUA-CDE Annual Meeting, Tarragona, Spain,
June 2016



The Role and Response of Irish Universities

Prof. Lisa Looney, Dean of Graduate Studies



How do universities influence policies in doctoral education and research ?

- Know & understand the policy drivers
- Get organised & engage proactively as an identifiable significant stakeholder

How do universities implement those policies ?

- **Reacting to policy stimuli** (i.e. funding calls),
- **Developing underpinning agreements, systems and processes**
- **Delivering on new, normalised expectations.**
- Accommodating the real, and not the imagined PhD student



**DCU
Graduate
Studies**

2005



Universities becoming organised

Internally

- Established structures designed to enhance the delivery of doctoral education (Deans, Graduate Schools, GSOs).
- Revised administrative procedures, regulations and supports.

Collectively

- Established the 4th Level Network of Deans of Graduate Studies and senior administrators of graduate education in 2007.



DCU Graduate Studies



2004

- **OECD Review of Higher Education in Ireland**
“a much greater investment in postgraduate support with the aim of more than doubling the number of doctoral candidates by 2010”.

2005

- **Good Practice in the Organisation of PhD Programmes in Irish Universities (IUQB)**

2006

- **Salzburg Principles for Doctoral Training (EUA)**
- **Irish Strategy for Science, Technology and Innovation (DETE)**

2008

- **IUA PhD Graduate Skills Statement**

2009

- **Role of PhDs in the Smart Economy (Forfás)**
- **Good Practice in the Organisation of Ph.D. Programmes in Higher Education**, 2nd Edition (IUQB)
- **Establishment of the DRHEA** [Dublin Region Higher Education Alliance]

2010

- **Salzburg II Recommendations (EUA)**

2011

- **National Strategy for Higher Education to 2030 [Hunt Report] (DoES)**
- **IUA Inter-Institutional Agreement on Collaborative Graduate Programmes**
- **Principles of Innovative Doctoral Training (EC)**

DCU Graduate Studies

2012

- Towards a Future Higher Education Landscape (HEA)
- A reinforced European Research Area partnership for excellence and growth (EC)
- **1st cross institutional Graduate School** (DCU-DKIT Strategic Partnership)

2013

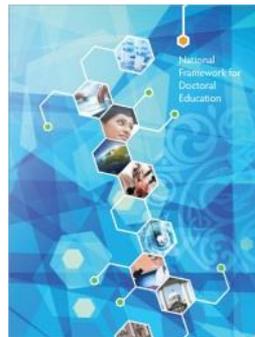
- Completing the Landscape Process (HEA)

2014

- System Performance Framework and Mission-based Performance Compacts (HEA)

2015

- **National Framework for Doctoral Education** (HEA/QQI)
- QQI Quality Assurance Review and Enhancement of Research degree programmes (QQI)
- IUA PhD Graduate Skills Statement - revised (IUA)



DCU

Developing underpinning agreements, systems and processes



Inter-Institutional Collaborative Memorandum of Understanding

For the purpose of enabling module delivery, student mobility and credit exchange in thematic collaborative graduate programmes formally agreed across Universities in the Republic of Ireland

Between

University College Dublin, Trinity College Dublin, Dublin City University, NUI, Maynooth, NUI, Galway, University College Cork and University of Limerick

2005 -2010

DCU Graduate Studies

Analysis points out new need & mismatch with PhD education

Universities challenged to address these issues, with funding put in place to drive transformation

Universities engaged in policy development & created a new model of PhD (mainly flagship models)



DCU Graduate Studies



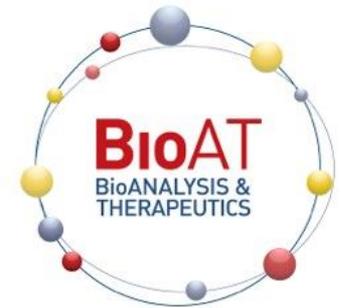
**Molecular and Cellular Mechanisms
Underlying inflammatory processes**
Structured PRTL I PhD Programme



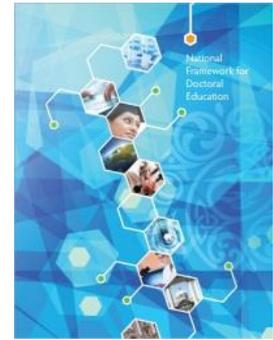
digital arts & humanities PhD



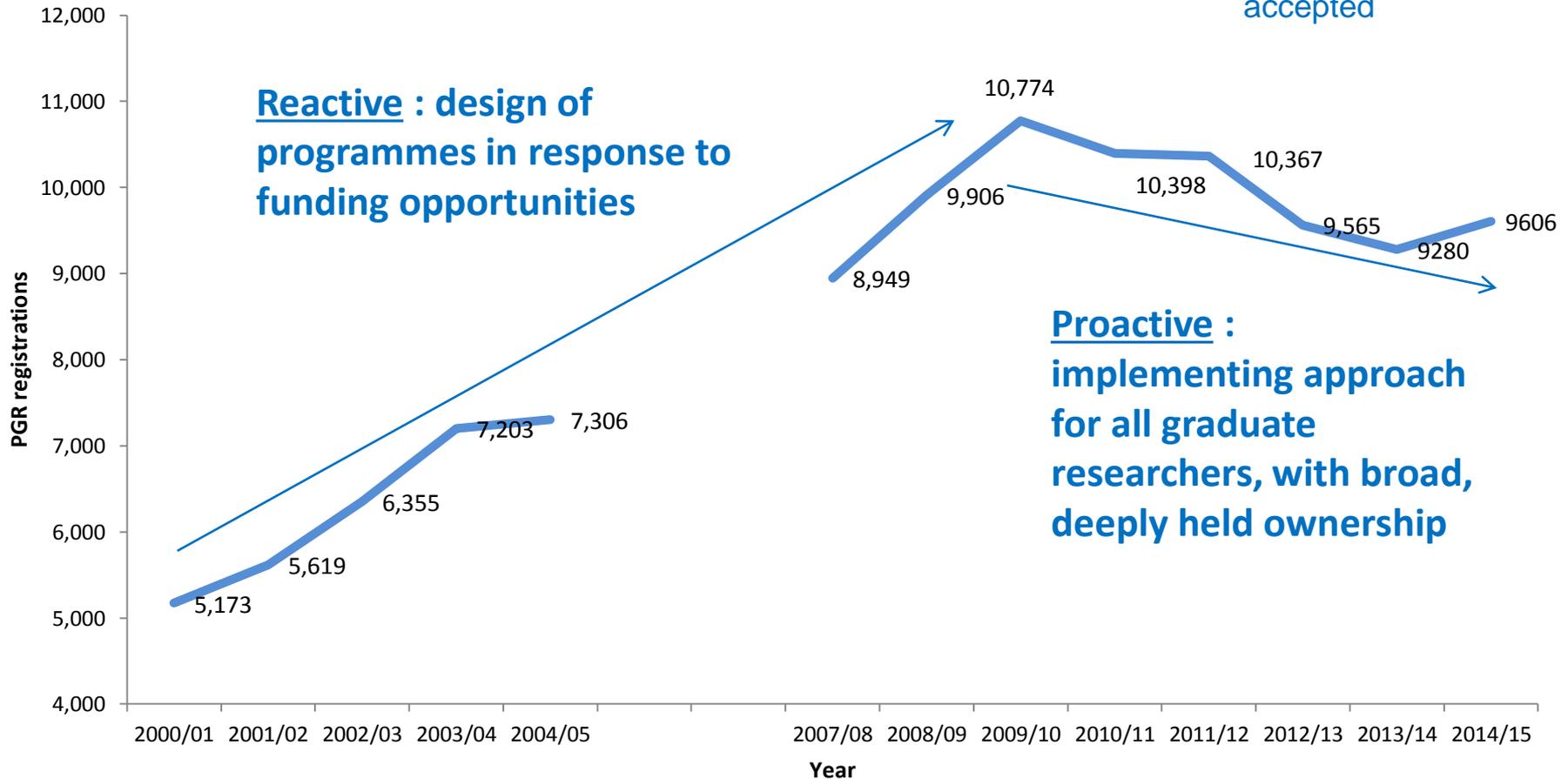
Co-Funded by
Irish Research Council Marine Institute
Established 2011



Context revisited



New model of Doctoral Education broadly accepted



2011 -2016

**from 'flagship',
to building 'a new normal'**

**Policy still points
to a changed
expectation**

**Universities
challenged to
address this,
with no specific
funding put in
place.**

**Universities
trying to sustain
the new model
of PhD, and
deliver across all
disciplines**



DCU's journey

1. Review in Context

Policy context

- Review of EU & national policy, qualification frameworks, QA, funding, employer surveys
- Review of university strategic priorities, internal funding drivers

Culture & attitudinal context

- Test with discussion papers and specific proposals via formal committees and informal discussion groups
- leverage student exit surveys

2. Build Institutional Consensus

**Agree
Outcomes**

Decide on Principles

Establish Constraints

**Doctoral
Framework
Design**



1. Agree Outcomes

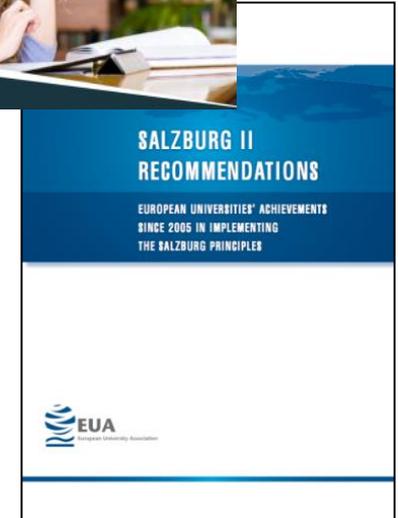
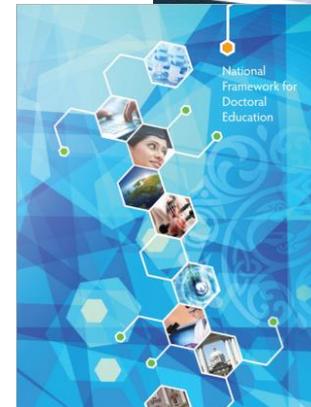
Disciplines: reference international disciplinary norms & the research product with specific technical / analytical skills

Candidates: reference competitiveness for academic careers & answering a niggling or niche question

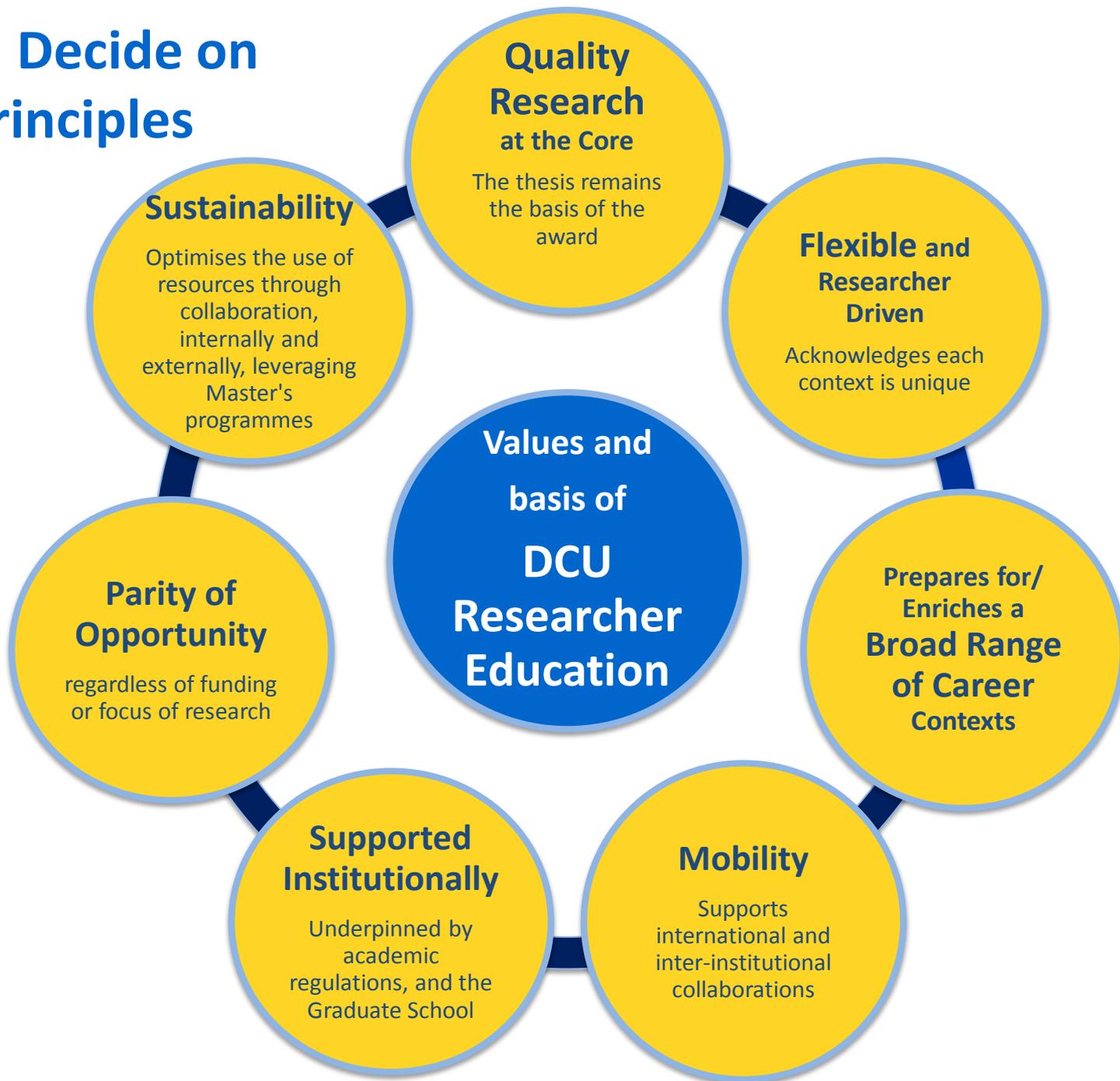
**Strengthen (not diminish) outcomes delivered by traditional model
but also
add new types of outcomes**



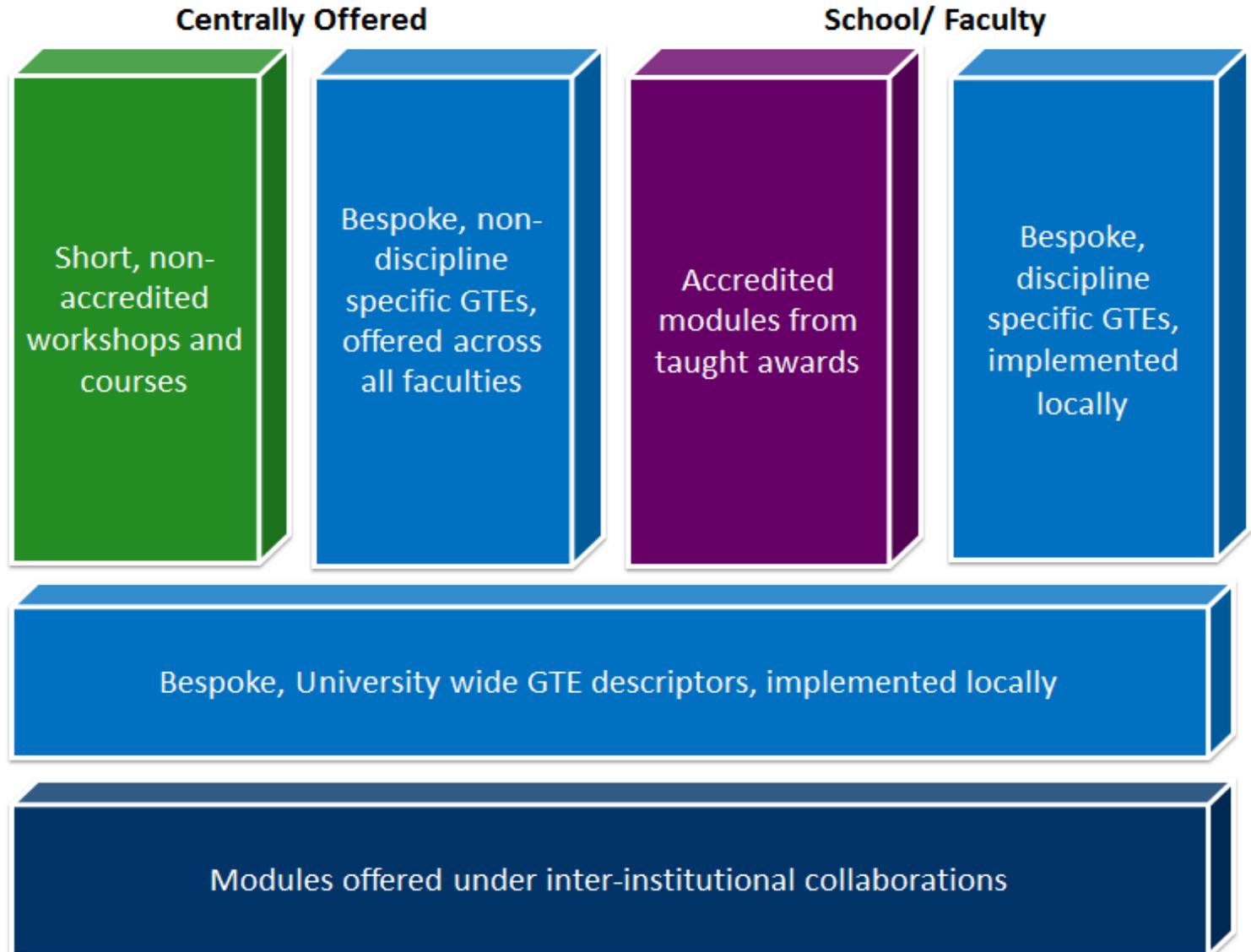
Policy



2. Decide on Principles



3. Implement within constraints



4. Test against important criteria eg. accommodating emphasis



A way for candidates to identify, target, and obtain the skills required for work in a wide variety of settings

Discipline Specific

School Pathway

Structured Doctoral Pathway

Core
Discipline-
Specific
Modules

Core
Transferable
Skills
Modules

Elective
Modules

Non-accredited
training,
workshops and
masterclasses

The Role and Response of Universities

How do universities influence policies in doctoral education and research ?

- Know & understand the policy drivers
- Get **organised & engage proactively** as an identifiable significant stakeholder

How do universities implement those policies ?

Well, but it helps a lot if:

- policy, institutional and discipline culture and expectations of all stakeholders align,
- resources are put in place, and funding instruments are well designed.
- People take the time to talk to one another.





NATIONAL FRAMEWORK FOR DOCTORAL EDUCATION

HEA | HIGHER EDUCATION AUTHORITY
AN tSúgaras um Aiféiríocht

QQI
Quality and Qualifications Ireland
Oibríocht Calúcháin agus Calúcháin Éireann

IUA | IRISH
UNIVERSITIES
ASSOCIATION

IOTI
Institutes of Technology Ireland

IRISH RESEARCH COUNCIL
An Chomhairle um Thaisiú in Éirinn

**DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
AND SKILLS**

An Roinn Post, Fiontar agus Nuálaíochta
Department of Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation

sfi

RIA

HRB
Health Research Board

**ENTERPRISE
IRELAND**
Where Innovation Meets Business

COGASC
Association For Doctoral Studies