

Higher Education



Tough choices or tough times?

A well-educated and highly trained population is essential for the social and economic well-being of Ireland and its citizens.

It would appear that the knowledge society is here to stay, requiring capable, highly qualified and innovative Irish citizens. Recent increased rates in levels of educational participation suggest that Ireland has certainly got that message. By 2006, in excess of 52% of 25 – 34 year olds had attained at least tertiary education, a dramatic increase on the previous decade. But what do the next 10 years have in store, and is increasing participation adequate to sustain Ireland's development into its next phase?

Managing the growth and development of the Irish higher educational system in a way that improves access, enhances quality and boosts value for money poses a significant challenge to the Irish state and individual institutions particularly in changing economic circumstances.

While nobody can predict how far the expansion in tertiary education will continue, Ireland needs to develop a sustainable financing model capable of responding to growing student numbers and improving the quality of teaching and learning and research outputs and supporting the development of industry and the community.

Questions many university senior management teams and governing bodies are struggling to respond to include:

- How to develop and provide quality outputs within the constraints of current and future higher education funding levels, models, the economic climate and, in many cases an ageing estate.
- How to deliver both to the Government, on the Modernisation agenda as set down in National Development Plan, and to the student, whilst adapting to more recent changes in Government expectations.
- The challenge associated with the commitment to doubling PHD students by 2013 and the challenge in the expansion of research activity of international quality.
- The oversight and compliance requirements of the recently introduced Code of Governance and subsequent Statement of Internal Control.
- The changing nature of the Irish demographic environment and the competition many Irish universities face for the brightest and best of Irish students and academics.
- The opportunity or perhaps the threat associated with the internationalisation of Irish higher educational institutions and the question of how many Irish universities can operate in that space.
- The higher education quality agenda and the focus on the evaluation of teaching/learning outcomes.
- What controls, systems and procedures can be put in place to balance tax compliance with effective tax risk management

Mazars specialist higher education team

Mazars is one of the few firms operating in the Irish and UK markets to employ a dedicated team of higher education specialists, the majority of whom have been supporting Irish and international institutions and education sectoral and funding bodies for in excess of 15 years. Our team includes former members of senior management teams from leading Irish and UK universities together with chartered accountants, internal and external auditors, university tax and VAT specialists, business consultants, governance and risk consultants and specialist university system advisors.

In drawing both from our specialist team and our wide experience, we can support you in meeting the challenges you face across any of the following areas:

- Strategy & Planning
- Governance
- Resource Allocation
- Internal Audit
- Value For Money (VfM) Reviews
- Tax Planning
- Project Appraisals
- Risk Management
- Organisational Reviews
- External Audit
- IT/Security Audit
- Operational Reviews
- VAT
- Support in the Preparation of Funding Applications

Mazars have partnered with institutions, agencies and organisations right across the education sector by providing a full range of services and are focused on continuing to meet the demands of a changing and challenging education environment.

If you have any queries or require further information, please do not hesitate to contact:

Dera McLoughlin	01 4494485	e-mail dmcloughlin@mazars.ie
Bernard Barron	01 4494411	e-mail bbarron@mazars.ie
Frank Greene	01 4496415	e-mail fgreene@mazars.ie



Mazars
Harcourt Centre
Block 3
Harcourt Road
Dublin 2

email: mazars@mazars.ie
tel: +353 (0)1 4494400

Mazars
Mazars Place
Salthill
Galway

email: mt@mazars.ie
tel: +353 (0)91 570100

www.mazars.ie

