



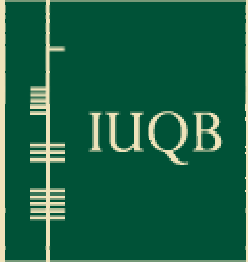
# Doctoral Education Challenges for the Future

Reflections from Ireland

Dr Padraig Walsh  
Chief Executive  
Irish Universities Quality Board

24<sup>th</sup> October 2007

UK Council for Graduate Education, European Summer Conference  
24-25<sup>th</sup> October, Burlington Hotel, Dublin



IRISH UNIVERSITIES  
QUALITY BOARD

# OECD Report on Irish Higher Education

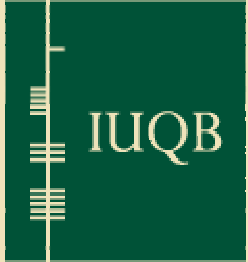
September 2004

- R&D personnel as a % of workforce

Ireland = 0.95% v EU average = 1.39%

- PhD graduates per 1000 head of  
population aged 25-29

Ireland = 1.8% v EU average = 2.9%



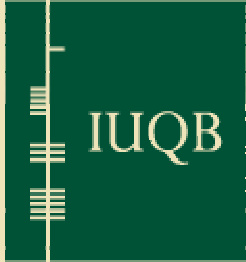
IRISH UNIVERSITIES  
QUALITY BOARD

# OECD Report on Irish Higher Education

September 2004

Warning -

*“The lack of a sufficient supply of doctoral students could seriously hinder Ireland’s aim to create a research-intensive university system and stimulate much higher levels of industrial R&D”*



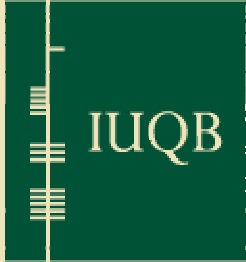
IRISH UNIVERSITIES  
QUALITY BOARD

# OECD Report on Irish Higher Education

September 2004

Recommendation -

*“That steps be taken radically to expand the number of doctoral students with the intention to more than double them by 2010”*

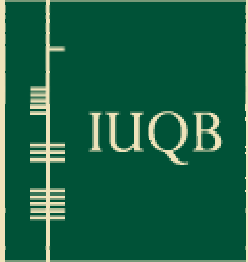


IRISH UNIVERSITIES  
QUALITY BOARD

# Response of Irish government

April 2005

Announcement by the Minister for Education and Science of the creation of a multi-annual Strategic Innovation Fund (SIF) for Higher Education



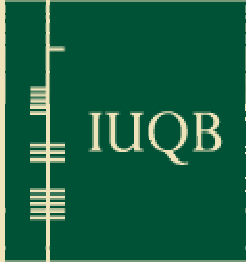
IRISH UNIVERSITIES  
QUALITY BOARD

# Government Aims

October 2005

“We want to encourage more of our third level graduates to pursue advanced postgraduate study and research at fourth level – a vibrant fourth level sector that will produce our future knowledge leaders and underpin a climate of innovation”

*An Taoiseach (Prime Minister), Bertie Ahern*



IRISH UNIVERSITIES  
QUALITY BOARD

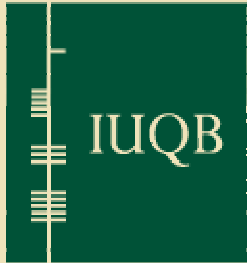
# Response of Irish Universities

November 2005

Publication by Irish Universities Association  
of:

*Reform of 3<sup>rd</sup> level Ireland and creation of  
4<sup>th</sup> level Ireland*

Proposed a radical modernisation of PhD  
and post-doctoral training



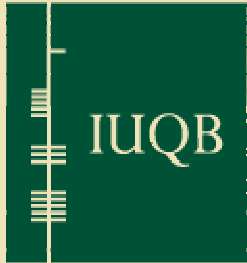
IRISH UNIVERSITIES  
QUALITY BOARD

# Minister for Finance Budget Speech

December 2005

“The higher education system must deliver people who will expand knowledge-based business based in Ireland.

This will require substantial change and quality improvement in universities and centres of higher learning and the promotion of system-wide collaboration that can draw on the collective strength of these institutions.”



IRISH UNIVERSITIES  
QUALITY BOARD

# Minister for Finance Budget Speech

December 2005

“What we need is the promotion of a system-wide collaboration that can draw on the collective strengths of all of our 3<sup>rd</sup> level institutions.

For the period 2006-2010, the Strategic Innovation Fund for 3<sup>rd</sup> Level will be €1200 million (€300 million recurrent and €900 million capital).”



Publication by  
Government of *Strategy for*  
*Science, Technology and*  
*Innovation*  
June 2006

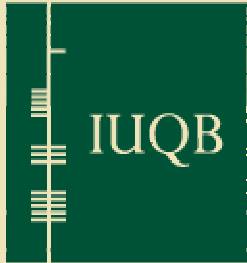
“There is an emerging consensus within the university system that a graduate school type mechanism is needed to ensure the most effective professional development of our researchers.

The increases proposed in advanced research numbers and the aim to see a significant movement of advanced researchers to the enterprise sector, underscores the need for such a mechanism.”



Publication by  
Government of *Strategy for*  
*Science, Technology and*  
*Innovation*  
June 2006

“The more structured approach to postgraduate formation also has the potential to reduce the time taken to complete a PhD and increase the completion rates of entrants to doctoral programmes, thus delivering both quality and improved value for money for the resources invested in PhD training.”



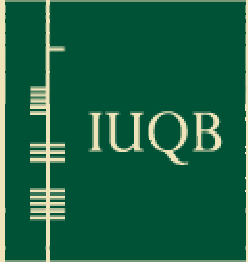
IRISH UNIVERSITIES  
QUALITY BOARD

# Government Response

## NDP 2007-13

The National Development Plan for 2007-2013 -  
Investment of €7.5 billion in Science, Technology and  
Innovation

The government aims to double the number of Researchers  
and PhD students in universities by 2013, to drive the  
country's research agenda and to meet industry's growing  
demand for a highly qualified workforce



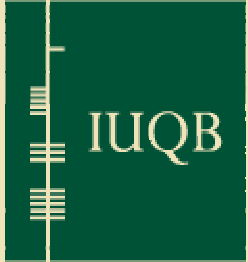
IRISH UNIVERSITIES  
QUALITY BOARD

# 4th Level Ireland

## Aims

“The Irish universities are collaborating to offer a rounded PhD education and research training programme to all students.

The core of the PhD will be the development of an independent research in a world class environment.”

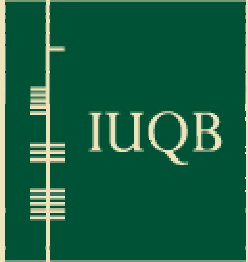


IRISH UNIVERSITIES  
QUALITY BOARD

# 4th Level Ireland

## Aims

“The Irish universities want to attract all students of talent in Ireland and a significant number internationally, and from which those students can graduate with the right qualities for engagement with, and leadership of, a changing and complex knowledge-rich society.”



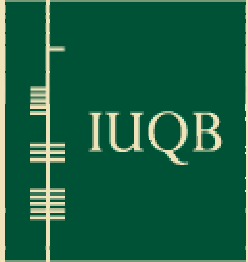
IRISH UNIVERSITIES  
QUALITY BOARD

# 4th Level Ireland

## the challenge

“The development of 4<sup>th</sup> level Ireland means a new and very different research environment in our universities; one which is characterised by flexibility, responsiveness and innovation”

“4<sup>th</sup> level Ireland will provide a new cohort of researcher at the doctoral and postdoctoral level, our future innovators and knowledge entrepreneurs”



IRISH UNIVERSITIES  
QUALITY BOARD

# 4th Level Ireland

**7 universities – 7 claims**

“university with the highest level of peer-reviewed research grants in the State”

“Ireland’s youngest university”

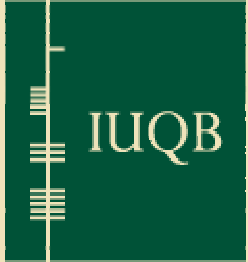
“university with a distinguished record in research and scholarship”

“Ireland’s second oldest university”

“ranked highest of Ireland’s universities in terms of research”

“Ireland’s largest and most richly diversified university”

“Young, energetic and enterprising university”



IRISH UNIVERSITIES  
QUALITY BOARD

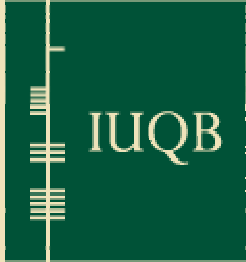
# Irish Universities Association

## Sectoral initiatives under SIF (Mark 1)

Attracting International Graduate Students  
(including pilot project for PhD  
exchange with China)

PhD Quality Assurance

4th Level Support Network



IRISH UNIVERSITIES  
QUALITY BOARD

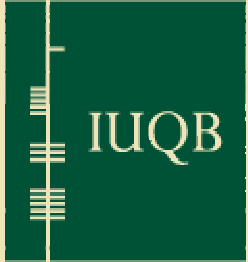
# Lessons from Elsewhere

## The past informs the future

Finland – First Graduate Schools were established in 1995

Finnish Higher Education Evaluation Council (FINHEEC) recently undertook an assessment of doctoral education in Finnish universities

Reported published January 2006



IRISH UNIVERSITIES  
QUALITY BOARD

# Review of Doctoral Education in Finland

## Some recommendations

- Continue but revise the Graduate School system
- Encourage the development of university-wide means of assuring quality in doctoral education within each university
- Develop code of conduct; international benchmarking
- Maximise four-year funding: create national fellowships
- Encourage further internationalisation of the Doctoral Education System



# Review of Doctoral Education in Finland

## Some recommendations

The Finnish universities should cooperate with FINHEEC to develop and disseminate throughout the university sector a National code of Conduct for doctoral research programmes

# Publication of National Guidelines of Good Practice



## Good Practice in the Organisation of PhD Programmes in Irish Universities

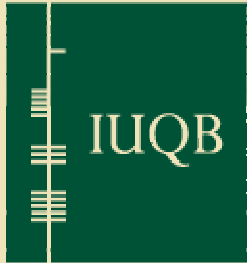
First published: February 2005  
Reprinted: June 2006

# Review of Adoption by Irish Universities of National Guidelines of Good Practice



October 2006: IUQB Board in consultation with universities agreed to a review of the adoption of the *National Guidelines of Good Practice in the Organisation of PhD Programmes in Irish Universities*

To take place in 2008



IRISH UNIVERSITIES  
QUALITY BOARD

# Lessons from Elsewhere

## The past informs the future

UK – Code of Practice for Research Degree Programmes  
(1996 and 2004)

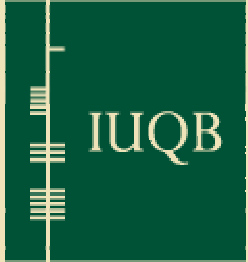
Findings arising from the review of research degree  
programmes in England and Wales 2005-06

Published 2007

# UK Review of Research degree Programmes

## Challenges

- Some institutions require or allow supervisors to be present at the oral examination
- In areas such as workload allocation for supervisors, there are wide variations in practice between institutions
- Providing development opportunities for established supervisors
- Finding ways of assuring fairness and consistency in the oral examination



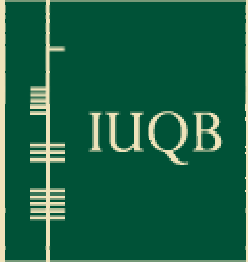
IRISH UNIVERSITIES  
QUALITY BOARD

# Irish Universities Association

## Sectoral initiatives under SIF (Mark 1)

### **4th Level Support Network (Commenced 2007)**

This four year project will create a new sectoral expert network supporting graduate education, engaging stakeholders, informing and analysing pertinent aspects of graduate schools and programmes.



IRISH UNIVERSITIES  
QUALITY BOARD

# Irish Universities Association

## SIF – 4<sup>th</sup> level Support Network

### Some Challenges

Establish a national credit system for graduate courses enabling inter-institutional graduate programmes

Engage employers and government on sustainable careers for graduates



# Doctoral Education Challenges for the Future

Reflections from Ireland

Dr Padraig Walsh  
Chief Executive  
Irish Universities Quality Board

24<sup>th</sup> October 2007

UK Council for Graduate Education, European Summer Conference  
24-25<sup>th</sup> October, Burlington Hotel, Dublin