

An Taoiseach announces Ireland's first Technological University

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The alliance of Dublin Institute of Technology, Institute of Technology Blanchardstown and Institute of Technology Tallaght is set to become the first Technological University (TU Dublin) in Ireland, as revealed by An Taoiseach Leo Varadkar TD in Grangegorman today.

The University will be located on three campuses at Grangegorman, Blanchardstown and Tallaght creating an inclusive and open learning experience offering pathways to graduation from apprenticeship to PhD level to a diverse range of students.

DIT campuses in Kevin Street, Cathal Brugha Street and Rathmines will move to Grangegorman in 2020, while the Aungier Street campus will relocate in 2021. The Bolton Street relocation will take place at a later stage.

Joining An Taoiseach in Grangegorman to mark this transformative development in Higher Education, were Minister for Education and Skills, Richard Bruton TD, Minister for Finance and Public Expenditure and Reform, Paschal Donohoe TD, and Minister for Higher Education, Mary Mitchell O'Connor TD.

Speaking at the announcement, **Professor Tom Collins**, Chair of the three Institute's Governing Bodies, said: "The members of the [Technological University Dublin Alliance](#) are delighted to receive confirmation today from An Taoiseach that we are to become Ireland's first Technological University (TU Dublin) in 2019. This is the historic culmination of seven years of hard work and commitment on the part of our three Institutes. The process of engaging with the independent international panel that visited Dublin in May gave us the opportunity to highlight the potential for TU Dublin to be ground-breaking by providing a pioneering and practice-based, research-informed learning framework to students. We are extremely pleased that the panel's final report, combined with the Higher Education Authority's (HEA) recommendation, has resulted in a decision by the Minister for Education and Skills to grant us designation as Technological University Dublin (TU Dublin)."

President of Dublin Institute of Technology (DIT), **Professor Brian Norton**, said: "This is a milestone day that marks the beginning of a new type of Irish University that will revolutionise Higher Education in this country. TU Dublin will be positioned at the convergence of the arts, business, science and technology, and will strengthen the Greater Dublin Region and its prominence as a location that encourages and supports knowledge advancement, sustainable development and inclusive education. After many years of laying the groundwork, today is the realisation of our long-held collective ambition to become a Technological University and the beginning of an exciting new chapter in Higher Learning in Ireland."

Dr Diarmuid O'Callaghan, President of [Institute of Technology Blanchardstown](#), said: "Technological Universities are an established feature of many international educational systems in Germany, Austria, Finland, the Netherlands, Canada and New Zealand, acting as a dynamic catalyst for economic, technological, social and

cultural progress. TU Dublin will comprise a joined-up approach to the third-level experience that involves connecting students, employers, researchers and the wider academic community to facilitate economic transformation and sustainable growth. On this momentous day, we look forward to the establishment of the pioneering TU Dublin, where our students, staff and societal partners will connect with academic programmes to create Ireland's skilled graduates of tomorrow."

President of [Institute of Technology Tallaght](#), **Mr Thomas Stone**, said: "On behalf of all the staff, the 28,500 students across our three Institutes, and all the contributors over the last seven years that have made this breakthrough possible, I would like to express our delight at today's announcement by An Taoiseach. TU Dublin will focus on practice-based, research-informed learning, combined with rigorous academic standards and success through inclusive and authentic engagement with our students. We look forward to the final stage of this process which will include ongoing engagement with the HEA and the Department of Education and Skills in advance of formal designation early next year."

Dr Mary Meaney, TU4Dublin Programme Lead, said: "This is a red-letter day that is the culmination of a huge effort over many years. The passion and hard work of staff and students across our three Institutes over the last number of months, in particular, laid the final foundations for this exciting announcement and we're enthused about the ultimate stage of our journey to designation as TU Dublin."

The legal framework to establish TU Dublin was made possible by the enactment of the Technological Universities Act 2018 in March. Following its application for designation as a TU last April, the Technological University Dublin Alliance submission was evaluated in May by an independent international panel. As part of their evaluation process, the panel met with students and staff from DIT, IT Blanchardstown and IT Tallaght, as well as a wide range of community and industry partners. In a follow-up report to the HEA, the panel confirmed that the application for TU status met the specified criteria for designation. The panel's report was considered by the HEA, which made a formal recommendation to the Minister for Education and Skills, resulting in his decision to award designation.

With establishment confirmed for early next year, the first graduates of Technological University Dublin (TU Dublin) will receive awards from the new university in 2019. CAO and lifelong applicants who accept a place in DIT, IT Blanchardstown or IT Tallaght this August, as well as our continuing students, can look forward to receiving their parchments from the new University.

Editors' Notes:

- Since the 2011 Hunt Report, DIT, IT Blanchardstown and IT Tallaght, as part of the Technological University Dublin Alliance, have been building on their respective histories and distinctive strengths and combining ideas and resources to create a new type of university - a Technological University - for the Greater Dublin Region. The shared ambition of the TU Dublin partners has been to create '*an incomparable institution of higher learning which will offer wide-ranging opportunities to learners, collaborating with civic, academic and industry partners.*'

- The development of the Grangegorman Campus has accelerated with construction underway on two major PPP projects that will accommodate 10,000 students by September 2020. The students will include those currently studying in DIT buildings in Kevin Street, Rathmines and Cathal Brugha Street.
- Development will continue on the Blanchardstown campus with the opening of a new, dedicated student services building in early 2019, and a 4000 m² teaching building will also be built as part of the Government's Public Private Partnership (PPP) programme for the higher education sector. The project in Blanchardstown is one that will help drive regional development and meet many of the skills needs that have been identified by the National Skills Council and the nine regional skills fora, which were established last year by Minister Bruton.
- The Tallaght campus will continue to expand its academic programmes and research activity, as well as community and enterprise supports to the South Dublin County Region as part of Technological University Dublin. Two new building projects are currently in progress on the 41 acre campus with planned completion dates in 2021. The first is a 5,200 m² multi-disciplinary building as part of the Government's PPP programme, combining teaching space, hospitality and culinary arts as well as engineering and apprenticeship activities. The second building is a Sports Science, Health and Recreation building including outdoor sporting facilities.