



# Annual Report 2009

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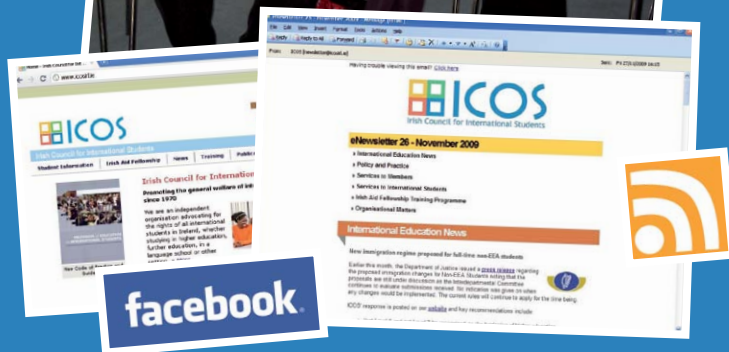
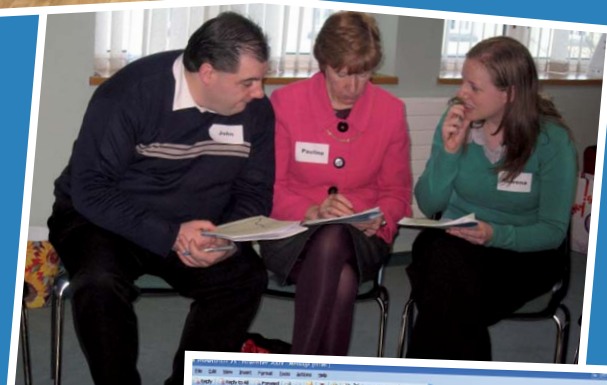
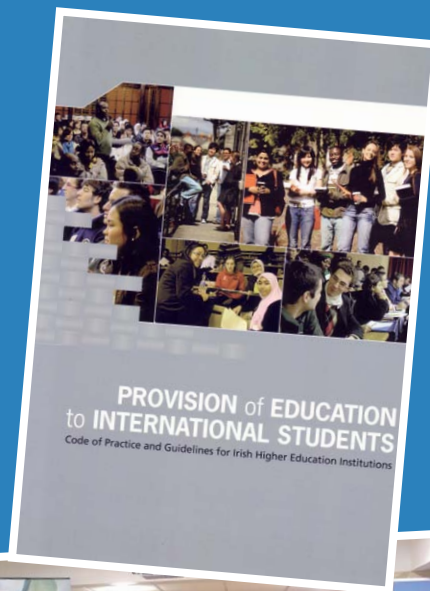
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ICOS gratefully acknowledges the support of Irish Aid.



## Irish Aid

Department of Foreign Affairs  
An Roinn Gnóthaí Eachtracha

# FOREWORD



**Suzanne Buckley**  
**ICOS Chair**

Throughout 2009, ICOS' focus remained firmly on creating a positive environment for international students in Ireland. Our main event was a national seminar in June which brought together key Government actors and higher education representatives in a call for action on the quality issue and highlighting the recently released Irish Higher Education Quality Network (IHEQN) Code of Practice for providers of education to international students which offers benchmarks and guidelines on the standards to be achieved in student services.

ICOS continued to work closely with USI to ensure that the student voice was represented on relevant national platforms, including the High Level Group appointed by the Minister for Education and Science in December to develop Ireland's new international education strategy. ICOS in turn supported USI in organising regional fora to allow international students to voice their feelings and concerns about their experience of higher education in Ireland. The first of these was hosted in UCC in November.

2009 was also an important year in terms of ICOS' management of the Fellowship Training Programme on behalf of Irish Aid with the signing of a new 3-year contract and the taking on of some interesting new responsibilities. The fellowship remains firmly focused on providing higher education opportunities to qualified, well-placed candidates nominated by Ireland's development

partner organisations in order to improve capacity to deliver quality aid. Tracking surveys conducted by ICOS as part of our new mandate indicate that fellows who have completed courses in Ireland are making a significant contribution on return to their home countries. Working with Irish Aid, ICOS will be making additional efforts to capture the experience of returned fellows and build up a fellowship alumni network, an important resource for Irish Aid as it seeks to build partnerships.

With a new communications specialist on the team, the year saw several improvements in the way we get our messages across and in our capacity to monitor the media. Despite the deepening recession, member institutions remained interested in ICOS' training courses for staff working with international students. We also delivered a number of information workshops for international students at the request of institutions.

With no end to the country's financial crisis in sight, ICOS is pleased to close 2009 with our books balanced. We remain strongly placed to contribute at both national and institutional levels to making Ireland a better place for international students. We thank each person for their contribution in 2009, not least our hardworking staff and board members and we look forward to working with Irish Aid on the fellowship programme and with all our members and partners in 2010.

ICOS' **vision** is that all international students who come to study in Ireland achieve their educational aims and are valued and treated equitably by the institutions that host them and by the wider society in which they live and work.

**INTERNATIONAL  
EDUCATION  
POLICY  
AND  
STANDARDS**

**IRISH AID  
FELLOWSHIP  
PROGRAMME  
DEVELOPMENT AND  
AWARENESS**

**ICOS  
STRATEGIC  
GOALS**

**SERVICES TO  
ICOS MEMBERS  
AND STUDENTS**

**ORGANISATIONAL  
DEVELOPMENT**

ICOS' **mission** is to be the leading independent organisation advocating for the rights of international students in Ireland. Working with its members, student organisations and government agencies, ICOS will strive to achieve a political, operational and social environment where international education will thrive and be respected.

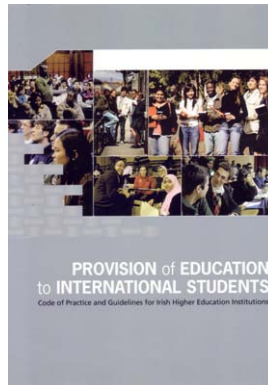
# POLICY AND STANDARDS



**Goal: To influence national and institutional policies so as to offer greater protection to international students and enhance their experience in Ireland**

## Quality and Standards

In 2009, ICOS' key focus was on quality and on ensuring that the momentum and energy that had gone into the production of IHEQN's Code of Practice and Guidelines for HEIs involved in the provision of education to international students would not be lost and that the Code would be adopted by the Government and implemented across the sector. While it will take some time to put the legislative framework in place which will see the implementation of the Code as part of a Quality Mark regime, at the end of the year, the signs were positive. The Minister for Education and Science made a number of statements which confirmed his Department's commitment to quality and a more coordinated policy approach to international education. In December, the Department of Education and Science (DES) announced the appointment of a High Level Group which would support the Government in the development of an action plan to drive Ireland's ambition to become a leading destination country for high quality international education.



While ICOS cannot claim specific credit for this progress in 2009, the organisation's advocacy and lobbying activity certainly played its part and was recognised in the invitation by the Minister for Education and Science to the Director of ICOS to contribute to the High Level Group.

A key activity during the year had been ICOS' annual seminar in June which focused specifically on quality and assembled a high level panel including officials from three government departments to indicate their intentions on the matter to a very interested audience of more than 50 participants from Irish Higher Education Institutions (HEIs). Mr Fabrice Hénard provided the international

perspective on quality drawing from the OECD's comprehensive report, Tertiary Education for the Knowledge Society (2008).



ICOS Annual Seminar: 11 June 2009 - L-R Seamus McLoughlin, (DES), Anna Cunningham (NUIG), Frank McMahon, Chair (DIT), Mary Killeen (DETE), Sheila Power (ICOS) Fabrice Hénard (OECD), Kevin O'Sullivan (INIS)

## Policy

ICOS continued to engage in discussions with government departments and made submissions on behalf of members on various policy issues affecting international students. Prominent among the policy concerns in 2009 were the Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform proposals released in September for a new immigration regime for non-EEA students and also a specific proposal on internships released earlier in the year. ICOS gathered members' views and made strong submissions on both issues.

All ICOS' policy submissions and meeting reports are available to members on its website.

## Liaison

There was continuing positive engagement with the Garda National Immigration Bureau (GNIB) and the Irish Naturalisation and Immigration Service (INIS) which included three formal meetings and ongoing liaison under the umbrella of the Immigration Information Network of which ICOS is a member. This meant that ICOS was able to assist its members with questions on immigration issues.

# FELLOWSHIP PROGRAMME DEVELOPMENT AND AWARENESS



**Goal: To work with Irish Aid and higher education institutions to develop the Fellowship Training Programme as an effective tool for capacity development in Ireland's partner countries and to contribute to a better understanding of the programme in Ireland**



New Ireland-based Study Fellows at the 2009 orientation

Work on the Irish Aid Fellowship Training Programme (FTP) remains the cornerstone of ICOS' activity and the main basis on which the organisation is funded. After protracted negotiations and some uncertainty regarding the available budget, Irish Aid and ICOS signed a new 3-year agreement in September which covers the period to the end of 2011.

While the budget is lower than in previous years and the number of fellowships is down, ICOS has taken on some interesting new responsibilities in relation to the programme. As well as managing current fellowships, ICOS will have responsibility for the development of an alumni network for the FTP and will also have an input in extending the range of study opportunities available for fellows with hopefully more courses offered and availed of in African HEIs and an exploration of possibilities for courses offered through distance learning.

The main aim of the FTP is to ensure the selection of high quality candidates who will be successful in their study programmes. Candidates are expected to return to their own countries on completion of their studies and contribute to development efforts with specific reference to Irish Aid's programme priorities in those countries.

## Services provided by ICOS

- Financial and administrative services
- Coordination of placement of Fellows on academic programmes
- Pre-and post arrival information and briefings to Fellows
- Travel and logistics service
- Links with academic staff and host institutions
- Arrival briefings and orientation programmes including dedicated Orientation/Fellowships Day and welcome reception at the start of the academic year



# Irish Aid

Department of Foreign Affairs  
An Roinn Gnóthaí Eachtracha

- Support, advice and information to Study Fellows during the course of their fellowship
- Monitoring academic progress and welfare of Fellows
- Immigration assistance and advice
- Social and cultural events
- Reporting to DFA on Fellowship matters
- Research on the longer term impact of the Fellowship on recipients when they return to their home countries
- Development of an alumni network for the FTP
- Expanding the range of study opportunities through investigations into the quality of regional courses and courses available through distance learning
- Greater visibility of the FTP through the development of case studies and other materials, in addition to increased the use of the web

## Fellowship Awards

ICOS processed 200 applications which resulted in the award of 30 new fellowships by Irish Aid for the 2009-10 academic year. 22 fellowships were for study in Irish HEIs while 8 were for study in regional institutions.

In addition, ICOS continued to support fellows from previous years and at the end of the year 29 candidates had successfully completed their fellowships and returned home. The high quality of the fellowship candidates is evidenced by the fact that over 90% achieved honours grades in their masters, with 10% achieving first class honours.

## Countries of Origin

2009 awards were overwhelmingly made to applicants from Irish Aid Partner Countries including Ethiopia, Uganda, Zambia, Tanzania, Mozambique and

## FELLOWSHIP BENEFITS

### WHAT STUDENTS COMPLETING IN 2009 SAID...

“My communication skills were improved and I am able to engage rural farmers in a manner that yields results. Using the research skills I acquired, I can arrive at the real issues affecting the farmers and prioritise them for actions. The fellowship enriched my ability to perform.” - *Ugandan alumni*

“I now have broader understanding of education issues in my country and the dynamics of education leadership from different perspectives which help me contribute effectively.” - *Zambian alumni*

“One of the issues in the developing countries is the problem of female empowerment. I have been given a new position not because I am just a female civil servant but I have the appropriate educational qualification.” - *Ethiopian alumni*

*All quotes from ICOS' 6 month follow-up survey*

# FELLOWSHIP PROGRAMME DEVELOPMENT AND AWARENESS

Vietnam. One student from Burundi also received an award. Malawi, which became a programme country in 2007, was included in the awards for the first time and six candidates from Malawi travelled to Ireland to take up studies in 2009.

## Courses and Places of Study

The majority of Fellows undertake postgraduate courses related to development priorities and new awards in 2009 were distributed across six HEIs in Ireland. Courses of study undertaken by fellows included: MA in Development (DCU), MSc Agriculture (UCD), MSc in Global Health (TCD), MSc (Agr) in Environmental Resource Management (UCD), MSc in Development Studies (UCD), MPhil in International Peace Studies (TCD), MA in Development Studies (Kimmage DSC), MA in Education (UCD), MSc in Pharmaceutical Quality Assurance and Biotechnology (DIT), MBS in Human Resource Management (DCU), Masters in Education (TCD) and Master of Laws in Human Rights (NUIG). Eight awards were made for study in African HEIs, including four Fellows in Sokoine University, Tanzania.

## Special Events for Study Fellows

ICOS organises special events on an annual cycle for Fellows. This includes a comprehensive Orientation/ Fellowships Day and welcome reception for all newly arrived Fellows in late September/early October. At this time of year, ICOS also organises



a day-trip for Fellows to a place of interest outside Dublin. These events are a useful opportunity for Fellows to get to know each other and to begin the process of adjusting to living and studying in Ireland. Each year ICOS also hosts both Christmas and St Patrick's Day parties for Fellows and 2009 was no exception.



## Fellowship Alumni Network

Throughout 2009, ICOS worked on developing a contact database and materials to support a fellowship alumni network with a central hub and regional chapters. Files going back over 10 years were trawled and the database now contains over 1,000 records of former study fellows. It is hoped that the network will act as an ongoing support for returned study fellows as well as a rich resource of contacts in various fields of expertise for Irish Aid.

## Irish Aid Fellows in Ireland 2009

Country / Institution	DCU	DIT	KDSC	NUIG	QUB	TCD	UCD	UL	Total
Burundi						2			2
Ethiopia						1	4		5
Malawi			1				5		6
Mozambique							1		1
Tanzania		2							2
Uganda	1		2	2		4	7	1	17
Vietnam	1						1		2
Zambia			2		3	4	9		18
<b>Total</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>53</b>



## SERVICES TO MEMBERS AND STUDENTS



**Goal: To strengthen the ability of our members to deliver appropriate and quality services to their international students while also providing independent information and advice directly to international students**

### Member Services

Regular e-newsletters, emails and website updates are the main ways in which ICOS provides up to date information and advice to staff in member institutions. Six issues of the ICOS e-newsletter were produced during 2009. Subscriptions to it grew steadily, suggesting that it is increasingly recognised as a source for updates on international education matters. An ICOS Facebook page was set up at the end of the year with a view to establishing it as a channel for more immediate updates.

Despite the recession and ever dwindling budgets, ICOS continued to offer a training service to members. 11 courses were delivered for 6 member institutions and one external agency. Most were either half-day or full-day programmes on intercultural awareness and communication skills but a course on Teaching and Learning in a Cross-Cultural Environment was becoming increasingly popular as the year progressed. In addition ICOS provided 5 information workshops to international students both in specific colleges and at national careers' events. ICOS also contributed to USI's annual training for incoming student union officers.

ICOS' annual seminar was more popular than ever with attendance up by 25% on the previous year.

### Services to International Students

ICOS provides a largely web based information service for international students. In 2009, ICOS continued to develop and update its website and the site is widely used with an average of 303 visits and 1141 page views per day, up 17% and 44% respectively on the previous year.

In addition, the office responded to over 400 individual email and telephone requests for information. Most questions related to funding and fellowships for study while much of the balance had to do with immigration issues, admission procedures and English language study.

In February, with financial support from the Citizens' Information Board, ICOS published an information leaflet on the employment rights of international graduates. While mainly targeted at non-EEA students, the leaflet is also of interest to employers who may wish to understand the different schemes which allow for the employment of non-EEA graduates.



ICOS has long promoted the idea of organising forums of international students in order to ensure that the student voice is heard and their needs taken into account in discussions on international education in Ireland. After a very successful national event in 2007 and publication of a report in 2008, ICOS was pleased to co-operate with the Union of Students in Ireland (USI) on the organisation of a number of international student forums on a regional basis. The first of these was hosted by UCC in November 2009 and was a very lively event. Further forums were planned for Dublin and Galway in 2010.

ICOS regularly takes up individual student issues, especially in cases where there has been an obvious problem such as the failure of an institution to provide educational or other services or to refund tuition fees when a visa has been refused. In 2009, students from a diverse range of countries approached ICOS for support in various situations. The most common problems related to funding and quality but family reunification and the issue of schooling for the children of international students remained a source of difficulty for some postgraduates. Work permission for non-EEA graduates was also a major concern with many feeling strongly about the lack of opportunity in Ireland compared to other countries.

# ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT



**Goal: To strengthen ICOS' own capacity to deliver**

## Membership

At the end of 2009, ICOS had 29 institutional members, 2 faith/NGO members, 5 honorary individual members and 1 subscriber.

Since the 2008 AGM, ICOS has unfortunately lost two institutional members. A long standing member whose representatives had contributed significantly to ICOS' work for many years, NUI Maynooth, unexpectedly withdrew its membership in November 2009. We also lost Ashfield College as a member as the company ceased trading during the year. We take this opportunity also to acknowledge with thanks the great contribution of honorary individual member, Jim Vale who resigned after many years of sterling service.

## Executive Committee

Suzanne Buckley, International Student Support Officer from UCC, continued in her role as ICOS Chair but we had a new Vice-Chair in 2009 in the person of Nicola Carroll (Head of the International Office at NCI). Ann Flynn (International Student Officer at DIT) remained on as ICOS' Honorary Treasurer. The Executive Committee met 5 times in 2009 and was strengthened and renewed with the election of 2 new members at the AGM in June.

## Staff

There were a number of staffing changes in 2009. The biggest challenge came early in the year when we were forced to make two staff redundant, Sue Heah who had worked at reception and George Salib who worked as Accounts Assistant. We thank both Sue and George for their dedicated service and hope they are doing well as they face the difficult prospect of building new careers in very challenging times. In July 2009, Paul O'Keeffe left ICOS to take up an exciting opportunity with VSO in Thailand and we also wish Paul the best in his new career and thank him for his contribution to ICOS. In July, we were pleased to welcome Dave

Moore as Paul's replacement. Working with the Fellowship team, Dave has been able to make a considerable contribution especially in relation to ICOS' technical and communications capacity with noticeable improvements to ICOS' website and news monitoring.



ICOS staff with departing fellows who made presentations to new students at the 2009 Irish Aid Fellowship Training Programme orientation. L-R: Ruary Martin, Dave Moore, Stephen Phiri, Henry Tumwebaze, Beatrice Mumbi, Sheila Power, Louise Staunton, Colin Tannam

## National and International Networking

ICOS keeps up to date and maintains its international profile through membership of the UK Council for International Student Affairs (UKCISA) and the European Association for International Education (EAIE).

At national level, ICOS is involved in a number of networking forums including the Immigrant Information Network which regularly meets with officials in the GNIB and INIS.

ICOS is also a member of Dóchas and The Wheel and connects with immigrant support organisations such as the Africa Centre, the Migrant Rights Centre of Ireland (MCRI) and the Immigrant Council for Ireland (ICI).

# SUMMARY OF ACCOUNTS

Approved by the Board: 21st May 2010  
Auditors: BFGD Chartered Accountants, 1 Castlewood Avenue, Rathmines, Dublin 6

<b>Income</b>	<b>2009</b>	<b>2008</b>
Irish Aid Administration Grant Received	274,280	419,009
Irish Aid Fellowship Programme Grant Received	966,000	1,143,601
UCD Fellowship Programme Grant Receivable	24,934	-
Membership Subscriptions	27,404	24,712
Interest Received	264	2,969
Training Income	9,211	15,100
Other Income	4,974	2,732
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,307,067</b>	<b>1,608,123</b>
<b>Expenditure</b>		
Employment Costs	262,389	371,650
Administration Costs	54,874	93,916
Fellowship Programme Expenses	990,934	1,143,601
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,308,197</b>	<b>1,609,167</b>
<b>(Deficit)/Surplus on Ordinary Activities Before Taxation</b>	<b>(1,130)</b>	<b>(1,044)</b>
Tax on (Deficit)/Surplus on Ordinary Activities Before Taxation	(14)	(869)
<b>(Deficit)/Surplus on Ordinary Activities After Taxation</b>	<b>(1,144)</b>	<b>(1,913)</b>

## Balance Sheet as at 31st December, 2009

	<b>2009</b>	<b>2008</b>
<b>Fixed Assets</b>		
Tangible Assets	199,916	204,287
<b>Current Assets</b>		
Debtors	25,645	22,932
Cash at Bank and on Hand	558,225	414,225
<b>Creditors</b>		
Amounts Falling Due Within One Year	(580,523)	(437,037)
<b>Total Assets less Current Liabilities</b>	<b>203,263</b>	<b>204,407</b>
<b>Capital and Reserves</b>		
Revaluation Reserve	60,327	60,327
Income and Expenditure Account	142,936	144,080
	<b>203,263</b>	<b>204,407</b>

# INSTITUTIONAL REPRESENTATIVES AND INDIVIDUAL MEMBERS

**President of Honour**

**President Mary McAleese**

## ICOS Council, December 2009

### Individual (Honorary) Members

Ms. Alice Grattan Esmonde

Prof. Brian McMurry

Mr. Don Niall

Prof. Louis Smith

Mr. John Magoye

<b>American College, Dublin</b>	Ms. Kathleen Shehan	International Admissions Officer
<b>Athlone Institute of Technology</b>	Ms. Mary Simpson	Manager of International Office
	Ms. Celine Peignen	International Officer
<b>Ballsbridge College of Further Education</b>	Mr. Robert Griffiths	Head of EFL
	Mr. Laurence Cooke	Co-ordinator
<b>Dublin Business School</b>	Ms. Genevieve Daly *	Manager of International Office
	Ms. Tracy Power	Head of International Admissions
<b>Dublin City University</b>	Ms. Marie Heraughty	Head of International Affairs
	Ms. Angela Mitchell *	Assistant International Officer
<b>Dublin Institute of Technology</b>	Ms. Ann Flynn*	International Student Officer
	Ms. Patricia Houston	Student Officer
<b>Dun Laoghaire Institute of Art, Design and Technology</b>	Mr. David Doyle	Academic Administration and Student Affairs Manager
<b>Dundalk Institute of Technology</b>	Mr. Michael Stewart	International Marketing Officer
	Ms. Mary Heffernan	International Officer
<b>Galway-Mayo IT</b>	Mr. Dennis D Murphy	Head of Teaching and Learning
	Ms. Caitriona Cummins	International Officer
<b>Griffith College Dublin</b>	Ms. Rebecca O'Brien	Marketing Manager
<b>IT Blanchardstown</b>	Ms. Fiona Canning	International Officer
	Ms. Mairead Murphy	Marketing Manager
<b>IT Carlow</b>	Mr. Donal McAlister	International Coordinator
	Mr. Jim McEntee	External Services Manager
<b>IT Sligo</b>	Mr. Padraic Cuffe	Academic Administration Manager
	Ms. Eileen Curley	International Officer

<b>IT Tallaght</b>	Ms. Stella Browne	Administrative Officer
	Mr. Vincent Lennon	Head of Student Services
<b>IT Tralee</b>	Ms. Sinead Lucey	International Development Manager
	Mr. Eddie Skully	International Education Officer
<b>International Study Institute Ireland</b>	Mr. Brian Burns	Director
<b>Islamic Society</b>	Mr. Mustafiz Gani	Youth Coordinator
<b>Milltown Institute</b>	Dr. Thomas Grenham	Associate Dean of Student Affairs
<b>National College of Art and Design</b>	Ms. Cecily Grant	Admissions Officer
<b>National College of Ireland</b>	Ms. Nicola Carroll *	Head of International Office
	Ms. Fiona Mongan	International Communication Officer
<b>NUI Galway</b>	Ms. Anna Cunningham	Director, International Office
	Ms. Louise Kelly *	International Student Officer
	Ms. Louise Coyle	International Officer
<b>Royal College of Surgeons</b>	Mr. Philip Curtis	Head of Admissions and Student Services
	Ms. Corriena Brien	Student Services Adviser
<b>Shannon College of Hotel Management</b>	Mr. Phillip J Smyth	Director
<b>Tipperary Institute</b>	Ms. Carolann Bargary	Access Officer
<b>Trinity College Dublin</b>	Mr. John Mc Partland	Director of International Office
	Ms. Susan Phillips	International Student Officer
<b>Union of Students in Ireland</b>	Ms Linda Kelly *	Equality Officer
<b>University College Cork</b>	Ms. Suzanne Buckley *	International Student Support Officer
<b>University College Dublin</b>	Dr. Erik Lithander *	Director of International Affairs
	Ms. Carl Lusby	International Student Officer
<b>University of Limerick</b>	Mr. Liam Ó Dochartaigh	Director, International Division
	Ms. Josephine Page	Manager, International Division
<b>Waterford IT</b>	Mr. Brían McNamara *	International Development Officer

\* Executive Committee member

<b>Subscriber</b>	Ms. Maura Gallagher	Langtrain Intercultural Training, Dublin
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# SUMMARY OF ACTIVITIES 2009

Goal	Main Activities
<p>1 To influence national and institutional policies so as to offer greater protection to international students and enhance their experience in Ireland</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ICOS seminar (June) calling for action on quality in international education provision and policy attracted a high level of interest and was well attended</li> <li>• ICOS Director appointed to High Level Group (December) to support Government in the development of a plan to drive the internationalisation agenda</li> <li>• Written Submissions on:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Internships for international students (January)</li> <li>- Response to proposals on a new non-EEA student immigration regime (October)</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Representations and discussions with various government departments</li> <li>• Meetings with GNIB (3) and INIS (3) on customer service and registration issues affecting international students</li> <li>• Media work including interviews and statements on various issues</li> </ul>
<p>2 To work with Irish Aid and higher education institutions to develop the Fellowship Training Programme (FTP) as an effective tool for capacity development in Ireland's partner countries and to contribute to a better understanding of the programme in Ireland</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• New 3-yr contract with Irish Aid signed (September)</li> <li>• Administration of Fellowship awards including processing of 200 new applications</li> <li>• 29 Fellows (100%) successfully complete their masters programmes and return home</li> <li>• Travel, accommodation and insurance arrangements for all Study Fellows</li> <li>• Ongoing welfare and support services to deal with illness, bereavements and other problems of Study Fellows</li> <li>• Compilation and dissemination of list of approved courses for FTP applicants</li> <li>• Development work on a new Fellowship alumni network including building a contact database with over 1,000 records</li> <li>• Research work on extending the range of study opportunities available through the FTP</li> <li>• Development of Fellowship pages on ICOS' website</li> </ul>
<p>3 To strengthen the ability of our members to deliver appropriate and quality services to their international students while also providing independent information and advice directly to international students</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Delivery of regular e-newsletter to members with 6 issues in 2009</li> <li>• Continued development of ICOS training programme with delivery of 11 courses to 5 ICOS members and 1 other client</li> <li>• Information sessions (5) to international student groups at request of members, including ICOS stand at careers fair; topics included integration and employment rights</li> <li>• Publication of leaflet on employment rights of non-EEA graduates</li> <li>• Co-operation with USI on first regional international students' forum held in UCC in November</li> <li>• Ongoing response to information requests from members</li> <li>• Web based information service – over 300 visits per day to ICOS website</li> <li>• E-mail enquiry service for international students</li> <li>• Support to students with problems with their institutions – ongoing case work</li> <li>• Support to students in difficulty – operation of small hardship fund</li> </ul>
<p>4 To strengthen ICOS' own capacity to deliver</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continued strengthening and renewal of ICOS' Board – with 2 new members in 2009</li> <li>• Ongoing up grading of ICOS' data management, media monitoring and communications systems, including launch of new Facebook Page</li> <li>• All staff avail of training and development opportunities</li> <li>• Membership of national and international networks to keep up to date on best practice</li> </ul>

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All other images: ICOS

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