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**Abstract**

The Lisbon Agenda, Bologna Process and nations' individual economic and education policy objectives and strategy have placed an increasing emphasis on the importance of the 'third-cycle' of higher education to economic development and social well-being, bringing into sharp relief what doctoral education does, is, and seeks to achieve. Additionally, the 'third-cycle' has attracted significant investment and has had to accommodate itself to being both a progenitor and midwife to the 'knowledge economy'. This has presented those who organise, deliver and manage doctoral education with the challenge of ensuring that as stewards of their respective disciplines they help achieve public policy objectives without compromising the doctorate's integrity and deliver a student experience that educates them as scholars but also equips them to work in diverse sectors and roles. This paper is an exposition of the Irish approach to this challenge and how Irish universities have undertaken reform of doctoral education while maintaining the degree's integrity. (HRK / Abstract übernommen)