

**Minutes of the meeting of the Governing Body of Technological University of the Shannon:
Midlands Midwest**

Monday 19th of September 2022 at 10.00am

via MS Teams & in person – Midlands Campus.

Members: Ms. Josephine Feehily – Chair (in person)
Prof. Vincent Cunnane (in person)
Mr. John Doyle (in person)
Mr. Noel Gavin (in person)
Ms. Anne Meagher (Teams)
Mr. George O’Callaghan (Teams)
Mr. Kevin McLoughlin (In person)
Mr. Tony Mahon (in person)
Mr. Martin Quinn (Teams)
Mr. John Griffin (in person)
Ms. Marguerite Doyle (in person)
Mr. Niall Naughton (in person)
Mr. James Hadnett (in person)
Mr Shahboz Babaev (In person)
Ms. Colette Ryan (in person)
Ms. Anne Cusack (in person)
Ms. Catherine Collins (in person)
Ms. Brigid Delamere (in person)

In Attendance: Mr. Bill Delaney, Governing Body Secretary (in person)
Ms. Martina Moran, Recording Secretary (in person)

4. Apologies: James Ring, Han Brezet

Section A: Standing Items

1. Chairperson’s opening and introductions.

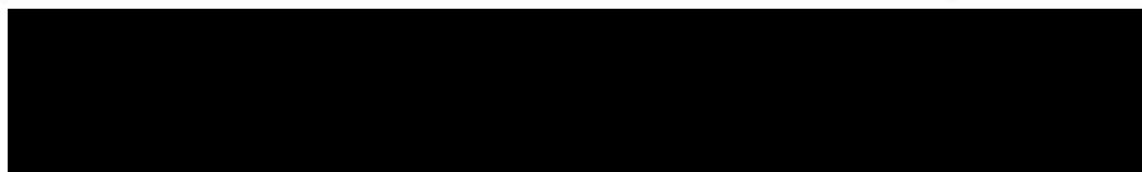
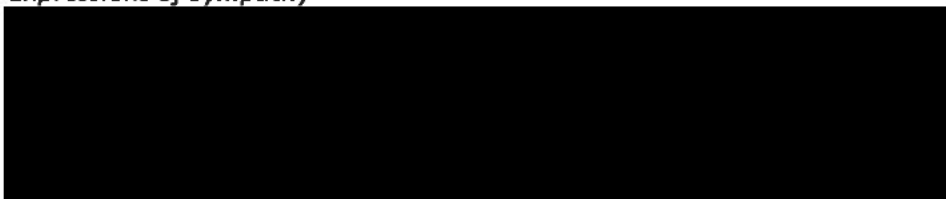
The chair welcomed members to the meeting and to the start of a new academic year. The chair advised members that she had a meeting with Minister Harris who indicated that the Higher Education Reform Bill is expected to be passed in the Senate by the end of September.

The HEA has commenced a Review on the Progress on Gender Matters – TUS and other HEIs have been consulted. A workshop (via Teams) has been arranged for Chairs this afternoon.

2. Approval of the Agenda

The agenda was approved. G. O'Callaghan advised that he will have to leave the meeting early as he has another appointment but hoped to re-join the meeting at noon approx.

3. Expressions of Sympathy



5. Declaration of Conflicts of Interest

There was no declaration of conflict of interest.

6. Correspondence

The Chair advised members that she has received a solicitor's letter, which was also addressed to various government departments, members will be appraised of all developments in this regard.

7. Minutes of Governing Body meeting of 18th July 2022

The minutes of 18th July 2022 were approved.

Proposed by N. Gavin and seconded by M. Doyle.

8. Matters Arising

The process for the AIT and LIT Annual Report is now complete, and both Reports are now filed and published.

The Standing Orders have been amended and are available on the Resource section of Decision Time.

The President signed the agreement to grant a licence to DFHERIS to allow the Minister to enter into the project agreement with the PPP company (as approved at the last meeting).

Governing Body committees – both the chairs of ARC and EDI have been busy in recent times in their respective roles as chair. The Governance committee has yet to meet, however, a date will be scheduled for early October.

9. Action Log

Item 9 – Intellectual Property and IP Conflict of Interest Policy (red)

Progress has been made and this will be brought to the VP Council for further discussion and approval and once finalised will be scheduled at Governing Body for either October or November meeting. In the interim, TUS will operate with the current AIT and LIT policies.

Item 3 – Commonality of Directors between TUS GB and subsidiaries

The Constitution of subsidiaries are currently being reviewed and will be brought to Governing Body for approval in December.

Item 31 – Responsibility of TUS and the various leverages available regards the Probation Service

This is ongoing, the President has been in communication with the Minister's Office and DFERIS on this matter, and will continue to do so. Communication needs to take place with the Probation Service

Governing Body agreed to close off items in 'green' and to remove some from the Action Log.

10. Risk Management

The President advised that – students are opting to defer their places which is primarily due to the student accommodation crisis and the cost of living. All TUS campuses are experiencing an accommodation crisis. The accommodation problem will probably affect 1st years more than 2nd and 3rd year students (primarily due to the fact that Leaving cert results and CAO were issued late this year).

In relation to the 'room for let' scheme – this has been quite successful but this option does not suit 2nd and 3rd years and is probably more suitable for 1st years.

Over the last number of years results have been watched closely and there is no evidence of a grade inflation of TUS awards.

The risks arising from the financial impact of inflation was raised. Management is currently reviewing the cost impact, particularly for energy which is a major cost for TUS. An update will be provided to the next ARC and GB meetings.

In relation to a reported data breach nationally for Springboard students, the portal for which is operated by the HEA which is the data controller and therefore holds responsibility for same), there has been no reported queries/complaints from students to TUS.

11. TUS Key Strategic Priorities Progress Report and Presidents Update

The President apologised for the late submission of this Report. Members were given time to read the Report.

CAO – 2nd, 3rd and 4th years have been on campus since last week and 1st years will be on campus next week. The CAO Acceptances Report will be brought to Governing Body in October.

RUN – EU – The President briefed the Board on the process of the change in President and senior leadership team in the coordinating institution IP Leiria. A meeting took place in Portugal last week, in which President Cunnane attended. TUS are charged with making application renewals for the new cycle for the University Alliance. President Cunnane will attend a further meeting to be scheduled in Portugal in October.

Strategic Plan – TUS Community survey has been issued to staff, student representatives and Governing Body. The outcomes of which will be reported back to Governing Body.

Student Accommodation – TUS has developed a model for affordable Student Accommodation which will be discussed at a meeting with the VP of Campus Services & Capital Development and DFERIS later today.

The President appraised members regarding the cessation of the agreement with Cavan

Institute in relation to social care students due to issues with CORU. No students will be disadvantaged, however, this will be the last year that students from level 5 in Cavan will proceed to level 6 in TUS on this programme. A formal visit from CORU will take place in the coming weeks, the President will brief the Governing Body after this meeting. The President was requested to communicate to students once a decision has been made. This issue will be noted as a risk.

Annual Health Service Excellence Awards and Sláintecare Integration award – this was a great achievement for TUS and in particular for Nurse Laura Tully. Congratulations were expressed to Nurse Tully and two TUS students who won National awards recently at the National Skills event.

As the Strategic Plan emerges the Organisational Structure needs to match, the President will update members on this at the next meeting.

Section B: Items for Decision/Approval

12. TUS Policy Framework

B. Delaney gave background to the Policy Framework. There are currently 68 policies listed in the policy appendix. Work on the development of TUS policies is still ongoing by various functions and policy owners.

The Academic polices are not listed here, however, Academic Council will be requested to supply a list of Academic polices to Governing Body. A Policy Unit which reports to B. Delaney has been established, currently this Unit has one employee who has a dual role, along with a Grade 5 additional administration support. The function of the Policy Unit is to facilitate the process of policy adoption in a timely and concise manner and to disseminate and publish policies, however, the responsibility of each policy is the policy owner. It is the role of the policy owner to determine if a policy (outside of statutory or governance requirements) should be brought forward to be formally adopted at GB. The Policy Unit will also look at the establishment of a single repository for all policies.

Students may access policies on the website and will be referred to their location at induction, the Students Union website will also be developed shortly and student policies will also be found in this location.

The Chair observed that this was a really useful piece of work and encouraged members to review it. The following are a list of action outcomes from the discussion:

Action	By whom	By when
<i>Devise a matrix as a basis to determine appropriate policy approval including risk statutory/ governance requirement.</i>	<i>B. Delaney</i>	<i>Next ARC and subsequent GB meeting</i>
<i>Insert a box on table of policies 'Not requiring GB Approval</i>	<i>B. Delaney</i>	<i>Immediate effect</i>
<i>Progress report on TUS policies to be presented to Governing Body</i>	<i>B. Delaney</i>	<i>Quarterly</i>
<i>Safety Statement to be reviewed and approved by Governing Body</i>	<i>B. Delaney</i>	<i>GB meeting before Christmas</i>
<i>Format – proposed to move Policy Format Section to an Appendix - Agreed</i>	<i>B. Delaney</i>	<i>Immediate effect</i>

Policy title– ‘Policy on Policies’ to be changed to Policy Framework	B. Delaney	Immediate effect
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Section C: Items for Information/Noting

13. Staff Appointments

The staff appointments for both Midlands/Midwest campuses were noted. Members were pleased to see the return of Permanent Whole-Time positions.

14. Academic Council Standing Orders and Terms of Reference

Dr. Terry Twomey joined the meeting for this item. Clarification of the agenda - this item was stated ‘For Noting’, however this item is ‘For Discussion’ and is not noted or approved. Dr. Twomey briefed members on the TUS Academic Council documentation in detail and described the process of the Standing Committee and its function.

Dr. Twomey was requested to provide members with a list of Academic Policies. Proposals in relation to implementing TU Act section 17 (3) (d,e,f,g) will be presented to Governing Body at future meetings

In relation to 17 (f), this requires a regulation to be made by the Governing Body, which is now **urgent**. Before they can apply, the arrangements set out in Dr. Twomey’s paper must be presented as a draft regulation to an early Governing Body meeting. The Academic Council Standing Orders were noted. The Chair had an observation that it might be prudent to reference the Act in relevant sections of the Standing Orders.

In response to a question, it was noted that: in a letter issued to students regarding appeals, reference is made regarding the National Ombudsman

Action	By whom	By when
Provide Academic Council recommendation on regulations for appeal for approval by Governing Body (Sec 17 (3) (f))	Dr. Twomey	Future GB meeting
Report back to Governing Body re Section 17 (3) (d) (e) (g)	Dr. Twomey	Future GB meeting
Draft regulations under Section 17 (f) to be prepared as a matter of urgency	Dr. Twomey and the Chair of Academic Council	October GB Meeting
Provide list of Academic Policies to Governing Body	Dr. Twomey	For the next Governing Body meeting
Governing Body to review QQI Annual Quality review of TUS prior to submission	Dr. T. Twomey	Future Governing Body meeting
Governing Body review meeting with Academic Council representatives	Dr. T. Twomey & GB	Annually

Graduation is due to take place in Athlone on the 1st and 2nd of November and in Limerick on the 3rd/4th and 5th of November. Graduation on Saturday 5th of November is still to be confirmed and Governing Body will be advised whether or not this ceremony will take place.

Dr. Twomey was thanked for his contributions.

15. Presentation on TUS Research, Development and Innovation (RDI) activity – Dr. Liam Brown, VP RDI

Dr. Brown gave an RDI presentation and showed a youtube clip on Leadership @ Tus and TUS Scholarship. The presentation was followed by Q&A.

With regard to student stipends which are currently different on both campuses, Dr. Brown advised that this is currently being looked at by the team. It was also noted that research is very high on the agenda in both postgraduate and undergraduate levels and that collaborative research takes place with other HEIs, industry and within the civic community.

Dr. Brown was thanked for the presentation and was extended an open invitation to share the general evolution and progress of Research within TUS with Governing Body.

The Chair will arrange a separate meeting with Dr. Brown to learn more about RDI in TUS.

Section D


16. AOB

The President affirmed that the increased cost of living will have an affect on both students and TUS i.e. increase of electricity, materials, etc. Discussions are taking place with the Department in this regard. In relation to possible electricity black-outs – a plan will be put in motion for such a scenario, however, a back-up generator for critical components is in situ.

The next meeting will take place on Monday 17th October at 1:00pm in the County Arms, Birr and will conclude the next day Tuesday 18th October at 1.00pm.

There being no further business the meeting concluded at 1.30pm.

Signed:


Chair of TUS Governing Body

Date:

21/11/22