



**Minutes of the meeting of the Academic Council
Thursday 21 November 2019, 2pm
Moore Auditorium, O'Brien Centre for Science**

**Present: 97
In Attendance: 7
Apologies: 40**

Items are presented in the order in which they were discussed.

This meeting of Academic Council was Chaired by the President, Prof. Andrew Deeks.

The Chair welcome members of Academic Council and acknowledged apologies.

Welcome

1. Minutes of the meeting held 25 September 2019

The Minutes of the meeting held on 25 September were approved pending correction of item number 7. Reference to the Ministry of Education will be corrected to the Chinese Ministry of Education.

2. Matters arising from Minutes

The President confirmed that the Draft UCD Strategy 2020 – 2024 was approved by Governing Authority at its meeting on 17 October 2019 subject to minor editorial amendments. The strategy is due to be launched on 11 December 2019.

3. Report on Governing Authority Matters

Academic Council noted the summary of the Governing Authority (GA) meeting of 26 September 2019.

Part 1

ITEMS FOR DECISION/ DISCUSSION

4. Draft Report of the Academic Council Composition Working Group

Professor Colin Scott introduced this item and highlighted the following points:

- The Registrar intended plenty of time to be given to allow for discussion and implementation of the draft and that the purpose of today's presentation was to receive feedback from Academic Council.
- The draft proposes significant changes to the composition of the Academic Council
- Since the time the working group was initially commissioned to draft the report, The Department of Education and Skills launched a consultation on proposed legislative reforms of the Higher Education Authority Act 1971 with associated amendments to the Universities Act 1997, which would require an Academic Council to be between 50 and 70 people.

Following the delivery of preliminary comments Professor Scott proceeded to present the Draft Report of the Academic Council Composition Working Group. The Draft Report was circulated to members ahead of the meeting.

Academic Council Executive Committee (ACEC), at its meeting on 13 December 2018, agreed to commence a review of the composition of Academic Council with an agreed objective to achieve effective, informed and inclusive decision-making at Academic Council. At its meeting on 25 April 2019, Academic Council approved a number of principles to inform the review of Academic Council.

The Working Group met in May, September and October 2019 to consider the best approach to Academic Council Composition. The draft report recommends reducing the overall membership to 100 people comprised mainly of Heads of School, Programme Deans and a number of people elected at College Level. The approach is consistent with legislative provisions and is largely reflective of the principles agreed by Academic Council.

The Working Group is putting two recommendations forward to the Academic Council for feedback. However, the Group strongly recommends Option 1 as it is considered better suited to an organisation of the scale and complexity of UCD. ACEC also endorsed Option 1 as the more suitable approach to AC Composition.

The first option reflects the requirements of the Act and includes those occupying senior academic leadership roles as agreed by the Group and brings the total membership to 100 with a female representation of 41%, based on those occupying the current ex-officio roles. As the gender balance is calculated based on those currently appointed as Heads of School, the gender balance is subject to changes. The Working Group recommends the development of robust election regulations to ensure ongoing achievement of gender balance, regardless of those occupying Heads of School roles. These election regulations would be less stringent if the University was to achieve its own goals in terms of females occupying senior leadership roles in the University. Academic Council should also retain the right to co-opt members as needed as a final mechanism of achieving gender balance.

Option 1 is scalable to some extent to meet the needs of the Academic Council. It is possible to increase the number of elected per College, which will have the overall effect of increasing the size of the Council. The Group have prioritised keeping the membership at 100 but acknowledge that there is opportunity to scale this approach. Should the option to increase the number of elected representatives be explored, it should be noted that an even number of representatives in each category contributes more easily to a gender balanced Council. The Group also acknowledge that additional members could be allocated to larger Colleges to ensure more balanced representation.

Regarding student representation, although the overall number of students on the Council will decrease, this is the only group that will increase in representation. The students currently account for just 5% of the Council, but under the options put forward, will account for more than 10% of the Council at a minimum.

Professor Scott opened the floor for feedback and questions, these included:

- A member commented that as the College of Business consists of 1 school only it may be underrepresented on Academic Council as there is only 1 Head of School. Professor Scott explained that there would be ways to manage this such as giving a larger representation to heads of subject or a larger cohort of elected members. The intention is to achieve a proportionate representation for each college.
- It was queried whether there would be opportunities for ex officio members to nominate others to attend meetings in their absence. Professor Scott agreed that principles could be established to meet such requests in line with good governance practice.
- A member asked for clarification on what was meant by 1 student per college. Professor Scott said that the Students' Union would be encouraged to align representation with existing structures.
- It was asked if there would be an opportunity for the Academic Council to meet more often under the new composition. Professor Scott confirmed that meeting regularity was not in the remit of the working group and that the question should be referred to the Registrar to answer later.
- A member commented that many members of Academic Council regularly do not attend meetings and the reason for this has never been clarified. The member asked if it was anticipated that under the new composition that attendance would increase, as elected members might be more engaged. Professor Colin Scott confirmed that the actual reasons for members not attending meetings was not in the remit of the working group and the question should be referred to the Registrar to answer later.
- It was raised that the new composition would require changes to the statute, and it was queried if any consequential impacts were anticipated. Professor Scott explained that while it would not be part of the current working group, managing any consequential impacts to statute changes will be addressed.
- The President asked Professor Scott to lay out main differences between option 1 and option 2. Professor Scott confirmed that option 2 is a feasible option if the legislation proposed by The Department of Education and Skills which Academic Council to have requires 50 – 70 members only, is passed.

Decision	Academic Council endorsed option 1. The working group will report back to Academic Council in April 2020.
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5. **Agenda Item** Academic Council Standing Orders

The President invited the Registrar to present on Academic Council Standing Orders. The Registrar advised that the Standing Orders have been informed by primary legislation, Statute 25, existing terms of reference for Academic Council and custom and practice. They are consistent with the principles of good governance and are informed by the Code of Governance for Irish Universities, where appropriate.

The below items within the Standing Orders were highlighted:

- A term of office and limitation of consecutive term of office for elected members has been specified.
- The Standing Orders outline the procedures for removal or resignation of members and the procedures for filling casual vacancies.
- The circulation of papers has been extended to 2 weeks before a meeting.
- A summary note will be published shortly after meetings
- The procedures for decisions by electronic circulation has been specified.

Updates may be required depending on future changes to composition however most of the Standing Orders standardised current operations of Academic Council and its Committees.

The Registrar invited comments from members. No comments were made.

Decision	Academic Council approved Academic Council Standing Orders.
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6. **Agenda Item** Consolidating Graduate Research Governance

The President invited the Registrar to present on version 2 of the Proposal to Consolidate Graduate Research Governance.

On foot of a UMT decision of 7 November 2018 as part of the Student and Academic Services Review (SASR) initiative, a process of consolidating the operational support for graduate research programmes and students, and associated consultation, has commenced. It is concurrently proposed that the existing structure of graduate school boards (generally one for each college) with responsibility for graduate research programmes should be reformed to establish a single graduate school board for the University. This proposal is one proposal amongst three that share the common aim of providing accessible, visible, dedicated graduate research governance, student administration, and support, enabled by advanced technological systems.

It is proposed to locate oversight, support, and decision-making at the level of the school when it is most appropriately provided locally and at the level of the University when it is most appropriately provided centrally. Feedback following University wide consultation including Academic Council, UPB and Colleges through their Graduate School Directors received on an earlier version of this proposal highlighted a continuing demand for College-level forums to share practice and experience. In response to this feedback, a review was initiated of how such forums could be structured if local governing boards for graduate research education are consolidated into a combined, University-wide Graduate Research Board. By relocating the routine business of governing boards for graduate research education, such as applications for programme approval, programme change requests, and student decisions to a University level Graduate Research Board or by delegating decision-making powers to Schools directly, restructured college-level forums could focus on quality enhancement initiatives, sharing experience and practice, and developing and implementing strategic plans.

No change is proposed with respect to Schools' ability to determine for themselves the appropriate range of acceptable formats for research theses.

It was recommended that:

- 1) Academic Council approves the proposal to consolidate the governance of graduate research programmes and students at the University level.
- 2) In instances where a single governing board has responsibility for both graduate taught and graduate research programmes, that the Academic Council Executive Committee (ACEC) should oversee the formalisation of the separation of taught programme and graduate research programme governance and approve suitable governance arrangements.

The Registrar opened the floor to comments, these included:

- A member commented that it was important to think about the operational impacts and to ensure that school administrators are not overwhelmed with additional work. The member wanted it noted that the Partner model should remain. The Registrar confirmed that the administrative work required before the decision would be presented to the Board is already conducted by school administrators in the current process. The only part of the process that is proposed to change is the decision-making process.

- It was queried if there could be potential conflict around timelines if this item is approved now considering the recommendations of the ISER report is due in February 2020. The Registrar explained that if conflicts arise the item can be revisited.

Decision	Academic Council approved the Proposal to Consolidate Graduate research Governance
	Academic Council noted the proposal paper Graduate Research – College-level Forums to Share Practice and Experience. This paper was approved by UMT.

7. Agenda Item

- A) Proposal to Consolidate Student Appeals Mechanisms**
- B) Amendment to the ACCSAC Terms of Reference**

ACCSAC recommends:

- The establishment of a student appeals panel, from which student appeals committees will be convened. Proposed terms of reference are presented. The standing down of relevant existing appeals committees
- The establishment of a student appeals panel, from which student appeals committees will be convened.
- That regulations, terms of reference and policy documents are updated to reflect the approved recommendations

Appropriate consultation has taken place with the following key stakeholders:

- Chairs of Governing Boards
- SU President and SU Education Officer
- UCD Legal
- (Outgoing) Chair of GA Appeals Committee
- The Ombudsman
- Chair of ACCSCC

Professor Dooley opened the floor to comments, these included:

- A member commented that although the operational mechanism was clear they would like clarification on who would be responsible for reporting data and identifying trends. It was confirmed that reporting will continue to come to Academic Council from ACCSAC.

Decision	Academic Council approved the Proposal to Consolidate Student Appeals Mechanisms and the amendment to the ACCSAC Terms of Reference.
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Part 2

ITEMS FOR APPROVAL

8. **Agenda Item:** Proposals for Conferment of Emeritus

Name	Emeritus/Emerita Title	School
Dr Jackie Sinclair	Emeritus Assistant Professor	Business
Assoc. Prof. Eamonn O'Flaherty	Emeritus Associate Professor	History
Prof. Maurice Bric	Emeritus Professor	History
Prof. Gerard O'Sullivan	Emeritus Full Professor	Physics
Dr Gabrielle O'Kelly	Emeritus Assistant Professor	Nursing, Midwifery & Health Systems
Prof. Sheila O'Donnell	Emeritus Full Professor	Architecture, Planning and Environmental Policy
Ms Vivienne Brophy	Emeritus Lecturer	Architecture, Planning & Environmental Policy
Prof. Gethin McBean	Emeritus Professor	Biomolecular & Biomedical Science
Assoc. Prof. Nicola Figgis	Emeritus Associate Professor	Art History & Cultural Policy
Prof. Máire Ní Annracháin	Ollamh Sinsearach Emeritus / Emeritus Full Professor	Irish, Celtic Studies & Folklore

Retrospective/retired prior to the introduction of statute 16

Name	Emeritus/Emerita Title	School
Dr Berna Grist	Emeritus Lecturer	School of Architecture, Planning and Environmental Policy

Decision	Academic Council - recommended to Governing Authority the award of Emeritus on the above.
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9. **Agenda Item:** Recommendation of the Appointment of Dr Marie Moran as Centre Director UCD Centre for Equality Studies.

Decision	Academic Council recommended to Governing Authority the appointment of Dr Marie Moranas Centre Director UCD Centre for Equality Studies.
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10. **Agenda Item:** Nominations to the Student Conduct Panel 2018/19 – 2020/21

- **Professor Eugenia Siapera** for first trimester of 2019/20 only (3.09.19 – 19.01.20)
- **Professor Kaplana Shankar** from second trimester of 2019/20 onwards (from 20.01.20)
- **Associate Professor Crystal Fulton** (Member of Academic Council).

Decision	Academic Council approved Nominations to the Student Conduct Panel 2018/19 – 2020/21
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11. **Agenda Item** UCD Withdrawal Policy – Change of Status

Description

Decision/Action: This item was deferred for recommendation. It will be brought to a future meeting of ACEC.

12. **Agenda Item** Recommendations of the Tenure Committee

Decision	Academic Council approved Recommendations of the Tenure Committee
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13. **Agenda Item** Procedure for Awarding Titles for Professors and Full Professors

Professors & Full Professors may request the appropriate School and College and the Academic Council to approve titles indicative of their areas of expertise. The Procedures for this have been updated to:

- Make explicit that Full Professors are also eligible to request a new title
- Extend the ACEC to meetings as well as electronic consultation to include gender balance requirements in review group composition
- Reflect the changes in faculty titles

Decision	Academic Council approved Procedure for Awarding Titles for Professors and Full Professors
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ITEMS FOR NOTING

14. Faculty Promotions Annual Report 2018-2019

Decision	Academic Council noted the Faculty Promotions Annual Report 2018-2019
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15. Grade Approvals Process Policy (GAP)

Decision	Academic Council noted the Grade Approvals Process Policy (GAP)
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16. Academic Council Committees' Annual Reports 2018-2019 & Registrar's Commentary

Decision	Academic Council noted Committees' Annual Reports 2018-2019 & Registrar's Commentary
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17. Academic Council Committees' Work Programmes 2019-2020

Decision	Academic Council noted Academic Council Committees' Work Programmes 2019-2020
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18. Academic Council Committee on Academic Centres – Review Procedures

Decision	Academic Council approved Academic Council Committee on Academic Centres – Review Procedures
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13. Any other Business
N/A

Signed: _____
Chairperson

Date: _____

