

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

Tuesday 17-9-2024 at 9:00am

Shearwater Hotel, Ballinasloe, Co. Galway

Members: Josephine Feehily – Chair
Vincent Cunnane
George O'Callaghan
Tony Mahon
Noel Gavin
Jos Gijbels
Gearoid Folan
Marguerite Doyle
Maureen Falvey
Darina Kneafsey
Pamela O'Brien
Geoff Shannon
James Ring
Amelia Lown
Colette Ryan
Catherine Collins
Kevin McLoughlin

In Attendance: Bill Delaney, Governing Body Secretary
Martina Moran, Recording Secretary
VP Research, Development & Innovation – Dr. Liam Brown – Item 12
Research Integration Project Manager - Ms. Tania Marsh – item 13

4. Apologies: Anne Cusack, John Griffin

Items are recorded in the order they were discussed.

SECTION A: STANDING ITEMS

1. Chairpersons Opening

The Chair welcomed members to the meeting and noted that the previous day the GB had a very useful review of progress against the key performance indicators in the Strategic Plan and risks associated with those indicators. She welcomed the opportunity for members to engage with the strategic business of TUS in a less formal way without the usual pressures of time, Core funding risks were underlined as well as ongoing strategic risks in relation to TUS structure , student accommodation and the issue of professors.

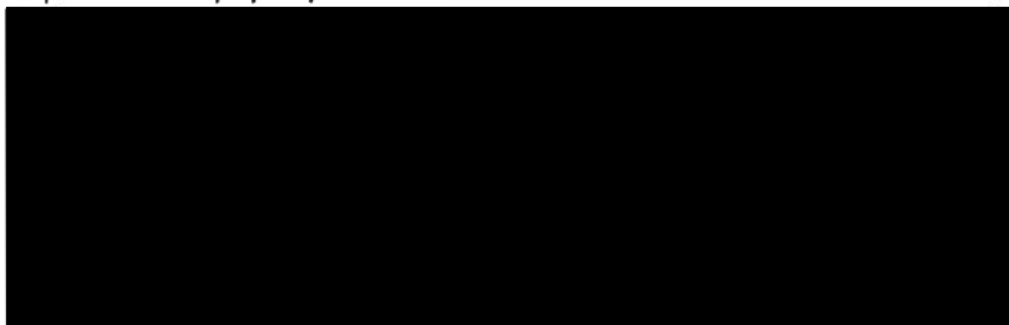
One indicator of particular concern related to the target for student numbers and she noted that the President had asked for further discussion on this item to be tabled in January when better student data will be available and better information about future prospects of certain programmes.

Action	By whom	By when
KPI on student numbers to be re-examined and presented to the GB for further consideration	President	January 25 GB meeting

2. Approval of the Agenda

The agenda was approved subject to inclusion of Item 3, (deferred from the meeting of 16/9/24) - *Emerging Issues and Governance* which will be tabled after Item 9 – Action Log.

3. Expressions of Sympathy



5. Declaration of Conflicts of Interest or Loyalty


There was no declaration of Conflict of Interest or Loyalty.

6. Correspondence.

TU Chairs commissioned the IPA to carry out work on their behalf, correspondence in this regard was sent to the Secretary General of DFHERIS on behalf of the Chairs.

7. Minutes of Governing Body meeting of 24th June 2024.

The minutes of 24th June 2024 were approved.

Proposed by 

8. Matters Arising

The President provided an update on the ongoing HR matter. In light of the President’s briefing, GB members expressed serious concern at the position it finds itself in and the risks to TUS of proceeding to the High Court. The GB decided that a clear statement in writing of the DFHERIS position was required. The GB agreed that the Chair and President would write to the Secretary-General on behalf of the GB and copy GB members.

Action	By whom	By when
HR Matter – issue letter to the Department	President & Chair	ASAP

The TUS Annual Report 2022-2023 is published on the TUS website.

TUS was awarded the Athena Swan Bronze Award in recognition of its work to enhance Equality, Diversity and Inclusion across TUS.

Members were thanked for their response by e-mail during August '24 in approving the resolution for TUS to become a 'corporate member' of the Central Applications Office and to appoint the VP Academic Affairs and Registrar to the CAO board as TUS's member representative. All related correspondence has been uploaded to Decision Time (item 8 of Meeting Pack of 17-9-24).

9. Action Log

The following updates were given:

- Item #81 – will revert once formal CINNTE review has been received
- Item #93 – Deloitte Final report 23 – Academic Programme Development Advisory Review is available in the meeting pack of 16/10/23. This report was reviewed by ARC and any open recommendations update will be reviewed at a subsequent ARC meeting. Further discussion including student data will be further discussed at a mid-term review in Jan '25.
- Item #129 – 'Green' will be removed from the Action Log.
- Item #131B - 'Green' will be removed from the Action Log.
- Item #142 – Governing Body updated.
- Item #144 – Governing Body discuss 16-9-24, the next update will be provided in Jan '25.
- Item #145 - 'Green' will be removed from the Action Log.
- Item #146 – Completed and will now turn 'Green' and will be removed from the Action Log
- Item #147 - Completed and will now turn 'Green' and will be removed from the Action Log
- Item #148 - Completed and will now turn 'Green' and will be removed from the Action Log
- Item #149 - Completed and will now turn 'Green' and will be removed from the Action Log
- Item #31 – Chair will follow up on this matter with Children's Ombudsman.

10. Emerging Issues and Governance

The Chair gave a background on developments in the sector relating to three universities which were the subject of HEA statutory intervention. She underlined that these interventions were directed at Governing Bodies in light of their responsibilities under the HEA Act and invited members to reflect and share any concerns about TUS governance

In light of these concerning issues and to raise level of awareness of governance risks the following immediate actions were agreed:

- Finance & Physical Development Committee to review TUS compliance with Public Spending Code and to report back to Governing Body.
- Pre Contract commitments - Procedure for earlier GB consideration of significant commitments and major contracts is in development. Procedure to include provision for FPDC / GB review of proposed significant potential commitments and contracts at pre-tender stage.
- ARC to review the Risk Register in light recent C&AG report and developments in the sector.

Action	By whom	By when
Review compliance with the Public Spending Code	FPDC	Future Governing Body
Formulate a procedure on commitment and pre contract work	Secretary	

Review Risk Register in light of developments in the sector	ARC	
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11. Risk Management

This was previously discussed at Governing Body of 16/9/24 and under Matters Arising today.

12. President’s Strategic Update and Report

The President’s report was noted.

The Taoiseach, Minister O’Donovan and the Higher Education Presidents met to discuss various issues, which included the strategic direction of Research Ireland and the Presidents were asked for their support in matters pertaining to Research Ireland.

RUN-EU General Assembly was recently held in Austria, which is coordinated by TUS and chaired by the President of TUS.

In response to the discussion, the President advised that the recent MOU with Cycling Ireland will not entail any expenditure by TUS. The proposal relates to an application for LSSIF funding.

SECTION C: ITEMS FOR INFORMATION / NOTING

17. Update on THEA

Over a year ago the President of TUS led a sector bid application comprising of the 5 TU and 2 IOTs for a new representative body which would ensure a single representative voice for the sector. A meeting of the seven parties recently took place to reaffirm their commitment to this new Body. The application will now be presented to the HEA Board for approval of funding.

16. Staff Appointments

All Appointments were noted.

The appointment of Ms. Marian Duggan to the post of VP People & Organisation was approved.

Proposed by [REDACTED]

SECTION B: ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION / APPROVAL

13. EU RUN – Not for Profit (NFP) Company Establishment

VP Research, Development & Innovation – Dr. Liam Brown was welcomed to the meeting for this item and provided a background to Governing Body on the proposal.

The context on the RUN EU Legal Entity was prepared by the RUN EU Work Package 6 Team; L. Brown and B. Delaney are representatives on this WP6 team.

After a detailed discussion, Governing Body reviewed the documents and agreed to authorise TUS be a corporate member of the NPO Company ‘RUN EU Services’.

Proposed by [REDACTED]

It was noted in accordance with Sec. 25 of the TU Act, the ‘consent’ of the Minister was required and would now be sought.

It was noted only funding provided by the EU in the grant agreement would be provided to the NFP to support the provision of IT systems.

During the discussion a query was raised around broader funding related to RUN EU Programme, the impact on TUS and related risk and oversight for Governing Body. It was noted RUN EU will be an enabler for supplementary Grant funding, particularly in the European Research Area (ERA). The President advised that the RUN is of strategic importance to Ireland and to TUS, and funding derives largely from Erasmus+ and other EU programmes. For completeness, the GB requested that a further piece of work would be prepared for its consideration setting out the wider impact, costs and benefits to TUS of the RUN-EU project.

Action	By whom	By when
RUN EU Network – carry out work on costs, benefits, oversight etc for TUS as part of RUN Network	VP Research, Development & Innovation	Q1 2025

14. Research Information Management System (RIMS) - PURE

Ms. Tania Marsh gave a power point presentation on the Research Information Systems (RIMS), the purpose of which is to collect and store metadata on research activities and outputs, which can be cohesively used for management, administration, networking and collaboration. The presentation was followed by Q&A.

T. Marsh was thanked for the presentation and wished every success with the system.

15. CINNTE Institutional Review Draft Report

The President gave a power point presentation on the QQI CINNTE Institutional Review Report 2024. The outcome of the Report is very positive. The President in his presentation highlighted the top 5 Commendations and Recommendations.

Once the CINNTE Report 2024 is formally approved by QQI it will be published. A table comprising of the entire list of Recommendations (15 in total), which will include owners of actions and timelines would be developed. This table will be presented to Governing Body at regular intervals to ensure that all recommendations are been actioned

The TUS Team who were involved in the CINNTE Review were commended, in particular Dr. Terry Twomey, Dr. Brendan Murphy and Ms. Mary Goode who led the process.

With regard to TUS Programme Reviews which are presented and discussed at Academic Council, a discussion will be facilitated with the Registrar to discuss enhancing GB oversight of Academic Governance.

Action	By whom	By when
CINNTE Report – 15 Recommendations present a table with recommendations, owners, timelines for presentation to Governing Body	TUS management	On publication and at regular intervals

Section D.

18. AOB

There being no further business the meeting concluded.

The next meeting will take place on at 10:00am on 14th October 2024, in the Midwest Campus.

Signed: Joseph Feehily
Chair of TUS Governing Body

Date: 14-10-24