

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

Monday 19th February 2024 at 10:00am

Midwest Campus

Members: Vincent Cunnane (in person)
Josephine Feehily (in person)
George O'Callaghan (in person)
Tony Mahon (in person)
Kevin McLoughin (in person)
Anne Meagher (in person)
Noel Gavin (in person)
Brigid Delamere (in person)
Amelia Lown (in person)
Jose Fernandes (in person)
Catherine Collins (Teams)
John Griffin (in person)
Marguerite Doyle (in person)
Niamh Kennedy (Teams)
John Doyle (Teams)
James Ring (In person)
Martin Quinn (Teams)

In Attendance: Bill Delaney, Governing Body Secretary (in person)
Martina Moran, Recording Secretary (in person)
Donnacha McNamara, Dean of Faculty of Business & Humanities/VP
International - Item 11

4. Apologies: Colette Ryan, Anne Cusack

SECTION A: STANDING ITEMS

1. Chairpersons Opening

The Chair welcomed members to the meeting and advised that a 'good news story' would be announced during the meeting.

2. Approval of the Agenda

The agenda was approved subject to facilitating a 'good news story' under item 11.

3. Expressions of Sympathy



5. Declaration of Conflicts of Interest & Loyalty

N. Gavin declared a potential future Conflict of Interest as he has been appointed President of Limerick Chamber. Noel was wished every success in his role as President.

6. **Correspondence**
There was no correspondence.

7. **Minutes of Governing Body meeting of 22nd January 2024.**
The minutes of 22nd January 2024 were approved.
Proposed by [REDACTED]

8. **Matters Arising**
Governing Body Secretary on behalf of the CMR committee gave an update on the Governing Body election process. Panel A election results have concluded and a candidate has been elected, results of which have been published. Nominations for panels B, C, D and E are now open and elections will take place 6th to 7th March, with results to issue on 8th March.

The CINNTE review will take place the week beginning 15th April '24. The panel will meet with a representation from Governing Body on the morning of 15th April, therefore, to facilitate this meeting, the Governing Body meeting will be rescheduled to take place in the afternoon of the 15th April. A paper will be drafted for Governing Body members who will meet with the panel to assist in the preparation of the review meeting.

Action	By whom	By when
Draft a paper in preparation of CINNTE review	VP Academic Affairs & Registrar	In advance of CINNTE Review panel visit

9. **Action Log**
The following items coded green will be removed from the Action Log:
83, 87, 107, 111, 112,113 and 119.

Items 103 and 120 are now complete and will be coded green.

The following items will be coded green after today's meeting:
97, 98, 104.

Both existing and additional items coded green will be removed from the Action Log. All completed items are archived and will be uploaded to the Resource Section for information on a quarterly basis.

Update on Return Scheme was noted.

10. **Risk Management**
This will be covered under item 13.1.

11. **President's Strategic Update and Report**
The President's report was noted.
Hildegard Naughton TD Minister of State for Public Health, Wellbeing & the National Drug Strategy visited TUS, Athlone campus on 8th February 2024 for a tour of the sexual health service.

A Strategic Review of TUS Student Support Services took place on 25th January 2024. A Peer Review Panel Report (draft) has been notified to the VP Student Education & Experience, the final draft is expected the 1st week of March from the Peer Review Panel Chair.

RUN EU

The reporting structure was noted. A Further update will be given at the next meeting by the VP Research, Development and Innovation.

Student Accommodation

TUS have been invited to submit a proposal for the delivery of student accommodation via an agreed process. The deadline for this Stage 1 submission is 15th March '24. The key stages of the process are as follows:

Stage 1: HEIs to submit proposals i.e. 'Long List of Options'

HEA will assess 'Long List of Options'

Stage 2: HEIs will require approval to progress to the next stage i.e 'Short List of Options'

HEA Approval Gate: Shortlist will be assessed

Stage 3: following approval, HEIs will finalise Preliminary Business Case and make recommendations to the HEA.

Once TUS develop the proposal it will be brought to Finance & Physical Development Committee and onwards to Governing Body.

D. McNamara, Dean of Faculty of Business & Humanities/VP International joined the meeting to give a presentation on QS Star Ratings. The QS Stars system is a university rating system launched in 2009 to assess institutions more broadly than through ranking alone. TUS were rated excellent as a 5 Stars institution in this process. TUS is the only Irish university to achieve 5 stars in all categories. The Chair, President and Governing Body thanked D. McNamara and the team on this exceptional achievement. The President advised that an all staff meeting is scheduled to take place at 1pm today to advise staff on all campuses of this wonderful achievement. QS will issue a report and once published this report will be uploaded to Decision Time.

Action	By whom	By when
Upload QS Report to Resource section on Decision Time	GB Secretariat	Once received

Section B: Items for Discussion / Approval

12. Finance & Physical Development Committee 24th January 2024

The Chair of FPDC briefed Governing Body on their meeting of 24/1/24.

12.1 Capital Projects Report

12.1.1 Update on Ongoing major projects & Capital Projects Update

The report was noted.

Masterplan merger is ongoing.

Background was given on Immigrant Investor Programme (IIP) operated by the Department of Justice. A report on the matter is currently being prepared by the VP Campus Services & Capital Development for FPDC and onwards to Governing Body.

12.2 Disability Act 2005 – Progress Report

Partial compliance for Part M of the Disability Act 2005 was noted. A works programme will aim to bring building stock into full compliance with Part M by Q3 2025.

Governing Body requested that an update on various maintenance and H&S issues on the Research Hub building, Athlone Campus be provided to the next FPDC committee.

Action	By whom	By when
Provide update on Research Hub building, Athlone campus	GB Secretary	Next FPDC meeting

12.3 Treasury Management Policy

On the recommendation of FPDC, the Treasury Management Policy was approved.

12.4 Financial Update & Financial Risk

The adjustment which changes the deficit to a surplus was noted and is included in Appendix D (log of changes) on the Financial Statements. Appendix D has been submitted to the C&AG.

12.5 C&AG Audit Planning Memorandum 22/23

Noted.

13. Audit & Risk Committee Report 8th February 2024

J. Griffin briefed Governing Body on the ARC meeting of 8/2/24.

13.1 Risk Management – Strategic Risk Register & Executive Summary

Both Risk Registers were noted.

Risk 8 – Research & Development on the Strategic Risk Register regarding the approved Post graduate stipend rate increase, while the increase is appreciated it is considered to be lower in comparison with other HEIs. This will be further discussed at the next ARC meeting.

CAO data will be presented to Governing Body at the March meeting.

Action	By whom	By when
Risk Register – Risk No 8 – further discussion at ARC	GB Secretary	Next ARC meeting
CAO Data	President	GB 25-3-24

13.2 2023 Follow Up – Open recommendations/Priority Listing

The report was noted including the two closed recommendations.

13.3 Annual Report on Protected Disclosures 2023

13.3.1 TUS PD Report

13.3.2 Report for the Minister

On the recommendation of ARC, Governing Body approved both the Protected Disclosure Annual Report and the Report for the Minister, subject to some 'tidy up' issues.

13.4 Protected Disclosure Policy Update

This item has been deferred to the March '24 ARC meeting.

13.5 TUS Policy Framework – Appendix D

On the recommendation of ARC, Governing Body agreed the Policy Framework – Appendix D as presented. The President gave assurances to Governing Body that there is a very robust process in place and that the Policy Unit are empowered to challenge policies as they see fit. The various sub-committees will also look at the policies at level 3 status.

13.6 Annual Governance Statement (AGS) and Statement of Internal Control (SIC) 22/23

Both ARC and GNC reviewed the AGS and SIC, and on the recommendations of both committees, Governing Body approved the AGS and SIC.

13.7 C&AG Audit Planning Memorandum 22/23

Noted.

13.8 ARC Work Plan

The Work Plan as presented was noted. An extra ARC meeting scheduled for 13th March was also noted.

13.9 Health and Safety Incident TUS Moylish Campus

The H&S incident which occurred on the Moylish campus on 31st January 2024 was discussed. The Chair was informed of the incident at the outset and was continuously updated by the President. Significant interaction has taken place between TUS and the Health and Safety Authority.

A formal report has been issued to the HSA and an inspection is due to take place this week. An internal investigation team will make recommendations once a final HSA report is received. A number of issues have been identified in the internal investigation and these will be addressed. The Chair on behalf of Governing Body expressed best wishes to all staff and students affected by the incident.

14. Governance & Nominations Committee 6th February 2024

14.1 IPA Governing Body Effectiveness Report

on the recommendation of GNC, Governing Body approved the responses to the IPA Governing Body Effectiveness Report. A process timeline will be drafted for the next Governing Body meeting. Both the President and GB Secretary will look at a proposal and date for a Strategy Day for Governing Body, which will take place after April '24.

Action	By whom	By when
IPA GB Effectiveness – draft a process timeline	GB Secretary	Next GB meeting
Look at a proposal and date for a GB Strategy Day	President & GB Secretary	For discussion at GB meeting of 15-4-24

14.2 Annual Governance Statement (AGS) and Statement of Internal Control (SIC) 22/23
Covered under item 13.6.

14.3 HEA Oversight Statement 2024

Background to this item was given by the Chair, who requested that with Governing Body approval the HEA Oversight Statement would be signed to include an amendment that the language used within the document would be identical for both HEA and TUS in relation to the 'principles' of the State Code. This was agreed.

15. Other Governance Matters

15.1 Process for GB approval of major contracts

The Chair invited GB members to consider the processes in place for GB approval of major contracts and proposed that it be discussed and reviewed at early Governing Body meeting.

Action	By whom	By when
Process for GB approval of major contracts to be reviewed and discussed	Paper from VP Finance	Early GB meeting

15.2 Academic Gowns

Noted that the Competition and Consumer Protection Commission obtained voluntary commitments from recently established TUs, including TUS, in relation to the procurement of graduation gowns.

The commitments require technological universities to:

- Reduce the length of supply contracts to no more than two years, with a potential one-year extension, for the on-campus supply and fitting of graduation gowns.
- Allow for the decoupling of photography and gown supply contracts.
- State clearly on the university's website that students may source gowns from other suppliers.

SECTION C: ITEMS FOR INFORMATION/NOTING

16. Staff Appointments

Noted.

17. Climate Action Roadmap Presentation

Deferred for future Governing Body meeting.

Section D:

18. AOB

Section E:

19. **GB Session – Non TU connected members**

19.1 Mid-year review of Presidents performance

The GB considered the documentation and noted the substantial progress on agreed performance indicators.

The meeting concluded at 1.00pm.

The next meeting will take place on Monday 25th March 2024 at 10:00am on the Midlands Campus.

Signed: Josephine Feely
Chair of TUS Governing Body

Date: 25/3/24

