

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

**Wednesday 1<sup>st</sup> of December at 11am via MS Teams & in person.**

**Members:** Ms. Josephine Feehily – Chair (in person)  
Mr. George O’Callaghan (in person)  
Professor Vincent Cunnane (in person)  
Ms. Colette Ryan (Teams)

**Apologies:** Mr. John Griffin

**In Attendance:** Ms. Áine Daly (Teams)  
Mr. Cormac Dillon (in person)  
Ms. Anne O’Leary (in person)  
Ms. Brigid Delamere (Teams)  
Mr. Eoin Woodlock (Teams)  
Mr. Tony Mahon (in person)  
Ms. Shelley Ann McCarthy Buckingham (Teams – part of meeting)

**In Attendance:** Mr. Bill Delaney (in person)  
Ms. Martina Moran, minute taker (Teams)

**Note: Items are recorded in the order they were discussed.**

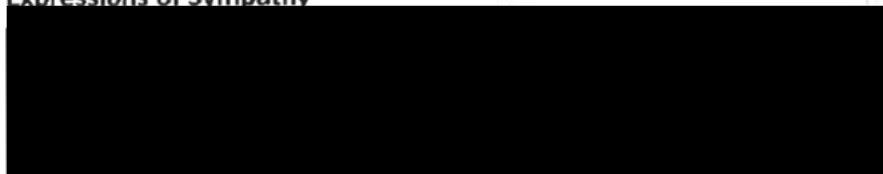
**1. Chairperson’s opening**

The Chair welcomed members and attendees to the meeting.

**2. Approval of the agenda**

The agenda was approved subject to an amendment on Item 14 which is for noting and not for approval.

**3. Expressions of Sympathy**



**5. Declaration of Conflicts of Interest**

There were no Conflicts of Interest noted.

## 6. Correspondence

The Chair received correspondence from Minister Harris formally appointing her as Chairperson of the Governing Body of TUS under section 55 (2) of the TU Act 2018 following the endorsement of her candidature by the Joint Oireachtas Committee on Education, Further and Higher Education, Research Innovation and Science.

## 7. Minutes of GB meeting of 11<sup>th</sup> November 2021

Minutes were agreed subject to the following amendments:

*Item 11 – This would include the authority to appointing staff up to the level of Head of Department (HoD)/Central Services Manager*

*Item 14 – in order to provide more clarity to the discussion the following rewording was proposed:*

*'An amount of €9.75m is to be provided from external funding providers incl. the HEA and Enterprise Ireland. A further amount of €500k has been sought from the HEA towards the cost of the apprentice facility development. A decision on same is awaited.*

**Proposed by G. O'Callaghan and seconded by V. Cunnane**

## 8. Matters arising

Due to the lack of PCR testing facilities for TUS students on the Athlone Campus, requests were made and subsequently facilities have been made available for PCR testing in the GAA grounds in Athlone for a short period of time.

## 9. Presidents Report

**The President gave a verbal report, which included the following:**

- ETTA Ireland Conference and Awards held on Athlone Campus.
- Undergraduate Open Days took place on Athlone and Limerick Campuses (Registration for the Moylish and Clare Street campuses sold out and waiting lists were formed), Open Day is due to take place on Thurles campus on 4<sup>th</sup> December.
- A Joint Oireachtas Committee on Education, Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science had a Study Visit to TUS Midlands Midwest, Moylish Campus Limerick on 25<sup>th</sup> & 26<sup>th</sup> of November. The President received positive feedback on the event & read a letter to Governing Body he had just received from P. Keogh, this letter will be uploaded to Decision Time for the next Governing Body meeting.
- ██████████ a sixth-year student from Our Lady's Bower school, Athlone was named SciFest Stem Champion 2021.
- 2021 MSc Digital Marketing graduate ██████████ was named 'Digital Student of the Year' at the 2021 Digital Media Awards.
- The PerPETual project which received €1.8m in funding through the Government's Disruptive Technologies Innovation Fund (DTIF), was launched with the aim of reducing landfill and incineration of waste plastic by creating a technology that will allow polyethylene terephthalate (PET) plastics to be continually recycled.
- A Webinar on the topic of 'Gender-Based Abuse: Engaged Research and Research Translation' took place on 30<sup>th</sup> of November in which Minister Harris gave the closing

speech.

- Discussions are at an advanced stage with Tipperary ETB with a view to a building project leading to a shared use of facilities on the Thurles campus.
- As the end of semester 1 is approaching, Covid issues are becoming more prominent. Athlone campus has completed formal teaching for this semester with teaching throughout the remainder of campuses to be completed by the end of this week. Exams will commence after this with a mixture of proctored, continuous assessment, open book and 'face to face'. While concerns have been expressed in TÚS Midlands about the 'face to face' the venues which have been identified for exams have the highest levels of ventilation with expected very low occupancy rates and management are doing everything in line with the public health guidance and the national 'Safe Return to Campus' plan which was drawn up by the Minister for Higher Education.
- StudentSurvey.ie (formerly ISSE), is a HEA national survey. This survey is treated very seriously as it reflects the voice of the student and is a very useful document. A Presentation on the Student Survey will be given to Governing Body at a Board meeting in early 2022.
- A contract will be signed with TUS and Kelbuild for the Campus Incubator Extension Project in the coming days.

#### **10. Risk Management**

The Risk on Covid and exams was previously discussed, and no other risks were noted.

The first TUS ARC meeting took place on Monday 29<sup>th</sup> of November, a report will be brought to the next Governing Body on the 15<sup>th</sup> of December.

#### **11. Presentation on Structure and Role of TUS SU by SU President**

Ms. Áine Daly, TUS SU President gave a power point presentation, which was followed by Q&A. Ms. Daly noted that while the structure is complicated, the SU acknowledged that the structures are an interim solution in order to ensure that the students in all campuses had representation.

The President commended Áine and the team on all their work to-date and for achieving the integration of one Student Union body & creating a single vision over a very short period of time. Members of Governing Body also thanked and acknowledged Áine and the SU team. The Chair & SU President will arrange an informal meeting to discuss Governance issues.

The SU President requested if the practise of contributing SU items to the President's Report could be continued, this was noted and will be discussed further in the context of the format of the President's Report going forward.

The presentation will be uploaded to Decision Time (Resources section).

#### **12. GB Recognition of TUS SU**

The Governing Body formally recognised TUS SU.

**Proposed by J. Feehily & Seconded by G. O'Callaghan.**

### **13. Regulation for Election of Staff Members to GB**

The draft regulation was reviewed and discussed. Consultation has taken place with the relevant staff unions.

Section 12 (5) (b) of the TU Act provides that Governing Body, in making regulations (for staff elections) "shall have regard to the objective that at least 40 per cent of members of the governing body shall be women and at least 40 per cent shall be men). The staff representatives are very cognisant of the gender requirement balance and will strive to achieve this.

The Academic Staff requested if the elections for the panels could be run in a different order i.e. election for Panel E i.e. all TUS staff be run first, as this may assist in enabling gender balance of nominations. Further consultation will continue with the staff unions and a revised draft regulation will be presented to the Governing Body for approval at its meeting on the 15<sup>th</sup> of December.

It was requested that Governing Body be provided with assurance so that they are fully satisfied that there are no GDPR or other risk issues in relation to the use of online Mi-Voice voting system. It was noted that the system has been used by the TUI, Students Union and other HE institutions elsewhere, and the system is considered to be robust and GDPR compliant.

**Action: B. Delaney will report to the Governing Body meeting on December 15<sup>th</sup> on same.**

In relation to the timelines of student membership on Governing Body, it was noted that all additional Governing Body members will become members at the same time, which will be March 2022.

### **14. Nomination Committee – External GB Members Candidate Brief**

The Nominations Committee have met to discuss and finalise this document and the document has been uploaded to Decision Time for information. A lot of attention has been given to the brief particularly in relation to gender and regional diversity. It was noted that one external position is reserved for a person with expertise in standards and practise in HE outside the State. The Brief will be sent to the HEA later today and will remain in draft format until the competencies included in the brief are agreed with the HEA, which is expected to occur at the HEA board meeting on December 14<sup>th</sup>. The Nominations committee will meet again before the end of the year to discuss the advertising and other related matters.

Ensuring an appropriate mix of skills and expertise for the full Governing Body will be important and the Chair would welcome informal input from members as to the backgrounds and expertise of elected members.

### **15. AOB**

TUS is registering on the Pobal portal as it is the intention to apply for a funding call in January. It has been advised that there is a requirement for two Governing Body members to be named in the registration documentation. Ms. J. Feehily & Mr. G. O'Callaghan agreed to be named and requested that they be copied on correspondence re same.

The meeting concluded at 12.45pm

16. **Members session**

This section of the meeting took place in private and considered a HR matter.

Signed:



Chair of TUS Governing Body

Date:

