

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

**Monday 23-3-26 at 10:00am. Midwest Campus
Members**

Josephine Feehily – Chair
Vincent Cunnane
Jos Gijbels
John Griffin (Teams)
Tony Mahon
Pamela O'Brien
George O'Callaghan
Geoff Shannon (Teams)
Gearoid Folan
Anne Cusack (Teams)
Dara Lenihan
Kevin McLoughlin
Maureen Falvey
Darina Kneafsey
Catherine Collins (Teams)
Marguerite Doyle
Colette Ryan (Teams)
Noel Gavin (Teams)

In Attendance: Jimmy Browne, Chief Operations Officer
Raphaella Kane, Chief Academic Officer (Teams)
Emma Hogan, Incoming Students Union President
Bill Delaney, Secretary
Orla Breathnach, Minute Secretary (Teams)

4. Apologies None

Note: items are recorded in the order they were discussed.

SECTION A: STANDING ITEMS

- 1. Chairpersons Opening**
The Chair welcomed members to the meeting.
- 2. Approval of the Agenda**
The Agenda was approved subject to Item 12A – Image Based Sexual Violence having its own agenda item as 12, and subsequent agenda items moved accordingly.
- 3. Expressions of Sympathy**

The President expressed gratitude to the TUS Student Resource Centre with their counselling aid to the student community over the last while.

5. **Declaration of Conflicts of Interest or Loyalty**
There was no declaration of Conflict of Interest or Loyalty.
6. **Correspondence.**
There was no correspondence.
7. **Minutes of Governing Body meeting of 23rd February 2026**
The minutes of 23rd February 2026 were approved.
Proposed by M. Doyle and Seconded by G. O Callaghan
8. **Matters Arising**
Legal matter: The GB will be updated when the settlement is complete.

Action Log

The Action Log was reviewed and updates were provided. Completed items, coded 'Green' will be removed from the Action Log

- #186 – TUS Honorary Doctorate Awards Policy: The policy will be brought to the next GB.
- #181 & #184 – PMDS: This will be reviewed in line with strategic planning
- #230 – Professorships: Work is ongoing to advertise for Professorships.
- #218 – Charity Trustee training: It was agreed that composite Training and Induction package would be progressed via the GNC, with delivery to GB members in September / October, when the new external members will have taken up their positions.
- #172A – Postgrad Stipends: Ongoing discussion between the Minister with SU Post Grad.

9. **Risk Management**
No further risks were identified.

10. President's Strategic Update and Report

The President's Report was noted.

- Nova Nordisk Launch Event, Athlone. Tableted medications will be produced and distributed worldwide. Employment will increase and TUS graduates are being recruited.
- ReShape Launch of AI – Powered Skills Platform. A new AI-powered digital platform designed to help workers and employers in the Midlands prepare for the future of work was launched at the Athlone campus.
- Official Launch of Mental Health Nursing Tertiary Degree. These are nursing degrees outside the CAO with the consortium involving four ETBs. Students will be able to complete courses in respective ETB's and gain access to the TUS Mental Health Nursing programme.
- Explore Engineering showcase event, Shannon. It was advised to clarify TUS' position on the new CLG.
- An update was provided on student accommodation strategy which is going to cabinet. The TU Presidents have a meeting with Secretary General post cabinet meeting.
- An update was provided on CAO numbers. There is an increase based on last year. Confirmation of numbers will be provided. The CAO is embarking on a full portfolio review with Deans looking at student numbers, retention and performance metrics over the next few months.
- The President congratulated the TUS Midwest ladies' team, as well as their coaches and support team, on their Donaghy Cup Final victory defeating University of Galway.

Action	By whom	By when
Explore Engineering - clarify TUS' position on the new CLG.	T Mahon	Immediate

SECTION B: ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION / APPROVAL

12. Image Based Sexual Violence

Due to a recent serious incident in another university, the chair welcomed discussion, and invited members to share perspectives on how TUS would act if a similar situation arose in TUS. It was agreed by all that the values of TUS and the principles of Student First would guide any responses or actions.

TUS have a Sexual Violence Prevention and Response Manager who is responsible for raising awareness and conducting training for both staff and students in the areas of consent, sexual violence, and harassment.

TUS have also developed a Policy and Procedure for Responding to Sexual Violence and Sexual Harassment. The Students Union welcomed the policy and procedure. The Students Union also have procedures in place.

Legal correspondence and related matters are managed through the office of VP Finance & Corporate Governance and the President confirmed that he makes all final decisions on legal action to be taken by TUS.

The Critical Incident Management Frameworks applies to all serious incidents, and the Students Union will be included in scenario training.

There is a concerted effort by both the TUS Students Union and TUS to encourage victims to report incidents. Victims are supported at every step.

13. EDI Report 11-2-26

All documentation taken as read.

13.1 EDI Annual Report

GB noted the level of activity the committee reviewed in the past year.

13.2 Policies for Approval

The TUS Equality Statement 2026-2029 will be for noting only as the full consultation requirements of the HEA Act 2022 amended have not yet been completed. The act requires formal external consultation with specified stakeholders.

13.2.1 TUS Equality Statement 2026-2029

A timeline, aligned with the statutory requirements will be prepared for the consultation process and GB will be appraised of same. When the consultation process is complete the Equality Statement will come back to GB for review and approval.

13.2.2 TUS Opportunities Policy 2026-2029

On the recommendation of the EDI, the TUS Opportunities Policy 2026-2029 was approved.
Proposed by D. Kneafsey and Seconded by G. O Callaghan

14. ARC Report 09-3-26

All documentation taken as read.

14.1 Internal Audit (Deloitte)

Internal Audit March Updates

March updates were provided. All scheduled audits are on track. The Procurement Audit will be slightly delayed as the new TUS Procurement manager steps into the role.

Risk Management Framework Project Update

Workshop on Risk Management Framework was held in Athlone 17.02.2026 with TUS SMT. The updated Risk Management Policy will be issued to management. The Strategic Risk Register will be provided to the next ARC 14.04.2026 for information.

14.2 2026 Follow-Up Internal Audit Open Recommendations

Items 8, 9, 10, relating to formation of IT committee is near completion. These items will remain as open until the IT Committee is in place.

14.3 Cyber Security Maturity Assessment Follow Up – Progress Update

The update showed that out of the recommendations; 74% implemented, 18% partially and 8% remain open. The IT team will create a risk treatment process for use of removable media. The integration of Educampus and HEAnet provides an additional support in cyber security.

GB noted the Cyber Security Maturity Assessment Follow Up – Progress Update

14.4 Critical Incident Management Framework

On the recommendation of the ARC, the Critical Incident Management Framework was approved.

Proposed by K. McLoughlin and Seconded by M. Doyle

15. FPDC Report 20-3-26

All documentation taken as read.

15.1 TUS Operational Budget 2026

The budget was presented and discussed in detail. A surplus of €1.1m is projected for 25/26 and €1.2m for calendar year 2026 which is important given statutory provision that 'a TU shall not, in a year, exceed its budget for the year'. However, a deficit of €1.647m is forecasted for 26/27 and €2m deficit for 27/28. Members were briefed on the key assumptions and risks which are essential elements in the preparation of the budget. All budget matters will be further discussed at the HEA Budget meeting scheduled to take place in mid-April. The main driver of expenditure is staff costs, due to growth in staff numbers connected to programmes and student numbers, particularly in growth areas of apprenticeships and nursing, together with cost impact of National Pay Agreements and increments and progression. Unrestricted Revenue Reserves of €15.3m were noted.

On the recommendation of FPDC the TUS Operational Budget 2026 was approved.

Proposed by G. O Callaghan and Seconded by G. Folan

B. Delaney and the team were acknowledged for their input and thoroughness in the preparation of the budget. The FPDC and GB will be updated following the budget meeting with the HEA.

15.2 TUS Report C/ HEA Report (Finance & Governance Update) – 4 months to December 25

GB Noted.

Action	By whom	By when
Page 3 of Report C – change “will” to “was”	Finance	Immediate

15.3 Annual Student Fee Schedule 2026-2027

On the recommendation of FPDC, the Annual Student Fee Schedule 2026-2027 approved.

Proposed by G. O Callaghan and Seconded by G. Folan

Action	By whom	By when
Insert proposed wording to table 1.1	Registrar	

15.4 Transfer to Capital Development Reserve (CDR) re Coonagh 01a – Apprentice Capacity Expansion Works

On the recommendation of FPDC, the transfer of [REDACTED] to CDR for the Coonagh 01a – Apprentice Capacity Expansion Works and for the appointment of Martins Construction as main contractors for the project were approved.

Proposed by G. O Callaghan and Seconded by M. Doyle

15.5 Update on University Avenue Project

The GB were updated of the ongoing project. There are two options recommended. A further public consultation by Limerick City and County Council will take place during the coming week to which TUS will contribute

Action	By whom	By when
Update GB of the preferred option	COO	Next GB meeting

SECTION C: ITEMS FOR INFORMATION/NOTING

16. Forge Design Centre – Dr. Liam Brown and Prof Anthony Caleshu

Dr Liam Brown and Prof Anthony Caleshu briefed the GB with a presentation.

Forge Design Factory is Ireland's first design-led innovation hub and a member of the Design Factory Global Network, spanning five continents.

Forge Design Factory connects students, researchers, industry, and stakeholders to address real-world challenges through collaborative, interdisciplinary design projects.

The hub supports design partnerships and research activity across the Midlands and Midwest, creating opportunities for applied learning, innovation, and regional development.

There are 3 sites involved; FORGE Fireplace (Nicholas Street, Limerick), FORGE Shed (George's Quay, Limerick) and FORGE Laundry (Clare Street, Limerick).

The presentation is an overview of the ongoing funding application under the Smart Regions Scheme funding.

A discussion took place on governance. FORGE Design Factory was established as a Company Limited by Guarantee (CLG) in 2018. It has no shareholders. Two of the three sites for development are on TUS land. There are many stakeholders represented on the CLG including, Clare Co. Co, Limerick & City Co. Co., Tipperary Co. Co. ICBE and UL. The GB requested a review of the compliance requirements of TUS representation, membership, role and responsibility on the CLG in line with the Code of Governance and Statutory requirements. The licencing or leasing arrangement of TUS land to the CLG for development also to be considered by management and reported back to GB, to ensure governance compliance. It was confirmed that no capital funding provision is required from TUS for the projects.

Action	By whom	By when
Consider Land licence / lease arrangement and Governance Structure - revert to FPDC/GB.	COO, VP F&CG	May GB

The GB commended the ongoing work and the additional space that will be made available, enhancing the overall student experience.

17. Staff Appointments

Appointments for TUS Midlands Midwest were noted.

SECTION D: AOB

18. AOB

Recruitment process for external GB members is now open. Members were encouraged to share the advertisement in their networks.

As there was no further business, the meeting concluded at 13.40pm.

The next meeting will take place on 23rd April 2026, in the Midlands Campus.

Signed: _____

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Chair of TUS Governing Body

Date: _____

27-4-26