



**MINUTES OF MEETING OF FIRST GOVERNING BODY  
HELD ON FRIDAY 1<sup>ST</sup> April 2022 AT 12PM  
LETTERKENNY BOARDROOM AND MS TEAMS**

**Present:**

Maura McNally (Chairperson)  
Dr Orla Flynn (Agenda item 3 onwards)  
Anne McHugh  
Felim McNeela  
Oonagh Monahan

**In attendance:**

Frances Wilson (Recording Secretary)  
Jim Fennell; ATU Secretary (Agenda item 4 onwards)

**Welcome**

The Chairperson welcomed members to the first meeting of the Atlantic Technological University (ATU) Governing Body.

**Apologies**

There were no apologies for this meeting.

**Conflicts of Interest**

There were no conflicts of interest declared at this this meeting.

**GB 001.01 Appointment of Governing Body**

The Chairperson highlighted the Statutory Instrument Number 36 of 2022 which cited 1<sup>st</sup> April 2022 as the Appointed Day for the purpose of section 36 of the Technological Universities Act 2018 (No. 3 of 2018) and this Order. On the appointed day referred to in Article 2 the following applicant Institutes shall stand dissolved:

(i) Galway-Mayo Institute of Technology; (ii) Letterkenny Institute of Technology;  
(iii) Institute of Technology, Sligo, and (b) the Technological University known by the following name shall stand established: (i) in the English language, Atlantic Technological University; (ii) in the Irish language, Ollscoil Teicneolaíochta an Atlantaigh.

*Appointment of Governing Body Members*

The Chairperson highlighted also the correspondences from Simon Harris T.D. Minister of Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science to

- Maura McNally S.C.
- Anne McHugh
- Felim McNeela
- Oonagh Monahan

The appointment of Anne McHugh as a governing body member for a period of two years was proposed by Felim McNeela and seconded by Oonagh Monahan.

The appointment of Felim McNeela as a governing body member for a period of two years was proposed by Oonagh Monahan seconded by Anne McHugh

The appointment of Oonagh Monahan as a governing body member for a period of two years was proposed by Anne McHugh seconded by Felim McNeela.

#### *Appointment of Governing Body Chairperson*

Correspondence from Simon Harris T.D. Minister for Further and Higher Education, research, Innovation and Science confirming the appointment of Maura McNally as the Chairperson to the Atlantic Technological University was reviewed by the Governing Body. The letter stated that the Chairperson's appointment is pending an appearance before the Joint Oireachtas Committee on Education, Further and Higher Education, Research Innovation and Science and in that context nominees for chairs of state bodies will be required to have their nominations ratified by the relevant Oireachtas Committee prior to their appointment being made by the Government. The Governing Body also reviewed an email from Fiona O'Byrne confirming that with regard to the appointment of a 'Chairperson Designate', pending an appearance before the Oireachtas Committee, in the interim period and from a governance perspective, it is the Department's position that as 'Chairperson-Designate' the person appointed by the Minister into the role has the full authority of the role of Chairperson as outlined in the Code of Governance of Institutes of Technology (2018).

The Governing Body ratified Maura McNally as the Chairperson of the Atlantic Technological University for a period of two years.

#### **GB 001.02 Appointment of President**

The Governing Body adopted the following Resolution:

"In accordance with provision of Section 56 (1) of the Technological Universities Act 2018, hereby appoints Dr Orla Flynn, being the person designated by the Minister for Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science to be the first President of the Technological University with effect from 1 April 2022. This date is the day appointed by the SI no 36 of 2022. In accordance with Section 56 (3) of the 2018 Act, The Minister for Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science directed that the term of office shall be 10 years from the date of her appointment. The requirements relating to the salary of the President are set out in a letter of the 4<sup>th</sup> February 2022 from the Principal Officer Fiona O'Byrne of the Department of Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science".

The Governing Body voted on the Resolution and unanimously voted to appoint Dr Orla Flynn as President for a period of 10 years.

Dr Orla Flynn joined the meeting at 12.15pm.

### **Appointment of Secretary**

Dr Orla Flynn advised that the appointment of a Secretary to the Governing Body was entirely a decision of the Governing Body. Dr Orla Flynn further advised the Governing Body that the role of Secretary to the Governing Body for LYIT and GMIT had been performed by the Vice President (VPs) for Finance and Corporate Services; Henry McGarvey and Jim Fennell respectively. The role of Secretary to the Governing Body of IT Sligo had been performed by Michael Henehan. Working Group 4 which consists of the three VPs for Finance and Corporate Services have decided to pool resources and work together collectively to prepare the documentation for this meeting. The three Vice Presidents have agreed in principle to divide the workload between them on an interim functional basis, to include finance, IT Services, Buildings & Estates, HR and Corporate Governance. Jim Fennell has agreed to take on the Corporate Governance activities and on that interim basis Dr Orla Flynn proposed that Jim Fennell should act as the interim Secretary to the Governing Body of Atlantic Technological University. The Chairperson asked if Jim Fennell could join the meeting. Jim Fennell joined the meeting at 12.20pm via Microsoft Teams and introduced himself to the Governing Body, he then left the meeting at 12.25pm. The Governing Body voted unanimously that Jim Fennell would be appointed the Secretary of the Governing Body of Atlantic Technological University.

### **GB 001.9 Proposal of Staff and Student Attendance at the Governing Body**

Dr Orla Flynn advised the Governing Body that Minister Simon Harris T.D. outlined "his request for consideration to be given by the first governing body to finding a mechanism to ensure that an academic staff representative, a non-academic staff representative and a student union representative are included in an appropriate capacity such as would facilitate their attendance at meetings of the first governing body from its inception".

Consequently, it was proposed that from the second meeting onwards until such a time as elections have taken place for staff and students there would be in attendance a female and male academic representative, a professional, management and support staff representative and a female and male student representative. The Governing Body highlighted that these members would be in attendance as observers and that while this would ensure openness and transparency to staff and students as to the business of the Governing Body, the representatives would not have voting rights and would not be present at the meeting when confidential matters were being discussed.

The meeting then adjourned until 1.50pm to allow for a staff and student briefing by the President and Chairperson.

**GB001.9**

**Proposal of Staff and Student Attendance at the Governing Body (continued)**

The meeting recommenced at 1.50pm. It was agreed that an invitation would be extended to the TUI to make a nomination of one academic female and one academic male staff member to be in attendance on an interim basis, as this had been agreed in the MOU with the TUI. The Professional, Management and Support Staff nominee is Ms Ursula Cox. Representation by the Student Union was then discussed. It was agreed that as the Student Unions are not yet formally one entity then a concession would be made to allow a male and female representative from each student union namely the Letterkenny, IT Sligo and GMIT student union for the period until the formal members were nominated by the ATU Student Union.

It was proposed that the Secretary would write to the three student unions and ask them each to nominate a female and male member to attend the Governing Body meeting going forward. For practical purposes it was proposed that the host campus student union members would attend in person with one other member from each union attending via MS Teams, leading to a total of four student union members attending any one meeting. For example, if the meeting took place in Sligo the Sligo female and male student union observers would attend in person and one member from each of the Letterkenny and Galway-Mayo nominees would attend remotely. Consideration should be given to gender balance and also the requirement within the Section 12 (1) of the Technological Universities Act (2018) to representation of one post graduate student. The Governing Body also advised that the letter should include a reminder that the student representation would be in attendance as observers.

The Governing Body queried whether a similar invitation should be extended to academic and non-academic staff to have separate representation from each campus however it was agreed that this was a concession given to the student union only to facilitate them to commence working collectively. Academic staff are represented collectively in negotiations by the TUI and non-academic staff or PMSS staff are represented by Forsa, Unite and SIPTU grouping and had already nominated Ms Ursula Cox. Dr Orla Flynn further assured Governors that it was intended that elections of staff to the Governing Body would take place with minimal delay.

**GB 001.03**

**President's Update and Presentation**

Dr Orla Flynn commenced a presentation outlining the role of the Atlantic Technological University (ATU) in the region "to be the higher education partner in the West and North West region". The presentation included an overview of the west and north west region. Dr Flynn indicated her view that there would be three phases in the development of ATU namely an establishment phase, a consolidation phase, and a growth phase. Dr Orla Flynn advised that it was her intention to establish an initial interim University Planning Team which would include geographical, functional and gender representation, comprising the ATU President, 3 Heads of College, 4 Vice Presidents, 4 Deans and 1 ATU Integration Project Lead. This team would be initially formed as 5 members and finalise as a team of 13 members.

The Governing Body queried the role of Head of College going forward. Dr Flynn advised that the Head of College will have a role in overseeing college operations at a local level to ensure there are no issues missed during the initial transition period but the Head of College will ideally also have an additional University wide responsibility. Dr Orla Flynn advised that the HEA have accepted three separate budgets and would not be merging the three budgets during the 2022 budget cycle. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] In terms of going forward it was unclear if the role of Head of College would be maintained as the international panel had expressed some concern and had requested that structures be reviewed after a period of time.

Dr Orla Flynn also highlighted the various challenges supports available to the Governing Body and advised that the minutes of the meeting would be published for transparency purposes.

The Governing Body queried whether an Academic Council had been put in place for the ATU. Dr Orla Flynn advised that the VPs for Academic Affairs and Registrars had documented the quality assurance arrangements that are in place and suggested that the decision regarding the Academic Council would ideally be taken at a later stage by the Governing Body when the full membership of the Governing Body had been established, or at least when the elected staff members were in a position to take up their places on the Governing Body.

A Governing Body member queried whether this would be an issue for the approval of courses. Dr Orla Flynn advised that the Act provided for the existing quality assurance mechanisms to be continued as an interim measure.

The Governing Body highlighted the importance of induction for Governing Body members and Dr Orla Flynn advised that the governance team is working on this induction programme.

The Governing Body queried the progress made to incorporate St Angela's College into the ATU. Dr Orla Flynn advised that the incorporation was at an advanced stage and due diligence had been carried out, however, the enactment of the HEA Bill 2021 had to occur before St Angela's College could be incorporated. The MOU with the TUI at St Angela's had been signed and a ballot of the TUI is taking place. Dr Orla Flynn advised that a meeting had taken place between Brendan McCormick, Paul Hannigan and Dr Orla Flynn and St Angela's College's Principal Dr Amanda McCloat during the previous week

#### **GB 001.04 Standing Orders**

The Standing Orders for Atlantic Technological University were approved by the Governing Body on the proposal of Felim McNeela seconded by Oonagh Monahan.

**GB 001.05 Delegation Resolution and Reserved Matters**

The Delegation Resolution and Reserved Matters for Atlantic Technological University were outlined by Jim Fennell. He advised that Arthur Cox had drafted the Delegation Resolution and Reserved Matters on behalf of THEA. He outlined that clause 2.1 relating to the threshold for capital projects had been set at €1,000,000 had been set locally. The Delegation Resolution and Reserved Matters was unanimously approved by the Governing Body.

**GB 001.06.1 Statement on application and scope of HR and non-academic policies and procedures.**

The statement on application and scope of HR and non-academic policies and procedures for Atlantic Technological University was unanimously approved by the Governing Body.

**GB 001.6.2 Preventing and Responding to Sexual Violence and Harassment Policy**

The Preventing and Responding to Sexual Violence and Harassment Policy for Atlantic Technological University was unanimously approved by the Governing Body.

**GB 001.6.4 Atlantic Technological University Safety Statement**

The Atlantic Technological University Safety Statement was unanimously approved by the Governing Body.

**GB 001.7 Bank Mandate**

The Atlantic Technological University Bank Mandate as presented was unanimously approved by the Governing Body.

**GB 001.8 Charities Regulation Declarations and Trustee Nomination**

The Charities Regulation Declaration and Trustee Nomination was deferred to the next meeting of the Governing Body.

**GB 001.10 Arrangements relating to quality assurance and access, transfer and progression procedures following order under Part 2 of the TU Act 2018**

The arrangements were noted by the Governing Body.



**GB 001.12    AOB**

There was no other business discussed however the Governing Body queried when the Audit and Risk Committee would be established. Jim Fennell noted this was on the agenda for the next meeting.

**GB 001.12    Date of next meeting**

The next meeting was scheduled to occur on Wednesday 13<sup>th</sup> April at 10am at the ATU Sligo campus.

  
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CHAIRPERSON  
  
  
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