



Ollscoil
Teicneolaíochta
an Atlantaigh

Atlantic
Technological
University

Minutes of the seventh ATU Governing Body Meeting
Held on Monday 26th September 2022 at 10 am.
ATU Connemara, Galway and MS Teams

Present:

Maura McNally (Chairperson) – in person	MMcN
Dr Orla Flynn (President) - in person	OF
Ursula Cox – in person	UC
Michael Geoghegan – in person	MG
Dr Brian McCann – in person	BMcC
Mary McGinley - online	MMcG
Anne McHugh – in person	AMcH
Felim McNeela – online	FMcN
Oonagh Monahan – in person	OM
David Minton - online	DM
Dr Martin Robinson – in person	MR
Gareth Roe – in person	GR
Dr Mary Kelly – online	MK
Dara Foynes – in person	DF
Michael Gilvarry – in person	MG
Edward Grant – SU Donegal – online	EG
Colin Kearney – SU Galway-Mayo – in person	CK
Dáire Martin – SU Sligo – online	DM

In attendance:

Henry McGarvey (Secretary) – in person - Agenda item 12	HMG
Fiona Faherty (Recording Secretary) – in person	FF
Dr Billy Bennett – in person - Agenda item 5	BB
Prof Jacqueline McCormack – online – Agenda item 8	JMcC
Tom Reilly – online – Agenda item 8	TR
Elizabeth McCabe – in person – Agenda item 12	EMC

Apologies:

Patricia King	PK
Jim Fennell	JF

GB 007.01 Declaration of Conflicts of Interests

There were no conflicts of interest declared at this meeting.

GB 007.02 Minutes of the meeting of 29th August 2022

The minutes of the meeting of the 29th August were reviewed by the members.

Decision: The minutes were approved on the proposal of GR and seconded by OM.

GB 007.03 Matters arising and Correspondence

The Chair referred to correspondence received from the Students Union Presidents who proposed the following representatives from the student body as members of the ATU Governing Body:

1. Colin Kearney, Students' Union President, and undergraduate student of ATU Galway-Mayo
2. Edward Grant, Students' Union President, and undergraduate student of ATU Donegal
3. Dáire Martin, Students' Union President, and postgraduate student of ATU Sligo

Decision: The three nominees as presented above were approved as members of the ATU Governing Body.

The Chair took Agenda item 6.2 Appointment of External Members at this time.

GB 007.06.2 Appointment of External Members

The Nominations Subcommittee recommended the appointment of Professor Rachel Ashworth. Prof Ashworth has extensive experience in business, higher education outside Ireland, governance, and equality.

Decision: Professor Rachel Ashworth was approved as a member of the ATU Governing Body.

GB 007.04 Presidents Report

The President's report was circulated in advance of the meeting and was taken as read.

GB 007.04.1 Report from the President

The President gave a presentation, which provided an update on internal and external activities over the recent months.

A significant milestone of 50 years in education was recently celebrated by ATU Galway, formerly GMIT and RTCG. The President noted this milestone was reached by all three partners over the past number of years and congratulated all involved.

ATU has very recently been invited to become members of the European Universities Alliance for Sustainability: Responsible Growth, Inclusive Education and Environment (EU Green), and ATU has accepted this invitation. The President will attend the launch in Sweden this week.

The President clarified that the Head of College posts across ATU campuses are not new posts but rather additional duties, which have been assigned to existing members of the management team. The strategic plan and organisation structure development are a work in progress and further clarification of ATU Management roles will emerge on completion of same. The mission and vision outlined in the CUA submission document will inform the Strategic Plan. The post of Strategic Facilitator will be advertised shortly which will further assist with this process. It is hoped to have a final draft by May 2023 for consideration and approval by the Governing Body.

The University Planning Team (UPT) consists of representative group of senior management from all three colleges who meet on a regular basis to deal with executive functions. The President noted the importance of local management of local issues to ensure staff and students have an avenue to voice their concerns in the first instance. The current arrangements are on an interim basis during this transitional period and on completion of the Strategic Plan will be developed formally through a consultative process.

GB 007.05 Report from Registrar

Dr Billy Bennett joined the meeting.

GB 007.05.1 ATU Student Profile 2021/2022

BB presented the latest ATU Student profile, which was compiled using data extracted from the SRS census return submitted to the HEA in March 2022 in respect of the Academic Year 2021/22.

The presentation was welcomed by the meeting and a discussion was held regarding the regional deprivation results and noted that this is an area that requires addressing where possible.

GB 007.05.2 Regulations for the Establishment of Academic Council

BB presented the Regulations for the Establishment of Academic Council to the meeting for approval. The feedback from the Governing Body at its meeting on 29th August was considered by the Academic Council (AC) subcommittee. BB reiterated the extensive consultation process that has taken place and the document circulated to the Governing Body is recommended by the AC subcommittee.

The President clarified that Note 5, page 2, '16 persons' are proposed to be at SLII & SLIII Grades and not limited to only those with the job titles of "Head of Department", "Head of School" or "Faculty", but open to all staff who hold the grade of SLII or SLIII.

GR expressed the view that the advantages and disadvantages listed on page 7 require review and added that the role on Academic Council should not be representative of regional location and that industrial engagement requires monitoring. He proposed that a smaller model of Academic Council could be introduced.

BB noted GR comments and advised that his concerns and the concerns of the Governing Body, which were raised at the GB meeting on 29th August were considered by the AC subcommittee and by the AC itself. He welcomed the contribution of the Governing Body and added that a review mechanism is built into the document. A new organisational structure will be in place in two years' time and the Academic Council will be reviewed then.

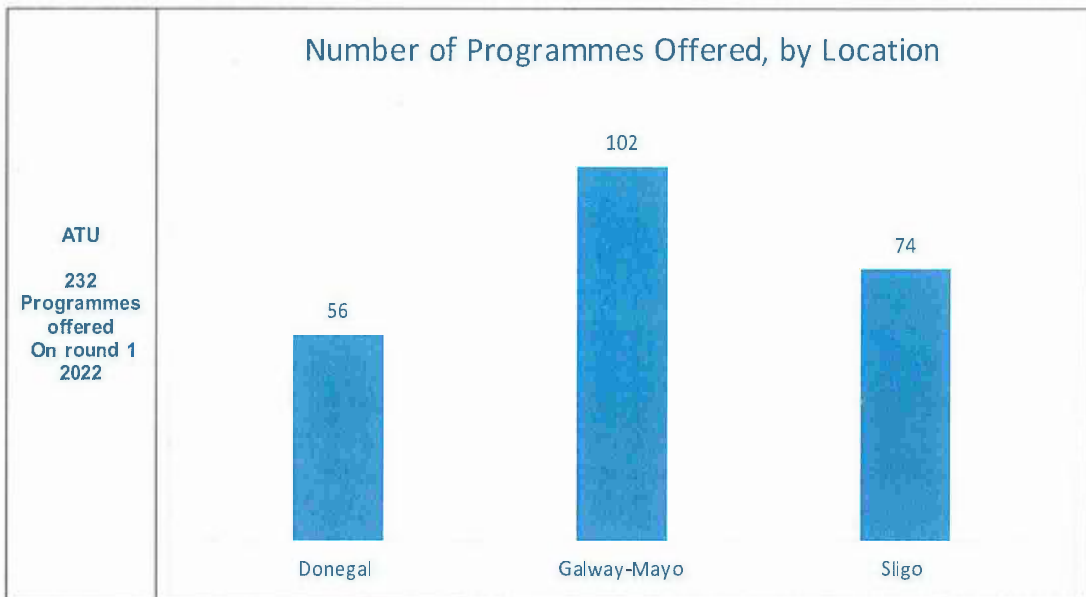
UC sought clarification on the request to amend the PMSS membership from one PMSS staff from each college to two PMSS staff from each college. The President informed the meeting that this request was considered and discussed by the AC subcommittee, who supported the wider involvement of PMSS staff in AC subcommittees when established.

MR had requested that regional provision be included in the document, BB confirmed that this request has been made and the document now reflects this.

Decision: The Regulations for the Establishment of Academic Council were approved on the proposal of OM and seconded by BMcC.

GB 007.05.3 CAO Update

BB provided an update on the latest CAO figures for round 1 accepts.



ATU Round 1 2022	Total Offers		First Prefs
Donegal L8	795	19.1%	575
Galway-Mayo L8	2089	50.1%	1138
Sligo L8	1288	30.9%	904
Total L8 Offers	4172		2617

ATU Round 1 2022	Total Offers		First Prefs
Donegal L6/7	1935	26.7%	1689
Galway-Mayo L6/7	3409	47.1%	3174
Sligo L6/7	1894	26.2%	1730
Total L6/7 Offers	7238		6593

ATU Round 1 Offers 2022



The Governing Body welcomed the presentation, and it was noted that the level of ATU first preferences was a positive indicator for ATU. BB added that the net accepts as of 26th September were 4097. He will provide a further update at the October meeting.

GB 007.05.4 Conferring Dates

The dates for ATU Conferring were shared with the Governing Body and an invitation was extended to GB members to attend any session. The President noted the significance of this graduation for students who may have studied for two years remotely and would now graduate in person.

BB left the meeting.

GB 007.06 Report from Nominations Subcommittee

GB 007.06.1 Report from Nominations Subcommittee

The minutes from the Nominations subcommittee meetings of 19th July and 18th August were taken as read.

GB 007.06.2 Appointment of External Members

This agenda item was taken earlier in the meeting under item GB 006.03

GB 007.07 Report from Audit & Risk Committee (ARC)

GB 007.07.1 Report from ARC Meeting of 6th September 2022

The Chair of the ARC provided an update from the ARC meeting, which was held on 6th September. Following a meeting between the ARC and the Internal Auditor, AMcH advised that the Internal Audit plan is not finalised. Some elements of the plan were approved by the ARC, the IFC review and Risk Management. The outstanding items will be reviewed at their next meeting.

The Integrity at Work (IAW) membership and pledge was recommended to the Governing Body for approval.

Decision: The IAW membership and pledge was approved on the proposal of GR and seconded by MMcN.

GB 007.07.2 Revised Terms of Reference

AMcH presented the revised Terms of Reference to the Governing Body for approval. A separate document highlighting the amendments was circulated in advance.

Decision: The meeting reviewed the changes and approved the revised ARC TOR on the proposal of GR and seconded by UC.

GB 007.07.3 Appointment of Members to ARC

Following a self-review of skills and experience by its members, the ARC is proposing that the membership be increased by two new members with legal and ICT skills. Suggested nominations are invited from Governing Body in the first instance, which can be emailed to the Chair of the ARC with a view to approving new members at the October Governing Body meeting.

Decision: The request to increase the ARC membership by two additional members was approved.

GB 007.07.4 Approved Minutes of ARC 24th May and 21st June 2022

The minutes of ARC meetings held on 24th May and 21st June 2022 were taken as read.

GB 007.08 Report from EDI Subcommittee

GB 007.08.1 Gender Action Plan

TR and JMcC joined the meeting.

The Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Subcommittee (EDI) held their first meeting on 5th September. A combined Gender Action Plan is required to be submitted within six months of the establishment of the University to ensure that ATU can retain the legacy ATHENA Swan bronze award (for a period of three years). At the end of this period, ATU can apply for the Bronze Award or Silver Award. The Gender Action Plan has been prepared following a lengthy consultative process resulting in 49 actions and 29 objectives. The Gender Action plan was reviewed by the EDI and is recommended for approval by Governing Body.

Decision: The Gender Action Plan was approved on the proposal of UC and seconded by AMcH.

Following a review of the skill set of the EDI membership, the subcommittee are seeking approval for two additional members:

Owen Barr – Ulster University



Decision: The additional two members as outlined above were approved on the proposal of GR and seconded by BMcC.

GB 007.09 Report from Finance Subcommittee (FSC)

GB 007.09.1 Appointment of Members to FSC

HMG presented the terms of reference (TOR) of the Finance Subcommittee (FSC).

The following amendments were suggested to the TOR.

1. Membership, point (iv) insert the word 'risk' after Audit and before Committee.
2. Functions, point (iv) insert an additional number '0' in the figure, to read '€1,000,000'.

Decision: The terms of reference of the Finance Subcommittee were approved subject to the above amendments on the proposal of MG and seconded by DF.

GB 007.09.2 Appointment of Members to FSC

HMG sought nominations for membership of the FSC. Suggested nominations are invited to be emailed to the office of the Secretary to the Governing Body with a view to approving new members by Governing Body at the October meeting. It was also proposed to look at legacy Finance Subcommittees to ascertain if the required skillset could be sought there.

DM expressed his interest in joining the FSC. Further information on the level of commitment in terms of the number of meetings and duration of each meeting was discussed.

GB 007.10 Policies

GB 007.10.1 Sponsorship Policy

The ATU Sponsorship Policy was presented for approval. The Governing Body requested further clarification on what “sponsorship” encompasses and any information identifying a link between sponsorship to student numbers.

The policy was reviewed, and the following amendments were suggested.

1. The policy should be called an Interim Sponsorship Policy
2. 4. Procedure, 4th paragraph, 2nd sentence, replace with ‘There shall be no adverse consequences arising for an employee who reports suspected breaches of this policy’.
3. 3. Principles, 3.4, last sentence, include the word ‘or nominee’ after the word President.

Decision: The ATU Sponsorship Policy was approved, as an interim policy, subject to the above amendments on the proposal of BMcC and seconded by DF.

GB 007.10.2 Travel & Subsistence Policy

The Travel & Subsistence Policy was presented for approval.

Decision: The Travel & Subsistence policy was approved on the proposal of GR and seconded by BMcC.

GB 007.11 Integration of St Angela’s College

There is no further update on the integration of St Angela’s College.

GB 007.12 Capital Expenditure

GB 007.12.1 Capital Projects Overview

EMC joined the meeting and together with HMG provided an update on capital projects, costs and the associated financial principles, including that all reserves generated by legacy Institutes as at designation date will be reinvested in the college where those reserves were generated. Reserves can be transferred for capital projects in the short term to facilitate immediate funding requirements across the TU.

As of 31st August 2021, the total reserves are €57m. €56.8m of this is earmarked for specific capital projects by the Governing Bodies of legacy Institutes.

The Governing Body requested that the Master Plan be an Agenda item at a future meeting. It was agreed that time would need to be allocated to this agenda item at the meeting. There are master plans for each campus, which are being collated into one University Master Plan. It was agreed to put this as an Agenda item for the November meeting. It was also agreed that a draft of the master plans and supporting documents be sent to the Governing Body in advance of the normal issuing of papers for the November meeting.

GB 007.12.2 Conversion Galway 509 for Apprenticeship

HMG presented for approval a request for €1,000,000 additional funding from capital reserves for the conversion of room 509 in ATU Galway, which will be used for apprenticeships. The initial funding award from the HEA in May 2021 was €1.29m and a supplementary funding award was received from the HEA in July of 2022 for €0.83m bringing total HEA funding to €2.12m and the total project cost to €3.12m. The design and contracts documents were completed in August 2022.

HMG outlined that €500,000 of the funding requested is required to improve the sustainability of the building work, which is aligned with Ireland's climate action plan 2021. The remaining €500,000 is required to complete a science laboratory, which is aligned with the academic plan for the School of Science at the Galway-Mayo College.

Decision: The request for €1,000,000 additional funding as outlined above was approved on the proposal of GR and seconded by UC.

GB 007.12.3 Student Building Galway Campus

A request for €4.5m of the University's reserves to be allocated to the Student Building at ATU Galway was presented by HMG.

The student building in ATU Galway was approved by the GMIT Governing Body in 2010 and the project team was approved in 2011. Planning permission was secured in 2013 but due to GMIT operational financial challenges the building was put on hold. The planning permission was extended by five years in 2018 up to 2023. The decision was taken to re-activate the project in 2020/21. A re-engagement with the design team for the building was completed in January 2022 and the tender process was carried out from June to August 2022.

The Multi Criteria Analysis (MCA) which is being finalised by Grant Thornton recommends that the University proceeds with the project.

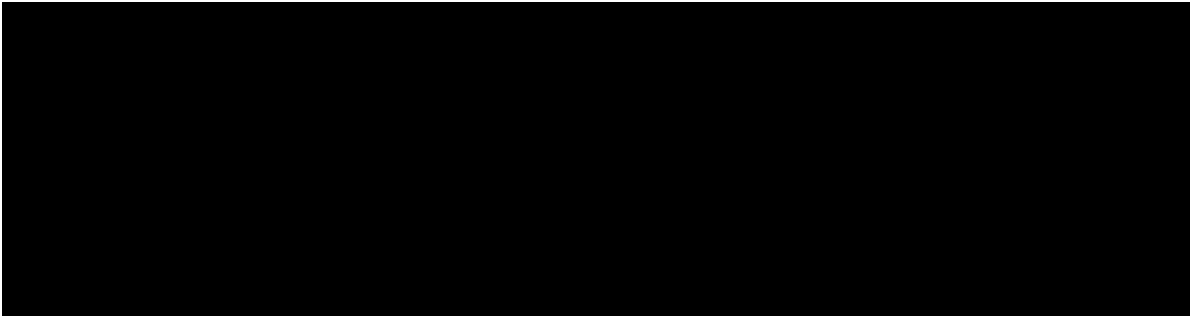
The total budgeted expenditure for this project is €14m. €9.5m had been allocated by the GMIT GB from GMIT reserves and approval is sought from the Governing Body to allocate €4.5m of the University's reserves to this project.

The meeting discussed the issues of rising building costs, associated parking and the need for this project to commence. It was suggested that vacant existing buildings in localities adjacent to the University's campuses be explored as options for development/renovation. The President commended the spirit of the UPT in their willingness to look at this project for the greater benefit of the University.

Decision: The request as outlined above was approved on the proposal of MG and seconded by BMcC.

GB 007.13 Staff Appointments

GB 007.13.1 Appointment of Senior Managers



A discussion took place regarding the information being submitted under the staff appointments. It was agreed that the information being submitted to Governing Body under staff appointments would be reviewed at the next meeting having considered the requirements of the TU Act.

GB 007.14 Governing Body Induction


GB 007.14.1 Date and Venue of Induction

The President informed the members that induction would be arranged in October or November. It was agreed to carry out a doodle poll with the suggested dates received from Deloitte, who will provide the induction training. The Chair also requested that IPA training be provided on the same day. The President advised that induction can be recorded and provided to those who cannot attend in person or via teams.

GB 007.15 AOB

The meeting requested a list of acronyms on reports where possible. It was also suggested that flow charts be included in presentations to provide a clearer picture on some subjects.

The Chair advised that there is ongoing consultation with the C&AG regarding the Financial Statements for year ended 31st August 2021 for IT Sligo and LYIT.

Signed: 
Chairperson

Date: 24th Oct. '22