



Ollscoil  
Teicneolaíochta  
an Atlantaigh

Atlantic  
Technological  
University

**Minutes of the 30<sup>th</sup> ATU Governing Body Meeting**  
**Held on Monday 17<sup>th</sup> February 2025 at 9.30am**  
**Donegal-Letterkenny Campus and TEAMS**

**Present:**

Maura McNally – in person	MMcN
Dr Orla Flynn – in person	OF
Dara Foynes S.C. – in person	DF
Dr Brian De Souza – in person	BDS
Dr Martin Robinson – in person	MR
Joe Cunningham – in person	JC
John Daffy – online	JD
Julia Bocianowska – online	JBoc
Kevin Sweeney – online	KS
Oonagh Monahan – online	OM
Regina Daly – in person	RD
Sarah Mohan – online	SM
Seamus Hughes – in person	SH
Michael Gilvarry – online	MG
Prof. Rachel Ashworth – online	RA
Dr John Bartlett – in person	JB

**In attendance:**

Jim Fennell (Secretary) – in person	JF
Carol Geraghty (Recording Secretary) – in person	CG
Michael Henahan – in person – items 3.2, 4.0, 5.1, 6	MH
██████████ (IPA) – online – item 4	██████████
Kieran Ryan – online – item 6.1.3	KR
Edel Hegarty – online – item 6.1.4	EH
Jacqueline McCormack – online – item 7.2	JMcC

**Apologies:** David Minton, Joanne Grehan

**GB 30.01 Declaration of Conflicts of Interests**

No conflicts of interest were declared at the start of the meeting.

### **GB 30.02.1 Minutes of 9th December 2024**

Changes agreed to minutes of the 9th December meeting - move information re accuracy of salary payments to section GB 29.03.1.4 and replace pronoun with "the member". OF advised the meeting that, when the signed minutes are published on the ATU website, the paragraph in question will be redacted.

**Decision:** The minutes of the 9th December Governing Body meeting, with the changes detailed above, were approved on the proposal of RD, this was seconded by MR

### **GB 30.03 Matters Arising and Correspondence**

#### **GB 30.03.1 Governing Body Log of Actions Items**

In response to a request for an update on the ATU Dignity at Work Policy, JF advised that staff consultation is complete and the document is currently with legal advisors for review. In a consultation with the Management team HR agreed to revert to members of the Management team who provided written feedback.

**Decision:** All items presented as *Propose Closed* can be closed, this was approved on the proposal of DF and seconded by JC

#### **GB 30.03.1.1 Clarification re who should attend “private members” meeting - Action 146**

JF summarised the action and responses received. Members discussed the wording in the State Code and the information provided in the paper. Members requested that, where possible in future, when documenting the response to actions more information should be provided. Members also requested that when advice is being sought from legal advisors or others that the query raised together with the response be provided.

#### **GB 30.03.1.2 Information re programmes withdrawn from CAO Handbook - Action 143**

JF summarised the response to this action received from the Registrar. The meeting was advised that the ATU procedure for this is currently being developed and is expected to be approved this Semester. OF provided an update on the Development of the ATU Academic Plan.

#### **GB 30.03.1.3 Wording re approval of academic procedures - Action 148**

The meeting again discussed the decision of the Academic Council to delegate the approval of academic procedures to the Academic Standards and Policy Committee of Academic Council including the legal advice received and the different interpretations of this advice. The meeting agreed that the Secretary seek legal advice on whether the Academic Council in delegating its functions to a subcommittee of the Academic Council can delegate its authority for the approval of academic procedures and what role if any the Governing Body has in this matter. The President reminded the meeting that the Academic Council had its own statutory standing under the legislation.

**Decision:** The Secretary to seek legal advice on the delegation of functions by Academic Council to Subcommittees of the Academic Council

### **GB 30.03.2 System for Recording the Concerns of Governing Body Members**

It was agreed to implement the proposed system, with the understanding that it could be reviewed and revised in the future if required.

**Decision:** The system for recording the concerns of Governing Body members was approved on the proposal of DF, this was seconded by SH

### **GB 30.03.3 ATU Annual Report 1 Apr 2022 – 31 Aug 2023**

The wording of the first ATU Annual Report was approved at the September Governing Body meeting. At the time, members requested that the final version of the report be circulated to members for information. Members are welcome to submit any comments or recommendations that they may have for future reports.

### **Other Matters Arising**

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

### **GB 30.04 Terms of Reference for External Evaluation of the Performance of the Governing Body**

The proposal from the Institute of Public Administration (IPA) was circulated to members in advance of the meeting. [REDACTED] from IPA joined the meeting and presented a summary of the proposed evaluation process. TW highlighted the value and importance of members engagement and contributions in the evaluation. Members were advised that feedback given during the evaluation process may be included in the report, however, the details of the individual giving the feedback will not be provided.

**Decision:** On the proposal of DF, IPA was given approval to complete an external evaluation of the performance of the Governing Body and its subcommittees, this was seconded by JB

**Action:** Hard copies of questionnaires be provided to GB members on request

## **GB 30.05 Items for Approval**

### **GB30.05.1 Appointment of Staff Members of St Angelas to Academic Council**

The election results were circulated to members prior to the meeting.

**Decision:** On the proposal of MMcN and seconded by BdS, the following staff members of St Angelas were elected to Academic Council:

- Female Constituency: elected – Fiona Crowe and Eileen Kelly-Blakeney.  
Reserve - Mary Kearns
- Male Constituency: elected – Seamus Dolan and Kevin McGlynn.  
Reserve - Ian Kennedy

### **GB30.05.2 Recruitment & Selection Procedures for Senior Leadership Team**

OF advised that immediately before the last Government was dissolved, outgoing Minister for FHERIS Patrick O'Donoghue gave approval for the initial phase of recruitment of the ATU senior leadership team. OF provided background to discussions between ATU and DFHERIS about appointment of a senior leadership team, including approved salary scales and phasing of appointments, and advised that the TUI has referred the issue of the salary scales to the Workplace Relations Commission (WRC). Members agreed that point 3 of the Selection Board sections should be revised to give the option of having the two external specialists from business, industry, the public sector or public sector agencies.

**Decision:** The recruitment & selection procedures for the senior leadership team, with one amendment detailed above, were approved on the proposal of DF, this was seconded by JD

**Action:** MMcN to write to DFHERIS on behalf of the GB, expressing GB support for pay parity with TU Dublin pay scales and seeking clarification on the queries raised by DFHERIS on the ATU Business Case

### **GB30.05.3 Staff Appointment**

The following staff appointment was presented to Governing Body for approval:

<b>Post</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Contract Type &amp; Term</b>	<b>Grade</b>	<b>Basis for Appointment</b>	<b>Recommended Candidate</b>
<b>Head Of Department – Civil Engineering and Construction</b>	Sligo Campus				

**Decision:** The post was approved on the proposal of OM, this was seconded by JD

### **GB30.06 Committee and Subcommittee Reports**

#### **GB30.06.1 Report from ARC**

JC presented the report from the January ARC meeting and advised the meeting that LeeAnn McGinley, a member of ARC who is also the Chair of the ICT Subcommittee, has resigned and the ARC is seeking a replacement.

##### **GB30.06.1.1 Annual Governance Statement**

JC summarised actions identified in the Annual Governance Statement (AGS) and the ARC recommended the AGS for approval by the Governing Body. The ARC and the Corporate Governance team were commended for their work on this document.

**Decision:** The Annual Governance Statement was approved on the proposal of MMcN, this was seconded by SH

##### **GB30.06.1.2 Protected Disclosures Report 2024**

The meeting was advised that no protected disclosures were received during the 2024 calendar year. ARC recommended the report for approval.

**Decision:** MMcN proposed the approval of the Protected Disclosures Annual report 2024, this was seconded by SH

### **GB30.06.1.3 Intellectual Property Policy & Procedure**

KR joined the meeting and highlighted two changes to the previous version of the policy - (1) reduce the University equity stake in Spin Outs from 15% to 10% and (2) add a clause re Spin Out company incentives. KR provided information about the policy on Spin Out stakes in other Irish Universities, the performance of Irish Universities, Enterprise Ireland Knowledge Transfer Ireland (KTI) metrics and how Spin Out company incentives are documented. Members discussed other supports that can be put in place to encourage the commercialisation of research and the treatment of undergraduate research. There was a recommendation about certification of the decision where Creators of IP elect to take or not to take shares in a Spin Out company.

**Decision:** V2 of the Intellectual Property Policy & Procedure was approved on the proposal of JB, this was seconded by DF

### **GB30.06.1.4 Data Protection Policy**

EH joined the meeting and presented the proposed changes to the Data Protection Policy. The importance of Data Protection Training, the timeline for reporting data breaches and financial penalties for not meeting this timeline were highlighted to members.

**Decision:** V2 of the Data Protection Policy was approved on the proposal of OM, this was seconded by MMcN

### **GB30.06.02 Report from Strategic Development Subcommittee**

OM presented the report from the Strategic Development Subcommittee meeting. OF advised that one item discussed was the provision of facilities for the Veterinary programme. Due to the time required to build the facility, a decision has been taken to defer the start of the Veterinary programme until September 2026. A decision on the start of the Pharmacy programme is pending, this is dependent on getting accreditation for the programme, this process is underway. Following a query by a member, it was agreed that all delays in building projects would be captured, whether experienced internally or from external approval requirements.

OM advised the meeting that, due to work commitments, she has tendered her resignation as an external member of ATU GB effective on 31st March 2025. OM was appointed to GB by the Minister for FHERIS, she has notified the Minister of her resignation.

**Action:** JB requested a copy in writing of advice received from the HEA on the options that would not be supported under the TSSPF funding call.

### **GB 30.06.02.1 Date for Governing Body Strategy Meeting**

Members were asked to advise availability to have a strategy meeting, preferably before the next GB meeting on 31<sup>st</sup> March.

## **GB 30.07 Reports**

### **GB 30.07.1 Recruitment Report**

A report showing recruitment from July – December 2024 was circulated. JF advised that HR Operations has been asked to amend the report to show the campus location advertised for each post (if any), this will be circulated when available.

**Action:** MR to advise the secretariat of additional information requested.

### **GB 30.07.2 EDI Steering Group Annual Report**

The report was circulated with meeting papers. JMcC joined the meeting, there were no comments or questions on the report and the team was commended for the work undertaken.

### **GB 30.07.3 Report from Governing Body Subcommittee with Delegated Authority**

A report on the 17th January meeting of the GB Subcommittee with Delegated Authority was circulated for information. The following post was approved:

<b>Post</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Contract Type &amp; Term</b>	<b>Grade</b>	<b>Basis for Appointment</b>	<b>Recommended Candidate</b>
<b>Head of Department - Health &amp; Nutritional Science</b>	Sligo Campus				

## **GB 30.08 President's Report**

OF summarised the key items on the Report which had been circulated prior to the meeting.

**Action:** Upload presentation from February All-Staff meeting to GB SharePoint site

## **GB 30.09 Report from Academic Council & Registrar**

### **GB 30.09.1 Academic Council Minutes**

Circulated for information

### **GB 30.10.1 Correspondence from Sligo County Council re Sligo Leitrim DAC**

A letter from Sligo County Council was circulated to members. JF advised the meeting that Sligo County Council has agreed to accept the transfer of the ATU shareholding in the company & they are requesting that ATU honour their financial commitment to the company. Sligo County Council is drafting the Memorandum of Understanding and is keen to continue to work with ATU; to this end, it is proposed that ATU will nominate 2 board members. ATU will update DFHERIS on progress, provide them with a copy of the letter from Sligo County Council and request the view of DFHERIS on ATU honouring the financial commitment made by IT Sligo to the company.

### **GB 30.10.2 Sponsorship Schedule**

Circulated for information.

### **GB 30.10.3 Governing Body Schedule of Agenda Items**

Provided to members for information.

### **GB 30.10.4 Student Appeal Committee**

■ students have appealed disciplinary decisions. In the absence of an ATU procedure, the former GMIT procedure will be applied. The Governing Body Appeals Committee which last met in December 2023 will be convened. Membership:

- Joe Cunningham – Governing Body member & Chair of Student Appeal Committee
- Oonagh Monahan - Governing Body member
- Sarah Mohan - Students Union President
- Independent Head of School.

A third Governing Body member of this committee is no longer a member of Governing Body. John Bartlett was nominated in his place.

**Decision:** On the proposal of MMcN, the Governing Body Appeals Committee that last met in December 2023 was approved to hear ■ additional student appeals, this was seconded by BdS.

**Decision:** John Bartlett was nominated to join the Governing Body Appeals Committee, this was proposed by MMcN and seconded by OF


## AOB

1. In response to a request from a member that their dissent relating to a decision made at the October meeting be recorded, the meeting was advised that the meeting minutes are not designed to be a verbatim account of proceedings; that meeting minutes should include clearly specified outcomes and actions for items, where relevant.
2. A member advised the meeting that he has fundamental concerns about the Policy on Additional Payments to Academic Staff which was approved at the December meeting. JF advised that his concerns have been sent to the Head of Finance and a response is awaited.
3. Request for a future agenda item – Communicate the value of ATU to the region.  
OF welcomed the suggestion. Some information based on number of students, type and amount of research being undertaken and funding streams is provided annually but this does not give the full value of the University to the region. OF gave information about work commissioned by MTU on this subject and advised that she would ascertain an estimate of the cost of this work.

**Action:** Start process of appointing consultants to estimate the value of the University to the region.

4. BdS gave a presentation on AI. Members thanked BdS for the interesting presentation. OF advised that some activities on this subject will be presented at the strategy meeting.

The next Governing Body meeting will be on 31<sup>st</sup> March 2025 at the Sligo campus.



Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

Chairperson

Date: 05/06/2025