



Ollscoil
Teicneolaíochta
an Atlantaigh

Atlantic
Technological
University

Minutes of the 37th ATU Governing Body Meeting
Held on Monday 3rd November 2025 at 10am on TEAMS

Present:

Joe Cunningham – online	JC
Dr Orla Flynn – online	OF
Conor Murphy – online	CM
Dr Brian De Souza – online	BDS
Dr John Bartlett – online	JB
Dr Martin Robinson – online	MR
Emil Kindl – online	EK
Joanne Grehan – online	JG
John Daffy – online	JD
Joseph Sweeney – online	KS
Kathya Rouse – online	KR
Naomi Walsh – online	NW
Regina Daly – online	RD
Thomas Gallagher – online	TG
Seamus Hughes – online	SH

In attendance:

Jim Fennell (Secretary) – online	JF
Dr Billy Bennett – online	BB
Carol Geraghty (Recording Secretary) – online	CG
Seamus Given, Arthur Cox Solicitors – online – item 5.	SG
Dr Jacqueline O'Toole – online – items 6.1, 6.3 & 6.4	JOT
Nicola Anderson – online – items 6.1 & 6.3	NA
Shane O'Connor – online – items 7.3 & 8.2	SO'C
Henry McGarvey – online – item 7.4	HMcG
Chandni Naran – online – item 8.2.3	CN
Michael Hopkins – online – items 8.2.5 & 8.2.6	MH

Apologies: Maura McNally, Rachel Ashworth, Dara Foynes

The Deputy Chair Joe Cunningham chaired the meeting.

GB 37.01 Declaration of Conflicts of Interests

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

GB 37.02 Approval of Governing Body Minutes

GB 37.02.1 Minutes of 1st September 2025

Decision: The minutes of the 1st September 2025 Governing Body meeting were approved on the proposal of JD and seconded by BdS.

GB 37.02.2 Minutes of 6th October 2025

Decision: The minutes of the 6th October 2025 Governing Body meeting were approved on the proposal of CM and seconded by KR.

GB 37.03 Matters Arising & Correspondence

1. October Agenda Item 8.3.7 *Legal Advice on TU Trustees* - in response to a question about the liability as individuals of GB members if they are Charity trustees, JF stated that the Officers Liability policy would be reviewed and the University's insurers would be notified if any amendment to the policy is required. This will be done before GB members are appointed as Charity trustees. The commencement order for the update to the Charities legislation has not yet been signed by the Minister, however, the Technological Universities Association (TUA) members are targeting January 2026 to appoint GB members as Charity trustees.

Action: Review Officers Liability Policy and notify the University's insurers if any amendment to the policy is required.

2. October GB Meeting Minutes section 36.08.2.2.2 – the changes to the Additional Payments to Academic Staff Policy were welcomed.

GB 37.03.1 Governing Body Log of Actions

The Governing Body Log of Actions was circulated to members prior of the meeting. JF summarised "propose closed" items. Papers were provided for actions 177, 203 & 174.

Action 199 – a member requested that the priority of this action be changed to high.

Action 177 – include request for interpretation of data and benchmark or historical data where available.

The meeting was advised that benchmark or historical data is not always available and, if available, may not be for the same time period e.g. data published by the HEA is typically one year in arrears.

Decision: On the proposal of JB and seconded by KR all actions listed as propose closed, to be closed.

Action: Action 177 Guidance on Papers for GB Meetings – include the following:

When presenting data, contributors asked to:

- Give their interpretation / insight / opinion of the data and include key findings observed.
- Provide relevant benchmark or historical data where available.

GB 37.03.2 Evaluation of Governing Body - Final IPA Report

The final report from IPA on the evaluation of Governing Body and its committee and subcommittees was circulated for information. In response to a question about Recommendation 1, JF stated that he awaits a decision from the Chair.

Action: Secretary to GB to review Recommendation 1 from the IPA report with the GB Chair.

GB 37.04 President's Report

GB 37.04.1 Presidents Update to Governing Body

OF summarised the report circulated in advance of the meeting giving further updates on:

- MOU with University of Galway – this is the renewal of a partnership with the University of Galway to deliver teacher education in the region through the Western Institute of Studies in Education (WISE).
- AI Training – UPT members attended 2 training sessions.
- Recent events in Letterkenny - including the North West Tertiary Education Conference where Minister Lawless gave the keynote address; Minister Lawless turned the sod on the PPP building in Letterkenny on the same day; Asia Matters business summit.
- Conferring ceremonies – held in Letterkenny & Sligo last week; GB members are invited to attend any upcoming ceremonies in Galway, Connemara or Mayo, details available in the invitation sent to GB members in mid-October.
- Faculty reports – as Deans and Faculty Operations Managers are appointed they will be providing regular reports to UPT. Key points of strategic importance from these reports will be included in the Presidents updates to GB going forward.
- Congratulations to Emil Kindl on being appointed President of the EU Green Alliance Student Council.
- Congratulations to Joseph Sweeney on his graduation last week.

GB 37.04.2 4.2. UPT Meeting Minutes

Minutes of 12th & 29th September UPT meetings were circulated for information.

GB 37.05 Additional Responsibilities Placed on GB as a Result of Section 89 of the HEA Act 2022

SG joined the meeting to respond to questions on the legal advice circulated with meeting papers on S89 of the HEA Act 2022 which amended S11 of the TU Act 2018 and specifically the legal advice on S11(1B)(e) of the 2108 Act. SG also advised that the other amendments in section 89 do not in any material way change the functions of the GB. They give statutory effect to what was happening anyway as a result of the Code of Governance. In essence, the section transfers matters specifically provided for in the Code of Governance into the TU Act itself.

Decision The Secretary to GB to instruct the University's legal advisors to draft an update to the ATU Interim Code of Governance on the proposal of KR, this was seconded by SH.

Action: Develop a guidance for GB members detailing the responsibilities of GB as laid out in the TU Act 2018 as amended by the HEA Act 2022.

Action Seek letter from legal advisors confirming advice provided to meeting.

Action: Circulate a plain language translation of legal advice.

GB 37.06 Report from Academic Council & Registrar

GB 37.06.1 Policy for the Development of Academic Quality Assurance and Enhancement Framework

Rev 001 of this document was approved by GB at their 1st September meeting subject to two amendments. As per the QAET process, in order to include the requested amendments, the document was taken through the consultation process. Following the consultation process Rev 002 was brought back to GB for approval to include the amendments requested in September. An update was requested to Section 4.7 to show that the Annual Review of the Academic Quality Assurance and Enhancement (AQAE) Framework will be presented to GB before it is submitted to QQI.

Decision: Subject to the inclusion of the update requested above, Rev 002 of the Policy for the Development of Academic Quality Assurance and Enhancement Framework was approved on the proposal of KR and seconded by CM.

Decision: If no changes other than the update to section 4.7 detailed above are included, rev 003 of the document does not need GB approval.

GB 37.06.2 Academic Council Standing Orders

The Academic Council Standing Orders is being updated to reflect Senior Leadership team titles. In response to a question about why GB is approving the Academic Council Standing Orders, BB advised that the first revision of the document was approved by GB in the absence of an Academic Council and any subsequent revisions have been brought to GB for approval.

Decision: Academic Council Standing Orders V7 was approved on the proposal of JB and seconded by CM.

GB 37.06.3 Review of the Academic Council Assurance & Enhancement Framework 2024-25

NA presented a summary of work carried out by the Quality, Assurance & Enhancement Team during the 2024-2025 academic year.

GB 37.06.4 CINNTE Implementation Plan

The plan, which details actions to address recommendations from the CINNTE review, was circulated for information.

GB 37.06.5 Programme Portfolio Report 2024-25

The report gives an overview of the University's programmes & was circulated for information. Programme information is collated on the Register of Approved Programmes, which was commended by QQI at a recent meeting. The consolidation of programmes offered by the University is ongoing, the Registrars team will work with the newly appointed Deans of Faculty on this.

GB 37.06.6 Options for the Formation of the Second Academic Council

The first Academic Council membership was primarily based on the legacy institutes in terms of electoral constituencies for academic staff. For the second Academic Council it is proposed that electoral constituencies will be faculty based. In response to a concern raised that there may be departments, schools or campuses without representation, the meeting was advised that no electoral model could deliver complete representation across all areas, but by choosing Proposal 1 (large-sized AC) or Proposal 2 (medium-sized AC) the possibility of underrepresentation could be reduced. There was a suggestion that, if it were possible, subcommittee membership could address any potential underrepresentation. Members were reminded that the current model is benchmarked as a medium-sized model.

Action: Members are asked to send their feedback on the options for the formation of the second Academic Council to the GB Secretary by 14th November.

GB 37.06.7 Academic Council Meeting Minutes

Minutes of the 13th June 2025 Academic Council meeting were circulated for information.

GB 37.07 Items for Approval

GB 37.07.1 Staff Appointment

OF presented two Senior Leadership Team appointments for approval:

Dean of Science & Health – Dr Joanne Gallagher

Decision: This post was approved on the proposal of KR and seconded by JD.

Dean of Design, Education & Social Science – Dr Patrick Tobin

Decision: This post was approved on the proposal of RD and seconded by JG.

GB members congratulated the successful candidates on their appointments. OF advised that there are four remaining senior leadership positions to be filled. The business case for these positions was sent to the Department of Public Expenditure, Infrastructure, Public Service Reform and Digitalisation by the HEA on 15th September. No response has been received to date.

GB 37.07.2 Entry Requirements & Progression for Technical Staff Procedure

This procedure aligns ATU's process for determining entry requirements for technical grades and the process for determining progression eligibility, in line with relevant Circulars and has been through an extensive consultation process. The meeting discussed section 5 Appeals Process.

Recommendation for consideration – review the language used in Section 5 to clarify that appeal is a formal appeal, not just a review.

Decision: V1 of the Entry Requirements & Progression for Technical Staff Procedure was approved on the proposal of CM and seconded by JG.

GB 37.07.3 Update to Standing Orders & Code of Conduct for Governing Body Members

At the June meeting, an action was taken to update the Code of Conduct for Governing Body Members to include sanctions for breaches of the Code. Legal advice on this was received and circulated at the 6th October GB meeting, at which time a decision was taken to instruct the University's legal advisors to draft an update. Draft updates to two governance documents were submitted for consideration – GB Standing Orders & Code of Conduct for GB Members. Members expressed their concern about the extent and implications of the proposed changes. The meeting was advised that the proposed changes align with best practices in other public bodies.

Action: Members to send feedback on draft changes to the two documents to the Secretary to GB by Monday 10th November.

Action: Send GB feedback to legal advisor & invite him to attend the next meeting.

GB 37.07.4 Activation of Break Clause on Crowley Park Licence Agreement with Galwegians
OF provided some background information on the purchase of Crowley Park in 2021. The property is adjacent to the Galway City – Dublin Rd campus.

Decision: The activation of the break clause in the Crowley Park Licence Agreement with Galwegians Rugby Football Club was approved on the proposal of CM and seconded by BdS.

GB 37.08 Committee & Subcommittee Reports

GB 37.08.1 Report from Strategic Development Subcommittee Meeting of 13th October 2025

The report from the Strategic Development Subcommittee Meeting of 13th October 2025 was circulated for information. KR advised that she is meeting with SDS members to discuss the remit of the subcommittee.

GB 36.08.2 Report from Audit & Risk Committee Meeting of 21st October 2025

The report from the Audit & Risk Committee Meeting of 21st October 2025 was circulated for information. SOC presented the items recommended for approval by GB.

GB 37.08.2.1 Risk Register

The risk profile remains broadly stable, no risks currently exceed the University's risk appetite, this shows a maturing risk culture across the organisation. The change to the risk rating for OP1 was discussed, a future review of this was requested.

Decision: The risk register was approved on the proposal of KR and seconded by SH.

GB 37.08.2.2 Internal Control Framework (ICF)

The ICF supports the University's Statement of Internal Control included with the financial statements. Management are asked to confirm controls annually. There has been a year-on-year improvement in the control environment – no material control failures or losses were reported and plans are in place where action is required to address non-compliance or weaknesses. In response to feedback on the management declarations, SOC advised that going forward an on-line form will be used, mandatory sections of the form will be identified and these have to be completed in order to submit the form.

Decision: The Internal Control Framework was approved on the proposal of KR and seconded by SH.

GB 37.08.2.3 Export Control Policy

CN presented the Export Control Policy. This policy sets out the University's governance framework for compliance with national and EU export control legislation and responds directly to recommendations arising from the Department of Enterprise, Tourism & Employment (DETE) 2025 compliance audit of ATU.

Decision: V1.0 of the Export Control Policy was approved on the proposal of JB, this was seconded by EK

GB 37.08.2.4 Update to ARC Terms of Reference

SOC summarised changes proposed to the FSC Terms of Reference to address a recommendation in the IPA Report.

Decision: The proposed update to the ARC Terms of Reference was approved on the proposal of JG and seconded by CM

GB 37.08.2.5 Corporate Procurement Plan & Multi-Annual Procurement Requirement Plan

MH presented the Corporate Procurement Plan (CPP). The CPP is an annual report & addresses the requirements of the National Public Procurement Policy Framework and the Code of Practice for the Governance of State Bodies. The CPP includes the MAPP which details anticipated future procurement requirements.

Decision: The Corporate Procurement Plan & Multi-Annual Procurement Requirement Plan were approved on the proposal of SH and seconded by CM.

GB 37.08.2.6 Procurement Non-Compliant & Non-Competitive Spend Sep 24 - Aug 25

MH presented the non-compliant & non-competitive spend Sep 24 - Aug 25 and summarised the regular reviews completed by the Procurement team which have contributed to the reduction in non-compliant procurement since April 2022.

GB 37.09 Presentation from Student Representatives

EK gave a presentation including; an introduction to ATU SU Sligo; a summary of what each SU is currently working on and issues that have arisen; an overview of collaborative projects that the SU's are currently involved with. JC thanked EK for the comprehensive identification of issues from all campuses.

GB 37.10 Recruitment Report

The Recruitment Report was provided for information.

Action: Going forward Recruitment Reports to include data from 1st April 2022 as a baseline for comparison.

GB 37.11 AOB

GB 37.11.1 Schedule of Agenda Items

Provided for information.

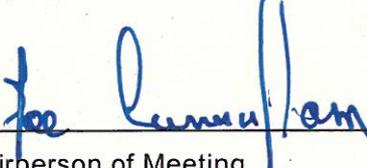
Other AOB

In response to a recommendation from the IPA Report, the 3rd November meeting was 100% on-line.

Action: GB members are asked to give their feedback on the on-line Governing Body meeting to the GB Secretary by 14th November.

Members thanked JC for chairing the meeting.

The next meeting is scheduled for Monday 8th December 2025 at the Galway-City Dublin Rd campus and on TEAMS.

Signed: 
Chairperson of Meeting

Date: 8/12/25