

**MINUTES OF MEETING NO. 190S OF**  
**THE ACADEMIC COUNCIL**  
**OF DUNDALK INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY**  
**HELD ON WEDNESDAY 7<sup>th</sup> FEBRUARY, 2024**

**Meeting No 190S**

**190S.1.1 In attendance:**

Dr. Brian Boyd	Mr. Frank Brady	Dr. Breda Brennan
Dr. Kevin Burns	Dr. Anita Byrne	Dr. Eoin Clancy
Mr. Dermot Clarke	Mr Eoin Clarke	Ms. Karen Commins
Mr. Lorcan Dunne	Ms. Sinead Dunne	Dr. Sheila Flanagan
Mr. Peter Gosling	Dr. Peadar Grant	Dr. Myles Hackett
Dr. Edel Healy	Dr. Siobhan Jordan	Dr. Gillian Lambe
Dr. Fiona Lawless	Dr. Paul MacCartan	Dr. Moira Maguire
Dr. Annaleigh Margey	Mr. Pat Mc Ardle	Prof. Fergal Mc Caffrey
Ms. Irene Mc Causland	Mr. Pat Mc Cormick	Dr. Martin Mc Hugh
Ms. Emer Mc Kenna	Dr. Matthew Molloy	Dr. Diarmuid O'Callaghan
Ms. Deirdre O'Malley	Ms. Antoinette Rourke	Dr. Brendan Ryder

**189S.1.2 Apologies:**

Mr. Peter Morris	Dr. Kieran Nolan	Mr. Kevin Irwin
Dr. Patricia Moriarty	Dr. Adele Commins	Dr. Thomas Lupton
Mr. Shane Hill		

**189S.1.3 Absent:**

Dr. Conor Brady	Dr. Bernard Drumm	Dr. Jennifer Fegan
Mr. Mark Lee	Dr. Ronan Lynch	Dr. Tim Mc Cormac
Ms. Emma Mc Caffrey	Ms. Siobhan Mc Carthy	Mr. John Reid
Mr. Donal Mc Morland	Mr. Noel Mc Kenna	
Ms. Paula Mullen		

**190S.01 Discussion on proposed amendments to the Dundalk Institute of Technology Academic Council Constitution (AC:DOC:190S:01:01) (AC:DOC:190S:01:02)**

The Academic Council of Dundalk Institute of Technology (DkIT) is established in accordance with the Regional Technical Colleges (RTC) Act, 1992 (the Act) and any subsequent amendments:

Sections 10 of the Act states:

- (1) *Each college shall have an academic council appointed by the governing body to assist it in the planning, co-ordination, development and overseeing of the educational work of the college and to protect, maintain and develop the academic standards of the courses and the activities of the college.*

Under the routine agenda of “Academic Council” at the Governing Body meeting on the 12<sup>th</sup> December 2023, previous minutes of Council were noted. It was noted by the Governing Body that the current Academic Council expires in Spring 2024 and that the current constitution has not been reviewed since 2016. It was suggested by Governing Body that the constitution is reviewed in advance of establishment of the next Academic Council (23<sup>rd</sup> February 2024).

At the November meeting of Academic Council (Meeting No. 190), a working group was set up to examine and update the Constitution of Academic Council before the start of the new Academic Council term.

#### Membership of the Academic Council Constitution Working Group

- Dr. Myles Hackett
- Dr. Breda Brennan
- Dr. Brendan Ryder
- Ms. Sinead Dunne
- Mr. Peter Gosling

Dr. Breda Brennan explained to the members of Academic Council as chairperson of the Academic Council Constitution working group and a representative of the Athena Swan committee’, the need for gender balance of 40% in line with national legislation.

The working group agreed that the scope of its work would involve updating the Constitution to include:

- Amendments to incorporate statutory requirements relating to gender.
- Amendments to incorporate legislative changes as appropriate. The Act has been amended by the Technological University (TU) legislation, Higher Education Authority (HEA) legislation and other relevant pieces of legislation.
- Limited amendments to the membership.

The purpose of this special meeting of the Academic Council was to discuss the draft updated Constitution with a view to bringing an agreed updated Constitution to the Academic Council meeting on the 23<sup>rd</sup> February 2024.

The gender balance on the current Academic Council is as follows:

<b>Ex-Officio</b>		<b>Elected</b>		<b>Total</b>	
<b>Male</b>	<b>Female</b>	<b>Male</b>	<b>Female</b>	<b>Male</b>	<b>Female</b>
13	11	18	10	31	21
<b>54%</b>	<b>46%</b>	<b>64%</b>	<b>36%</b>	<b>60%</b>	<b>40%</b>

A two thirds majority (36 Members) is required on Friday 23<sup>rd</sup> February, 2024 to approve the amendments which once approved be forwarded to Governing Body for consideration at their meeting on the 27<sup>th</sup> February, 2024.

Dr. Brennan guided Academic Council through the proposed changes.

It was noted that the working group have no control over the gender balance of the ex-officio members of Academic Council with the focus being on the elected members of Academic Council.

Each School is encouraged to promote gender balance within their area.

The President was concerned with the use of the word “endeavour” and strongly suggested that it be removed in line with the new primary legalisation.

*“The membership shall have regard to the extent to which gender is represented and shall **endeavour** to achieve an appropriate gender balance such that not less than 40 per cent of the members of the Academic Council shall be female and not less than 40 per cent of them shall be male.”*

A lengthy discussion ensued on how best to achieve the correct gender balance during the upcoming election of the new Academic Council. It was noted that five members of Academic Council are currently serving members of Governing Body.

A query arose as to why the School of Business and Humanities had seven seats compared to six seats in the other three Schools. It was agreed that the Heads of Department would discuss further with the Head of School.

The working group agreed to update the document following the discussion. In particular adding in a line to explain the variable constituency and removing the word endeavour.

The President concluded the discussion by thanking the working group for their time.

## **A.O.B.**

### **Draft Strategic Plan 2024 -2028**

Under the Regional Technical Colleges Act 1992 as amended, a Governing Body in preparing a Strategic Plan is required to consult with a number of stakeholders of which Academic Council is one.

The President requested in accordance with the function of Academic Council (Section 1.3 see attached) that Academic Council frames a response to the attached draft Strategic Plan 2024-2028 to be agreed at our next meeting on the 23<sup>rd</sup> February, 2024 and forwarded to Governing Body for their meeting on the 27<sup>th</sup> February, 2024. Dr. Sheila Flanagan requested that any comments you may have be forwarded to [teresa.ward@dkit.ie](mailto:teresa.ward@dkit.ie) by the 14<sup>th</sup> February, 2024 to be collated.

This plan sets out the proposed strategic direction for DkIT over the next four years. The objectives and performance measures are shaped by the Act, by relevant frameworks, national policies, Government priorities and consultation with stakeholders including colleagues and students.