



**UCD Academic Council
Comhairle Acadúil UCD**

**Minutes of the meeting of Academic Council
Tuesday 30 April 2024, 2pm
Auditorium, UCD Village**

**Present: 70
In Attendance: 15
Apologies: 24**

The meeting of Academic Council was chaired by the President, Professor Orla Feely.

The Chair acknowledged that this was the final meeting of the current Academic Council membership term and thanked members for their contribution.

The Chair informed members that items under Part 2 of the agenda are for decision en bloc and items under Part 3 are for information. Members were invited to indicate if they wanted any items from these parts moved to Part 1 for discussion. Agenda item 14 '*Change to Criteria for Entrance Awards*' for formal approval was briefly discussed.

Decision	Academic Council approved items from Part 2 and noted items from Part 3 of the agenda.
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1 Apologies

The Chair acknowledged that a number of apologies had been received.

2 Minutes and Matters Arising

Minutes of the meeting held on 23 November 2023

The minutes of the meeting held on 23 November 2023 were approved.

Matters Arising

There were no matters arising from the minutes.

Declaration of potential conflicts of interest or perceived conflicts of interest

The following conflict of interests were declared:

- Dr Jos-Dornsneider Elkind, Item 15 Head of School Appointments
- Professor Susie Geiger, Item 12 Professorial Title Amendment
- Professor Martin Grunewald, Item 16 New and Renewed Head of Subject Appointments

Decision	Academic Council approved the minutes of the meeting held on 23 November 2023.
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PART 1

ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION / DECISION BY ACADEMIC COUNCIL

3 UCD Strategy Consultation with Academic Council

The Vice-President for Strategy and External Engagement, Triona McCormack, was in attendance for this item and facilitated a 30-minute workshop. Academic Council was provided with a verbal update on the consultation process to date and a briefing document was tabled at the meeting with the consent of Academic Council. Slido was used to capture all responses to the following questions that were put to Academic Council:

- What are the challenges to the academic activities and academic governance of UCD that need to be addressed?
- What is going well that we should continue to do (or grow)?
- What should we be most concerned about?
- What makes UCD distinctive?

Academic Council's contribution will be captured in a full report allowing for detailed thematic analysis. Members were thanked for their input and encouraged to take part in other consultation processes taking place across the University or to contact Triona Cormack directly if they wish to input.

Decision Academic Council welcomed the opportunity to input into the consultation on the next UCD Strategy.

4 Review of the Student Plagiarism Policy

(a) Report: Student Plagiarism Policy Review

(b) Draft Academic Integrity Policy

(c) Draft Student Academic Misconduct Procedures

The Dean of Undergraduate Studies, Professor Marie Clarke, introduced this item and provided Academic Council with an overview. In October 2022, UMT approved the establishment of two Working Groups (1) Academic Integrity and Ethical Practice and (2) Online Assessment, reporting into the UMT Education Group. In the conduct of its business, and through extensive feedback from faculty and students, the Working Group noted the need to review the University's Student Plagiarism Policy and ACEC approved a review of the policy in January 2024. The Policy Review Group agreed that given the extent of the amendments required and the gaps in the current Student Plagiarism Policy, the issues emerging from the initial consultation processes would be best addressed through a new Academic Integrity Policy. This policy was drafted and circulated to stakeholders for feedback. In March 2024, ACEC considered the feedback report and the draft Academic Integrity Policy.

Professor Clarke highlighted key areas that had caused significant debate and were raised at ACEC. ACEC recommended a number of amendments that were incorporated into the draft policy for consideration by Academic Council. These key areas included the policy scope; roles and responsibilities; declaration statement; role of module co-ordinator; setting expectations with regard to the use of AI; definition of academic misconduct and examples thereof; use of file-sharing sites and copyright implications; and the use of electronic detection software.

A discussion by Academic Council ensued and a perceived gap between the policy and procedures was highlighted. Wording in the procedures document should clearly articulate that the procedure applies to all work submitted for assessment, while incidents of alleged academic misconduct that do not involve work submitted should continue to be referred under the Student Discipline Procedure. With regard to policy development, it was commented that Academic Council should be consulted earlier in the drafting process rather than at the final draft stage in order to reflect the experience and expertise of members.

Academic Council agreed that the wording in the procedures document is clarified and it delegated final approval to its Executive Committee. The Chair thanked Professor Clarke and all those who contributed to the process.

Professor Clarke thanked all members of the Working Group, in particular Deirdre Stritch, Caoimhe Rehill and Lynn Foster.

- Decision**
- **Academic Council agreed to rescind the current *UCD Student Plagiarism Policy* effective from 1 September 2024.**
 - **Academic Council approved the *Academic Integrity Policy*, effective from 1 September 2024, subject to ACEC approval of final wording.**
 - **Academic Council approved the *Student Academic Misconduct Procedures* in principle, effective from 1 September 2024, subject to ACEC approval of final wording.**
 - **Academic Council approved the establishment of a Working Group to review the *Academic Misconduct Procedures*.**

5 Additional Considerations for Assessment Policy

The Chair of the Working Group, Associate Professor Aideen Quilty, was in attendance for this item. The Registrar introduced the item, highlighting that the Working Group had been convened to review and reform two existing policies (i) Extenuating Circumstances, and (ii) Late Submission of Coursework. Associate Professor Quilty provided members with the context of the review which highlighted a history of devolved and varied practices across the university with significant inconsistencies across the process, namely: timelines; communication; supporting evidence; completion plans; and use of IX/WN. An extensive institutional consultation process had taken place amongst key stakeholders. The new policy, if approved would be supported by an infrastructure that will require thorough testing before it can be rolled out, and would also be subject to monitoring, evaluation and review to identify any unintended consequences which can then be resolved.

A discussion took place and the following points of note were raised:

- Benefits for the module coordinator include the reduction of a significant administration burden, which would be particularly impactful on large modules, and the reduction of risks associated with GDPR/sensitive data management.
- Benefits for students include limiting personal disclosures, greater equity and transparency and early identification of students experiencing significant difficulties allowing for timely intervention.
- A number of concerns were raised with regard to the principle of self-declaration. While the self-declare (self-certified) option is being used in more than half of comparator universities, the number of times per academic year is often limited. As the Policy currently stands, it is unclear how this will be implemented, particularly when offered at component level.
- While the self-declare principle is a new concept, it does not differ vastly from the Late Submission Policy. Currently significant variation exists across the University with regard to the application of

the Late Submission Policy, with many students being forced to use Extenuating Circumstances instead.

- Many students struggle to meet deadlines and there appears to be no advantage for students to minimise the 5-day extension allowed for by the self-declare pathway. This does not help students prepare for practices in the real world and may have knock-on effects for the next assessment.
- It was recognized that the self-declare pathway is not appropriate for all assessment types such as professional/clinical placements or laboratory assignments and this is captured in the Policy under inclusions/exclusions. The exclusion list can be added to if Academic Council members deem it appropriate.
- The expansion of categories under 'Certified Additional Considerations' requires more discussion.
- The Students' Union President commented that the perception of students, based on comments made by members was disappointing and not supportive of students or their circumstances.

While some members requested that further consultation and a final review by the Working Group take place, other members expressed their support for the Policy and did not want to delay implementation, pointing out that the concerns raised had already been considered by the Working Group. Following a request from a member, the Chair agreed to a show of hands to gauge consensus. The show of hands was too close to call, with only a small majority of hands in favour of approving the Policy. In the interest of building support for the policy and to ensure that Academic Council has given it all due consideration, the Chair asked that the Working Group take another look at the Policy and bring it back to Academic Council in the Autumn. The Students' Union objection to this was noted.

The Chair advised members that the final Policy will represent a compromise and not everyone will welcome the outcome. A decision will be made by majority vote at the next meeting if necessary. The Chair thanked Associate Professor Quilty for her excellent work.

Associate Professor Quilty thanked all members of the Working Group and specifically acknowledged Deirbhle Carroll, UCD Assessment, for all her work in supporting the Working Group.

Decision Academic Council agreed that the *Additional Considerations for Assessment Policy* undergo a final review by the Working Group.

As the discussion on Item 5 had run over considerably, the Chair recommended that the following items be delegated to the Academic Council Executive Committee for decision:

- 6. Review of the University's Academic Internships Framework**
- 7. Revised Policy for Supervision of Research Degree Student**
- 8. Policy for the Recruitment, Support & Development of Research Students Supporting Teaching and Learning**
- 9. Academic Regulations – Proposed Change to PhD Regulations**

Decision Academic Council agreed to delegate the 4 items listed above to its Executive Committee for decision.

10 Non-Major Awards - Proposed Convention on the Titling of Minor, Special Purpose and Supplemental Classes of Awards

The Registrar introduced this item. A request was received from Quality and Qualifications Ireland (QQI) seeking confirmation that UCD will observe the proposed Convention on the Titling of Minor, Special Purpose and Supplemental Classes of Awards. The request had been given thorough consideration by the University Programmes Board at its meeting on 4 April 2024 and members unanimously agreed to recommend to Academic Council that the proposed convention is not adopted by UCD.

Decision Academic Council approved the University Programmes Board recommendation that the proposed convention on non-Major Awards is not adopted by UCD.

PART 2

ITEMS FOR FORMAL APPROVAL BY ACADEMIC COUNCIL

11 Academic Council Subcommittee Election Procedures

Academic Council was asked to approve Election Procedures to govern an electronic election process to enable (i) Academic Council to elect Academic Council members to AC subcommittees, and (ii) Heads of School to elect Heads of School to AC subcommittees. The new term for AC subcommittees will run concurrently with the term of Academic Council, 1 September 2024 to 31 August 2027.

Decision Academic Council approved the Academic Council Subcommittee Election Procedures.

12 Professorial Title Amendment (College of Business)

Academic Council approved the Professorial Title change as recommended by the College of Business Review Group:

- Professor Susi Geiger - Full Professor of Markets, Organisations and Society

Decision Academic Council approved the Professorial title change.

13 Statute 32: Governing Statute

Academic Council was asked to consider Statute 32: Governing Statute which incorporates the following: a consolidation of Statute 25 as a new statute; conformance with the Universities Act 1997 [as amended by the Higher Education Authority Act 2022]; and the establishment of a Revised Governing Statute.

Decision Academic Council endorsed Statute 32: Governing Statute.

14 Change to Criteria for Entrance Awards

Entrance Awards are awarded to students entering UCD based on School-Leaving results. They do not currently have a formal approval mechanism and while a review of governance arrangements is underway, Academic Council is asked to approve a time-sensitive proposal during this transition period.

The proposed change is that Entrance Awards are awarded to the top entrant from each 2nd level school (and above a minimum threshold). The Registrar confirmed that this change is likely to give a better regional spread and increase diversity amongst entrants.

Decision Academic Council approved the proposed amendment to the criteria for Entrance Scholarships.

15 Head of School Appointments

Head of School appointments are presented to Academic Council for consultation in accordance with Statute 25 (Chapter 17, Paragraph 7).

College	School	Proposed Head of School	Duration
Engineering & Architecture	Civil Engineering	Associate Professor John O’Sullivan	From: 26 July 2024 To: 25 July 2029
Arts and Humanities	English, Drama and Film	Associate Professor Niamh Pattwell	From: 1 August 2024 To: 31 July 2027
Social Sciences and Law	Information and Communication Studies	Dr Marguerite Barry	<u>Extension</u> From: 1 April 2024 To: 30 June 2027
Social Sciences and Law	Politics and International Relations	Dr Jos-Dornschneider Elkink	<u>Extension</u> From: 1 Sept 2024 To: 30 June 2026
Social Sciences and Law	Geography	Dr Julien Mercille	<u>Extension</u> From: 7 June 2024 To: 30 June 2026
Social Sciences and Law	Psychology	Professor Louise McHugh	From: 1 September 2024 To: 30 June 2027
Social Sciences and Law	Economics	Professor Benjamin Elsner	From: 1 September 2024 To: 30 June 2027
Social Sciences and Law	Sociology	Dr Aogán Mulcahy	From: 1 September 2024 To: 30 June 2026

Decision Academic Council endorsed the Head of School appointments, noting that the Head of School appointment for the *School of English, Drama and Film* is in fact for three years.

16 New and Renewed Head of Subject Appointments

Head of Subject appointments are subject to Academic Council approval in accordance with Statute 25 (Chapter 17, Paragraph 11). Extensions are presented for noting.

School	Subject	Proposed Head of Subject	Duration
New Head/s of Subject			
Public Health, Physiotherapy and Sports Science	Dietetics	Professor Clare Corish	Start Date: 01/09/2024 End Date: 31/08/2027

Public Health, Physiotherapy and Sports Science	Sports Management	Dr Ross Neville	Start Date: 01/09/2024 End Date: 31/08/2027
Irish, Celtic Studies and Folklore	Irish	Dr Cathal Billings	Start Date: 01/06/2024 End Date: 31/05/2027
Extension to Existing Head/s of Subject			
Nursing, Midwifery & Health Systems	Mental Health Nursing	Associate Professor Timothy Frawley	Start Date 01/4/2024 End Date: 30/3/2026
Physics	Physics	Professor Martin Grunewald	Start Date: 01/09/2024 End Date: 31/08/2026

- Decision**
- Academic Council approved new Head of Subject appointments as presented.
 - Academic Council noted the Head of Subject extensions as presented.

17 Proposal for Emeritus Professor/Associate Professor/Assistant Professor

The conferment of Emeritus status is subject to Academic Council approval (as per Statute 25 and the *Governing Authority Schedules of Reserved Decision-Making Authority and of Delegated Authority*).

Name	Emeritus Title	School	Retirement Year
Associate Professor Michael Casey	Emeritus Associate Professor	Chemistry	2023
Professor Ravindranathan Thampi	Emeritus Professor	Chemical and Bioprocess Engineering	2024
Professor William Kinsella	Emeritus Professor	Education	2024

- Decision** Academic Council approved the proposal for Emeritus titles as presented.

PART 3

ITEMS FOR NOTING BY ACADEMIC COUNCIL

18 Academic Council Election Results

Academic Council was asked to note the outcome of the recent faculty elections to Academic Council for the term commencing 1 September 2024 to 31 August 2027.

- Decision** Academic Council noted the Outcome Report on the Faculty Elections to Academic Council 2024.

19 Academic Regulations 2024-2025: Definition of IH Grade

Academic Council, at its meeting on 27 April 2023, approved the revised Academic Regulations to be implemented from September 2024. As part of this process, Academic Council approved in principle the addition of an IH Holding Grade to be included under 'Academic Regulation 4.25 – Exceptional Grade Scale'. The University Programmes Board, at its meeting on 15 February 2024, agreed to recommend the proposed wording of the Regulation to Academic Council.

Decision Academic Council noted the definition of the new IH Grade.

20 Academic Council Committee Approved Minutes

Academic Council Subcommittee approved minutes were presented to Academic Council for noting, in line with the Academic Council Standing Orders.

Committee
ACCAC <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minutes of meeting held on 11 October 2023
ACCASP <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minutes of meeting held on 9 May 2023 • Minutes of meeting held on 21 June 2023 • Minutes of meeting held on 18 October 2023 • Minutes of meeting held on 6 December 2023 • Minutes of meeting held on 7 February 2024
ACCE <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minutes of meeting held on 20 October 2023 • Minutes of meeting held on 17 November 2023 • Minutes of meeting held on 15 December 2023 • Minutes of meeting held on 26 January 2024 • Minutes of meeting held on 23 February 2024
ACCSAC <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minutes of meeting held on 8 May 2023 • Minutes of meeting held on 16 October 2023
ACCSCC <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minutes of meeting held on 26 April 2023 • Minutes of meeting held on 18 October 2023 • Minutes of meeting held on 7 February 2024
ACEC <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minutes of meeting held on 5 October 2023 • Minutes of meeting held on 31 January 2024
ACQEC <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minutes of meeting held on 26 April 2023 • Minutes of meeting held on 2 October 2023 • Minutes of meeting held on 27 November 2023
UPB <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minutes of meeting held on 12 October 2023 • Minutes of meeting held on 22 November 2023

Decision Academic Council noted the Academic Council Subcommittee approved minutes as presented.

21 Visiting Academic and Adjunct Staff Appointments

Academic Council was asked to note:

- Visiting Academic, Adjunct appointments for noting, from 1 April 2023 to 31 March 2024 under the revised Visiting Academic and Adjunct Staff Appointment Policy introduced in December 2016.
- 2023/2024 Clinical Pathway Appointments for noting under the UCD Medicine Clinical Pathway and under the Dublin Academic Healthcare Centre initiative.

Decision Academic Council noted the Visiting Academic and Adjunct Staff Appointments, and the Clinical Pathway Appointments.

Other Business

The Chair once again thanked the outgoing members of Academic Council for their service.

Signed: _____

Chairperson

Date: _____