



## MINUTES

Meeting	: SETU Academic Council
Meeting Number	: 4
Date	: 4 June 2024
Duration	: 10.15am - 12.40pm
Attendees	: Prof. Veronica Campbell (Chairperson), Dr. Derek O'Byrne (Secretary), Ms. Adele Mahon, Ms. Amanda Freeman-Gater, Mr. Aubrey Storey, Dr. Cathal Nolan, Dr. Cara Daly, Dr. Ciara O'Hagan, Mr. Conor Phelan, Dr. Corinne Power O'Mahony, Dr. Daire O'Broin, Dr. Danielle Douglas, Mr. David Denieffe, Dr. David Dowling, Dr. David Scanlon, Dr. Dean Callaghan, Mr. Derek Sheridan, Dr. Eileen Doyle-Walsh, Ms. Eleanor Kent, Dr. Frances Hardiman, Dr. Geraldine Cleere, Dr. Hazel Farrell, Dr. Helen Murphy, Dr. Janette Davies, Dr. Karen Hennessy, Dr. Katherine Cagney, Dr. Kathleen Moore-Walsh, Dr. Ken Thomas, Mr. Kevin Doolin, Ms. Laura Widger, Dr. Maeve Doyle, Mr. Mark Dunne, Prof. Marie Claire Van Hout, Mr. Martin Walshe, Mr. Michael Tobin, Dr. Patricia Mulcahy, Mr. Peter Windle, Dr. Richard Coady, Dr. Sinéad O'Halloran, Ms. Siobhan Wall, Dr. Stephen Whelan, Dr. Thomas O'Toole, Dr. Tony Murphy
In attendance	: Mr. Michael Mullan (Item 3.4) Dr. Chris O'Riordan (Item 4) Dr. Paul O'Leary (Item 6) Dr. Laura Keane & Ms. Helena Fitzgerald (Item 7) Ms. Mairéad Boland (Item 8)
Secretariat	: Ms. Margaret Maher
Apologies	: Prof. Michael Harrison, Prof. Peter McLoughlin, Dr. Suzanne Denieffe, Mr. Gregg Murphy, Ms. Sadhb Reddy, Ms. Emer McGann, Mr. David O'Callaghan, Dr. Mrinal Chadha, Dr. Pauline Flanagan, Dr. Claire O'Gorman, Ms Yvonne Scully, Ms. Alicia Lewandowska, Mr. Ronan Larkin.

## 1. Minutes of Academic Council Meeting of 7 May 2024

**AGREED:** The minutes of the Academic Council Meeting of 7 May 2024 were approved.

## 2. Matters Arising

**NOTED:** There were no matters arising.

## 3. Policies for Approval

### 3.1 Open Research Policy

Dr. Tom O'Toole, chair of Research & Research Programmes Committee (RPC), presented on the Open Research Policy and advised members that the Policy has been through consultation across the University. During discussion the importance of highlighting the university's commitment to open research to internal and external stakeholders was raised.

**NOTED:** Members noted inconsistency in Section 6 in relation to the data retention policy and asked that this be addressed.

**NOTED:** Chairperson welcomed Prof. Marie Claire Van Hout to the meeting, Prof. Van Hout has just recently taken up the role of VP for Research, Innovation & Impact. The Chairperson also thanked Dr. Tom O'Toole for all his work in the Acting VP Research role.

**AGREED:** The Open Research Policy was approved by Academic Council subject to amendment above being made.

### 3.2 Graduate Studies Operational Procedures for Research Degrees in SETU

Dr. Tom O'Toole, chair of Research & Research Programmes Committee (RPC), presented on the Graduate Studies Operational Procedures for Research Degrees in SETU and thanked all involved in the development of this document over a three-year period. The Graduate Studies Operational Procedures for Research Degrees in SETU were developed with a view to standardising procedures across the University and will be effective from 1 September 2024. It was confirmed that the timing of formation of Research Programme Boards within Faculty structures had some flexibility due to variations in experience to date.

**NOTED:** Graduate Studies Office will be involved in setting up the procedures in the interim and as Schools/Faculties require going forward.

**NOTED:** Review date will be 3 years, or sooner if required.

**NOTED:** Graduate Studies Operational Procedures for Research Degrees in SETU were noted by Academic Council.

### 3.3. Assessment and Feedback

Ms. Hazel Farrell presented on the Assessment and Feedback Policy and the Guidelines for Implementing the Assessment and Feedback Policy advising members that the policy now includes rubrics and templates and the guidelines include practical samples of good practice for reference purposes only.

**NOTED:** Members thanked the Taught Studies Programmes, Teaching and Learning Committee for all their work on these documents and welcomed the idea of having separate policy and guidelines documents and suggested this should be considered for future policies, where relevant. During discussion, the importance of staff consultation was recognised.

**NOTED:** A re-wording in relation to the timeline for feedback on assessments was suggested to: *"Students should have a reasonable expectation of feedback **normally** within three weeks of an assessment, thereby addressing a key concern of learners."*

**AGREED:** The Assessment and Feedback Policy and the Guidelines for Implementing the Assessment and Feedback Policy were approved by Academic Council subject to minor amendment to Timing of Feedback section.

**NOTED:** Policy will be brought to the University Policy Committee for final approval.

### 3.4 SETU Duolingo Review

Mr. Michael Mullan joined the meeting and presented on the SETU Duolingo Review advising members that due to the COVID-19 pandemic, SETU temporarily shifted to using Duolingo for assessing English language skills. However, HEI's have started to consider the reliability of the Duolingo English test compared to more established forms of English language proficiency assessment.

**NOTED:** Members noted this paper has already been considered in detail by the Taught Studies Programmes, Teaching & Learning Committee who have recommended the removal of Duolingo as an English language proficiency test.

**AGREED:** Given the potential academic and reputational implications for SETU, Academic Council endorse the recommendation of the Taught Studies Programmes, Teaching & Learning Committee to remove Duolingo as an English language proficiency test from the 2025/26 academic year. This decision can be reviewed in the future.

### 3.5 Aegrotat Award Policy

The SETU Aegrotat Awards Policy was circulated prior to this meeting. The Policy was considered and recommended for approval by the Taught Studies Programmes, Teaching and Learning Committee. Dr. Derek O'Byrne advised members that this policy is designed to recognise the work completed by a learner where the learner's studies may be cut short due to their untimely death. This policy may be applied to undergraduate or postgraduate learners registered on SETU taught programmes, leading to a Major Award, or a Minor or Special Purpose Award of 60 credits, or greater, who die prior to completing their programme. This policy may not be applied to learners who are registered on Postgraduate Research Degrees, or on Minor or Special Purpose Awards of less than 60 credits at SETU.

**AGREED:** Academic Council endorse the recommendation of the Taught Studies Programmes, Teaching & Learning Committee to approve the Aegrotat Award Policy.

## 4. Committee Structure & Membership Handbook

Dr. Chris O'Riordan joined the meeting and presented on the amendments made to the Academic Council Procedures Document following previous consultation.

**NOTED:** Dr. O'Riordan advised members that no further comments had been received on the Terms of Reference for Academic Council Committees previously circulated to Academic Council.

**AGREED:** A subsequent request from the Student Experience Committee to amend the Terms of Reference to read as follows "The committee terms of reference, in collaboration with the learner, are to:..." was approved by Academic Council.

**NOTED:** Chairperson advised members that the new titles of the Committees were approved by Governing Body.

**NOTED:** Any future change in Term of Office for elected staff members from three years would be considered within the Review of Academic Council in due course

**AGREED:** Academic Council Procedures Document and Terms of Reference for Academic Council Committees were approved by Academic Council.

The Chairperson thanked Dr. O’Riordan for his work on this document and Dr. O’Riordan left the meeting.

## 5. Committee Reports

### 5.1 Research & Research Programmes Committee

The Minutes of the Research & Research Programmes Committee meeting of the 14 May 2024 were circulated prior to this meeting.

**AGREED:** As per the Committee Report the following were approved by Academic Council:

Application Type	Number of Applicants
Intention to Present/Nomination of Examiner	8
Confirmation to Doctoral Register	4
Admission to Level 9/10	1
Changes to supervisory team	1
Change of Registration between FT & PT	1
Change from PhD to a Masters by Research	2

### 5.2 Taught Studies Programmes, Teaching & Learning Committee

The Minutes of the Taught Studies Programmes, Teaching & Learning Committee meetings of the 14 May and 28 May 2024 were circulated prior to this meeting.

**AGREED:** The following were approved by Academic Council:

#### Programme Validations

- PP2 BA in Applied Leadership & People Management
- PP2 HC in Business in Business Studies
- CE2 MSc in Organic and Biological Horticulture
- CE2 PgDip in Science in Organic and Biological Horticulture: Minor Awards:
- CE2 Certificate in Management Practices for Landscape Biodiversity
- CE2 Certificate in Protected Crop Production in Organic and Biological Horticulture
- CE2 Certificate in Crop Management in Organic and Biological Horticulture
- Single Module – Lean Black Belt
- Single Module – Lean Green Belt
- CE2 Certificate in Personal Development
- CE2 Certificate in Applied Skills Development

#### Minor Changes

- Modules *IT & Communications 1, IT & Communications 2.*
- BSc in Construction Site Management.
- Bachelor of Arts (H), BA (H) International.
- MSc/PgDip in Professional Nursing.
- BSc Molecular Biology with Biopharmaceutical Science.
- BSc (H) Molecular Biology with Biopharmaceutical Science.
- BSc in Pharmaceutical Science.
- Module *Physical and Organic Chemistry.*
- HDip in Business Systems Analysis.
- Master of Business Administration
- BA (H) in Marketing and Digital Media
- BA (H) in Criminal Justice Studies, BA (H) in Applied Criminal Justice Studies

- BEng (H) in Mechanical & Manufacturing Engineering
- BSc (H) in Construction Management Engineering
- BSc (H) in Quantity Surveying
- Certificate in HV Systems
- HC in Manufacturing Engineering
- BSc (H) in Food Science & Innovation
- BSc in Agriculture
- BSc in Horticulture
- Module Project & Corporate Management
- Module Database Systems
- BA (H) in International Business
- BA (H) in Early Childhood Care & Education (Final Award calculation)
- BSc (H) in Applied Computing, BSc (H) in Computer Forensics & Security

### Embedded Awards

BA (H) in Design (Visual Communications):

- Higher Certificate in Arts
- Bachelor of Arts

### Micro-Credentials

- RPL e-Portfolio Development (2.5 credits)
- RPL in Higher Education (2.5 credits)

### External Examiner Nominations

**AGREED:** As per the Committee report the following were approved by Academic Council:

Category	Number of External Examiners
Programme Examiner – additions to current contract	1
Programme Examiner – new contract Sep2023-Sep 2026	3
Subject Area Examiner – new contract Sep 2023-Sept 2026	1
Subject Area Examiner – new contract Sep 2024 -Sept 2027	1

**NOTED:** Taught Studies Programmes, Teaching & Learning Committee will act as Standing Committee of Academic Council over the summer period.

### 5.3 Student Experience Committee

No report to note. Minutes of the meeting of 31 May 2024 will be brought to the next meeting of Academic Council.

**NOTED:** D. Denieffe advised members that the National Student Survey will not be carried out this year or next however, the Student Experience Committee consider there is a need for a University Wide Survey and will establish a Working Group to design and implement this survey and would welcome any volunteers.

### 5.4 Joint Quality Committee

The Joint Quality Committee met on 31 May 2024, minutes of this meeting will be brought to the next meeting of Academic Council.

## 6. Institutional Review update

Dr. Paul O'Leary joined the meeting and gave an update on the progress of the CINNTE Institutional Self-Evaluation Report including a synopsis on the various chapters of the report.

**NOTED:** It was suggested that a reflective piece should be included at the end of each chapter. Members were invited to contact Dr. O'Leary directly if they wish to provide further feedback.

**NOTED:** All Staff Webinar is planned for 13th June 2024. Final Draft of the Self-Evaluation Report will be brought to the next meeting of Academic Council for approval prior to submission to QQI. Main Review visit is scheduled for the beginning of October and training will be provided for those involved prior to this.

**NOTED:** D. O'Byrne thanked the Writing Group (Dr. Paul O'Leary, Dr Chris O'Riordan, Dr. Fintan Bracken and Ms. Mairéad Boland) for all their work on the Report.

Chairperson thanked Dr. O'Leary and he left the meeting.

## 7. First Year Start Date

D. O'Byrne advised members that the Leaving Cert results date is similar to last year and therefore poses the same problems encountered last year. Dr. Laura Keane and Ms. Helena Fitzgerald joined the meeting and proposed the following:

- Online Orientation for First Year students on Thursday 5 September 2024
- On campus Orientation for First Year students on Monday 9 and Tuesday 10 September 2024, during which period only First Year students would be on campus thereby assisting with an improved orientation for incoming students
- Classes start for all students on Wednesday 11 September 2024

Academic Council acknowledged that mid-week start of classes is problematic particularly in disciplines where labs take place. Members also acknowledged the logistical problems of having first year orientation when classes for continuing students have already begun and feel that the proposal put forward is the best option available in the circumstances. Academic Council also noted that the Autumn Exam Boards should be held as soon as possible and results made available to continuing students. Academic Council was reminded that with the Repeat exams running up to the 31<sup>st</sup> August 2024, the timings of systems roll-over process need to be kept in mind.

**AGREED:** The proposal put forward above was approved. The academic calendar for 2024/25 will be finalised and published in the next few days.

Chairperson thanked Dr. Laura Keane and Ms. Helena Fitzgerald and they left the meeting.

## 8. External Examiner and Programme Board Reports

External Examiner Analysis Report and Programme Board Report Analysis 2022/23 were circulated prior to this meeting.

Ms. Mairéad Boland joined the meeting and gave a presentation on External Examiner and Programme Board Reports first acknowledging Dr. Siobhan Ryan for her work on these reports. The presentation included a profile of the External Examiners, the total number of External Examiner reports received by School/Faculty/Department, sample findings from these reports and analysis of QA feedback themes. The Programme Board analysis included a summary of date, sample findings from Programme Board report analysis, findings from Programme Board Report analysis re External Examiner Feedback, sample student feedback and suggestions for improvement.

**NOTED:** Members thanked M. Boland for the presentation and discussion followed which included how SETU maximises the value of the external examiner process and acts on the feedback received from External Examiners. Issues faced with the recruitment of suitably qualified External Examiners and the low level of international external examiners were raised.

**NOTED:** Members noted that some of the information in Appendix 2 of the External Examiner Analysis Report is incorrectly attributed to the Carlow Campus instead of the Wexford Campus and asked that this be rectified.

**AGREED:** SETU would develop a template for these reports and that this item to be revisited by Academic Council in Semester 1 of the 2024/25 academic year.

Chairperson thanked Dr. Siobhan Ryan and Ms. Mairéad Boland for their work on these reports.

**9. Post Award Achievement required for additional Major Award at the same level**

*Post-award achievement required for an additional major award at the same level* document was circulated prior to this meeting.

**AGREED:** Given time constraints the item will be brought back to the next meeting of Academic Council.

**10. A.O.B**

**NOTED:** The next meeting of Academic Council is scheduled for 18 June 2024 this will be an in-person meeting on the Waterford campus.

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

Date: \_\_\_\_\_