



GMIT

INSTITIÚID TEICNEOLAÍOCHTA NA GAILLIMHE-MAIGH EO
GALWAY-MAYO INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY

Academic Code of Practice No.1 **The Academic Council**

As approved by the
Academic Council on 16th September 2019
and by the Governing Body on 27th June 2019

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1. ACADEMIC COUNCIL

1.1. OVERVIEW

The Academic Council is a statutory body appointed by the Governing Body to assist it in the planning, co-ordination, development and overseeing of the Institute's educational work and to protect, maintain and develop academic standards.

Subject to the Governing Body, the Academic Council has the responsibility and authority to deal with and regulate all academic matters within the Institute. Among its core functions are academic quality assurance, serving the twin purposes of enhancement and accountability, to create trust and to underpin stakeholder confidence in GMIT's academic performance.

Members of the Academic Council are expected to adopt an Institute-wide perspective and do not represent any section, School, Centre or Department. It is expected that members will engage actively in the work of the Council.

It is open to individual members of academic staff or to Programme Boards to communicate any issues, concerns or recommendations they may have, on academic matters, to the Academic Council for consideration. They may do so directly through correspondence with the Vice President for Academic Affairs & Registrar, or through their Head of School/Centre/Department or any member of the Council.

Heads of School/Centre and Heads of Department have a responsibility to communicate decisions and requirements of the Academic Council within their own School/Centre and Department on a timely basis.

There will be an induction workshop for members at the start of the term of office of each new Academic Council. This will be organised by the Vice President for Academic Affairs & Registrar.

1.2 FUNCTIONS OF THE ACADEMIC COUNCIL

1.2.1 The functions of the Academic Council are specified in Section 10 of the Regional Technical Colleges' Act 1992, as amended by Section 11 of the Institutes of Technology Act 2006.

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.
2. (a) Each Governing Body may by regulations made under this section provide for the membership and terms of office of the Academic Council.
b) The majority of members shall be holders of academic appointments within the college and at least one shall be a registered student of the college.

- (c) The members appointed to the Academic Council shall hold office for a period of three years and shall be eligible for re-appointment.
3. Without prejudice to the generality of *subsection (1)* the Academic Council shall have the following particular functions:
 - (a) to design, develop and assist in implementing courses of study consistent with the functions of the college;
 - (b) to make recommendations to the Governing Body for the establishment of appropriate structures to implement the courses of study referred to at paragraph (a) of this subsection;
 - (c) to make recommendations to the Governing Body on programmes for research and development work;
 - (d) to make recommendations to the Governing Body for the selection, admission, retention and exclusion of students;
 - (e) be responsible, subject to the approval of the Governing Body, for making the academic regulations of the college;
 - (f) to propose to the Governing Body, subject to the requirements of the Qualifications and Quality Assurance (Education and Training) Act 2012 or any university or other authority to which Section 5 (1) (b) applies, the form of regulations to be made by the Governing Body for the conduct of examinations and for the evaluation of academic progress;
 - (g) to make recommendations to the Governing Body for the award of scholarships, prizes or other awards;
 - (h) to make general arrangements for tutorial or other academic counselling;
 - (i) to exercise any other functions, consistent with this Act, which may be delegated to it by the Governing Body;
 - (j) to assist in implementing any regulations which may be made by the Governing Body concerning any of the matters aforesaid.
4. The Academic Council, with the approval of the Governing Body, may –
 - (a) establish such and so many committees, consisting either wholly or partly of persons who are not members of the college, as it thinks proper to assist the Academic Council in the performance of its functions under this Act, and
 - (b) determine, subject to the provisions of this Act, the functions of any committee established under *paragraph (a)* of this subsection.
5. The acts of a committee established under *subsection (4)(a)* shall be subject to confirmation by the Governing Body unless the Governing Body dispenses with the necessity for such confirmation.
6. Subject to the provisions of this Act and to the directions of the Governing Body, the Academic Council may regulate its own procedure.

1.2.2 The Academic Council is obliged, under Section 4(1) (g) of the Regional Technical Colleges' (Amendment) Act 1994, to advise the Governing Body on the organisations it considers require representation on the Governing Body having regard to the particular courses provided by the college, excluding interests otherwise represented.

1.2.3 The Academic Council is responsible for the quality assurance of awards for which GMIT has delegated authority from QQI, including for the maintenance of national standards in accordance with the National Framework of Qualifications.

1.3 ACADEMIC COUNCIL RESPONSIBILITY FOR ACADEMIC QUALITY ASSURANCE

1.3.1 The Academic Council is responsible for academic quality assurance, serving the twin purposes of enhancement and accountability, to create trust and underpin stakeholder confidence in GMIT's academic performance.

The Academic Council is responsible and accountable for the establishment, promotion, implementation and maintenance of the Institute's Academic Quality Framework and for ensuring that the quality of GMIT's awards is in accordance with national and international standards.

The Academic Council aims to foster high academic standards and will strive for continuous improvement in practice and performance.

1.3.2 Specific responsibilities of Academic Council for academic quality assurance include:

- ensuring that all academic matters are conducted in a fair, open and transparent manner;
- maintaining the standards of awards in accordance with national regulatory requirements;
- ensuring that programmes are designed and operated in accordance with the Institute's Quality Assurance Framework (QAF);
- ensuring that any conditions of programme approval arising from the validation processes are implemented and that any recommendations are fully considered and acted upon;
- establishing and maintaining procedures for the regular monitoring of programmes;
- ensuring that external examiners' reports are considered and appropriate action taken in relation to comments and suggestions made;
- ensuring that the documentation for each programme is maintained as specified;
- establishing and implementing procedures for the periodic systematic review of the QAF.

1.3.3 In discharging its responsibility for academic quality assurance, the Academic Council will incorporate external peer review to ensure fairness, objectivity, comparability, openness and transparency.

1.3.4 The Vice President for Academic Affairs & Registrar, as Secretary to the Academic Council, is responsible for co-ordinating the implementation of the QAF and reporting to Academic Council in this regard.

1.4 COMPOSITION OF THE ACADEMIC COUNCIL

1.4.1 Section 10 (2) of the Regional Technical Colleges’ Act 1992 requires that:

- (a) Each Governing Body may, by regulations made under this section, provide for the membership and terms of office of the Academic Council.
- (b) The majority of members shall be holders of academic appointments within the college and at least one shall be a registered student of the college.

GMIT’s Academic Council shall consist of *ex officio* members, registered student representatives and elected academic staff members. The number of elected academic staff members shall exceed by at least one the combined number of *ex officio* members and registered student representatives.

During the year preceding its re-election, the Academic Council shall review its size and composition. Any changes recommended shall be submitted to the Governing Body for approval.

The President shall be *ex officio* a member of the Academic Council and, if present, shall preside at all meetings of the Council and shall be entitled to be a member of every committee established by the Council (as per the Institutes of Technology Act 2006, Third Schedule).

The Vice President for Academic Affairs & Registrar shall be *ex officio* a member of the Academic Council and shall act as Secretary to the Council.

1.4.2 The composition of the Academic Council for 2019-2022 shall be as follows:

<i>Ex officio members</i>	<i>Number</i>
President (Chairperson)	1
Vice President for Academic Affairs & Registrar	1
One Assistant Registrar	1
Academic Administration & Student Affairs Manager	1
Vice President for Research & Innovation	1
Vice President for International Affairs & Marketing	1
Librarian	1
Head of School of Business	1

Head of School of Engineering	1
Head of Galway International Hotel School	1
Head of School of Science & Computing	1
Head of Mayo Campus	1
Head of School of Design and Creative Arts	1
Head of Department from School of Design and Creative Arts	1
Principal of Mountbellew	1
One Head of Department from School of Business	1
One Head of Department from School of Engineering	1
One Head of Department from Galway International Hotel School	1
One Head of Department from School of Science & Computing	1
One Head of Department from Mayo Campus	1
Total <i>ex officio</i> members	20
Registered Student Representatives (nominated by the Students' Union)	3
Elected Academic Staff Members	24
Total Membership of Academic Council	47

To ensure gender balance, the Governing Body requires that:

- i) there shall be a minimum of 40% of each gender represented in the *ex officio* membership.
- ii) both genders be represented in the student membership.
- iii) there shall be an equal number of male and female academic staff members elected.

1.5 TERM OF OFFICE

1.5.1 Section 10(2)(c) of the Regional Technical Colleges' Act 1992 requires that the members appointed to the Academic Council shall hold office for a period of three years and shall be eligible for re-appointment.

1.5.2 A person who is no longer employed by the Institute shall cease to be a member of the Academic Council.

A member who misses three or more consecutive meetings, without valid reason(s), shall be disqualified from membership.

1.5.3 A vacancy arising from among the *ex officio* members shall be filled by the new occupant of the post, whether in a full-time or acting capacity.

A vacancy arising from among the registered student members shall be filled by nomination from the Students' Union.

A vacancy arising from among the elected members shall be filled by co-option as per section 1.6.6 below.

Replacement members appointed shall hold office for the remainder of the three-year term of the Council.

1.6 ELECTION PROCEDURE FOR ACADEMIC COUNCIL

Elections for academic staff shall be conducted in accordance with the following Governing Body regulations:

- 1.6.1** The Governing Body requires that there shall be an equal number of male and female academic staff members elected. Consequently, there shall be a female constituency for female candidates and a male constituency for male candidates. Members of academic staff eligible to vote may nominate candidates for both constituencies and may vote in both constituencies.
- 1.6.2** Nominations shall be made on the Nomination Papers. To be nominated as a candidate for election, the signature of two other persons, eligible to vote in that election, shall be necessary
- 1.6.3** The Returning Officer shall rule on the validity of nominations and their decision shall be final.
- 1.6.4** The Returning Officer may declare a candidate elected if the number of candidates standing and duly nominated does not exceed the number of seats to be filled.
- 1.6.5** Polls shall be conducted if the number of candidates duly nominated exceeds the number of seats to be filled.
- 1.6.6** Voting shall be by secret ballot and on the basis of proportional representation by means of a single transferable vote.
- 1.6.7** Presiding Officers and polling clerks shall be appointed by the Returning Officer.
- 1.6.8** A member of the academic staff of the Institute (including all grades to SL III), who is employed during the period beginning on the first day of September preceding the election and ending on the following thirty-first day of August, shall be eligible to vote.
- 1.6.9** A list of persons eligible to vote in the above election is available in the Office of the Vice President for Finance & Corporate Services.
- 1.6.10** A candidate for election to the Academic Council shall be proposed and seconded from within the academic staff eligible to vote.
- 1.6.11** The Returning Officer for the election shall be the Vice President for Finance & Corporate Services, whose duty it is to organise and conduct all elections and counts.
- 1.6.12** A vacancy, arising from among the elected academic staff membership, shall be filled by co-option at a meeting of the Academic Council.

The vacancy will first be offered to the last eliminated candidate in the election, and so on, until the list is exhausted. The candidate may refuse the co-option.

Where co-option is not possible from eliminated candidates in the election, all eligible staff, as outlined above, will be invited to propose and second candidates from within their number, for consideration by the Academic Council. If more candidates than the number of vacancies are nominated, there shall be a secret ballot of members of the Academic Council present at a meeting where the co-option is on the agenda. The co-option shall also be conducted by proportional representation using the single transferable vote.

1.6.13 In order to ensure compliance with the requirement for an equal number of male and female elected academic staff members, all vacancies must be filled from the constituency in which the vacancy arose.

2. ACADEMIC COUNCIL FUNCTIONING

2.1.1 The role of the Academic Council is to carry out the functions specified in Section 1.2 above. It is established in accordance with Section 1.3 above.

As specified in Section 10 (6) of the Regional Technical Colleges' Act 1992, the Academic Council may regulate its own procedure, subject to the provisions of the Act and to the directions of the Governing Body.

The Academic Council shall conduct its business in accordance with Standing Orders specified in Section 3 below.

The Academic Council will establish a Standing Committee and various sub-committees to assist it in the performance of its functions.

2.1.2 The relationship of Programme Boards to the Academic Council will be specified in Code of Academic Practice No. 2.

The relationship of Progression and Award Boards to the Academic Council will be specified in Code of Academic Practice No. 3.

2.1.3 The Academic Council will formally review its own performance and that of each of its sub-committees towards the end of its term of office. The methodology will be decided by the Academic Council and the review will be co-ordinated by the Vice President for Academic Affairs & Registrar.

2.2 ACADEMIC COUNCIL STANDING COMMITTEE

2.2.1 Terms of Reference

The Standing Committee has authority to make decisions on behalf of the Academic Council, on routine matters that have been formally delegated to it by the Council. The decisions of the Standing Committee shall be formally noted at the subsequent Academic Council meeting.

The Standing Committee can offer advice and guidance on academic issues arising that may require an urgent response by the Institute. This may include advising on the necessity of convening an unscheduled meeting of the full Academic Council.

Meetings of the Standing Committee are convened by the President as Chairperson of Academic Council as and when they deem this necessary, subject to a minimum advance notice to members of two days.

2.2.2 Membership of the Standing Committee

The Standing Committee shall consist of the President and the Vice President for Academic Affairs & Registrar as *ex officio* members, and 10 other persons appointed by the Academic Council from within its membership.

2.2.3 Quorum

A quorum shall consist of the President or the Vice President for Academic Affairs & Registrar, and five members other than the President or the Vice President for Academic Affairs & Registrar.

2.3 ACADEMIC COUNCIL SUB-COMMITTEES

2.3.1 The Academic Council is authorised to appoint sub-committees in accordance with Section 10 (4) of the Regional Technical Colleges' Act 1992.

The Academic Council, with the approval of the Governing Body, may:

- (a) establish such and so many committees, consisting either wholly or partly of persons who are not members of the college, as it thinks proper to assist the Academic Council in the performance of its functions under this Act, and
- (b) determine, subject to the provisions of this Act, the functions of any committee established under *paragraph (a)* of this subsection.

Section 10 (5) of the Regional Technical Colleges' Act 1992 requires that:

the acts of a committee established under *subsection (4)(a)* shall be subject to confirmation by the Governing Body unless the Governing Body dispenses with the necessity for such confirmation.

2.3.2 Sub-committees can be appointed by the Academic Council on both a standing and an ad-hoc basis under section 2.3.1 above.

The Academic Council has appointed the following standing sub-committees:

- Academic Standards Committee
- Programme Amendments Committee
- Research Committee
- Collaborations Committee
- Access and Transfer Committee
- Retention Committee
- Disciplinary Committee
- Examinations Appeals Board

The terms of reference for each of the standing sub-committees are outlined in Appendix 1.

The Academic Council can appoint other sub-committees, on an ad-hoc basis, as it deems appropriate.

2.3.3 The membership of each sub-committee is subject to approval by the Academic Council.

Each sub-committee shall consist of a Chairperson and at least two persons appointed by the Academic Council from among its membership, *ex officio* members and co-opted persons if deemed appropriate. The co-opted persons may be drawn from among the membership of the Academic Council, from members of the Institute not on Academic Council or from outside the Institute.

The co-option of persons to sub-committees who are not members of the Institute requires Governing Body approval.

The *ex officio* members shall include the appropriate Institute person with contractual responsibility in the activity area (if applicable): for example, the Student Engagement & Retention Officer shall be a member of the Retention Committee.

Each School/Centre will be represented on sub-committees where this is deemed appropriate by the Academic Council.

Each sub-committee, with the exception of the Disciplinary Committee and the Examinations Appeals Board, shall have two registered student members. These members shall be nominated by the Students' Union.

2.3.4 Each sub-committee shall agree an annual work schedule with the Vice President for Academic Affairs & Registrar.

Each sub-committee will formally, and in writing, report to the Academic Council as and when necessary where issues arise but shall formally report on its activities, recommendations and proposals at least once each academic year.

2.3.5 Recommendations of sub-committees are advisory and shall be submitted to the Academic Council for consideration for adoption.

3. STANDING ORDERS

3.1 The Standing Orders are designed for regulating the procedures and business of the Academic Council. Changes to standing orders can be made by the Academic Council, subject to Governing Body approval.

3.2 MEETINGS OF THE ACADEMIC COUNCIL

3.2.1 The President shall chair meetings of the Academic Council. In the event that the President cannot be present, the President shall nominate a person to chair the meeting.

The Vice President for Academic Affairs & Registrar is Secretary to the Academic Council. In the event that the Vice President for Academic Affairs & Registrar cannot be present, they shall nominate a person to act as Secretary.

- 3.2.2** The Academic Council shall meet at least three times in each academic year – once every 10 weeks (approximately).

Special meetings may be called by the President or at the written request of not less than fifteen members.

- 3.2.3** Notice of meetings, together with the agenda and relevant documentation, shall be circulated not less than seven days in advance of the date of the meeting.

The Chair may call an emergency meeting of the Academic Council at two days' notice. Motions for consideration shall be circulated in advance and must be listed as agenda items. Motions not circulated in advance may be discussed by Council with decisions deferred to the subsequent meeting, wherein the motion will appear as an agenda item.

- 3.2.4** The quorum for a meeting shall be one third of the membership + 1. If after 15 minutes a quorum is not present, the meeting shall be postponed.

During the meeting, if the number of members present falls below the quorum, the meeting will be deemed adjourned.

The order of business shall be in accordance with the agenda, unless the meeting decides otherwise.

- 3.2.5** Decisions of the Academic Council shall be made by majority vote of members present, and by a show of hands, except when a secret ballot is requested by the Chairperson, or if a vote is deemed unnecessary as consensus exists (as provided for in 3.4.4 below). Voting by proxy is not allowed. The Chairperson shall have a casting vote in the event of a tie.

Decisions in relation to policy and procedure shall not be reconsidered by the Council until at least one academic year has elapsed, unless an applicable law, regulation or ordinance has been contravened. A proposal to change a decision made previously shall require a majority of the members present.

Decisions shall be noted in the minutes and, if appropriate, context shall be stated. A voting member may specifically request that their dissent be noted in the minutes.

- 3.2.6** Draft minutes shall be circulated to members of Council within two weeks after the meeting has taken place.

Minutes of Academic Council meetings, once amended (if necessary) and approved, will be published on the Institute's intranet.

3.3 THE POWERS OF THE CHAIRPERSON

- The Chairperson must ensure that a quorum is present.
- They sign the minutes of the previous meeting when approved by the members.
- The Chairperson's ruling on any matter of procedure is final.
- They have a casting vote, which can be used in the event of a tie.
- They may insist that all questions, comments, observations made by members be addressed to the Chairperson.
- The Chairperson may invite other persons, whether internal or external to the Institute, to attend a meeting to assist the Council in carrying out its functions. Such visitors have no voting rights.

3.4 RULES GOVERNING DEBATE

3.4.1 The meetings of the Academic Council will be conducted in a spirit of collegiality. The engagement and active participation of all members shall be encouraged and facilitated in debating issues.

3.4.2 As far as possible, every effort shall be made to reach decisions by consensus.

3.4.3 Any motion included on the agenda is properly placed before the meeting. Otherwise, motions, if taken, must be proposed and seconded before discussion. The Chairperson may rule that a motion proposed at a meeting should be deferred for consideration to a subsequent meeting, when it can be included on the agenda.

The proposer of the original motion has the right of reply before a vote is taken.

A proposer and seconder may withdraw the motion before a vote is taken.

When a motion or amendment has been voted upon, the resolution cannot be rescinded or altered unless another motion is proposed for this purpose. This may not be done at the same meeting.

3.4.4 Decisions of Academic Council should be formally adopted, following the proposal by the Chair of the necessity of a vote prior to formal adoption.

3.5 POINTS OF ORDER

The Chairperson shall decide all points of order.

APPENDIX 1: ACADEMIC COUNCIL SUB COMMITTEES TERMS OF REFERENCE

These Terms of Reference of a sub-committee may be amended at any time by Academic Council. Sub-committees themselves may propose such amendments for consideration by Academic Council.

ACADEMIC STANDARDS COMMITTEE

Purpose

The Academic Standards Committee has an oversight role and an internal audit role with respect to the Institute's academic Quality Assurance Framework (QAF).

Its purpose is twofold: firstly, to advise the Academic Council on the conformance of the QAF to external regulatory and policy requirements, including on gaps and on emerging issues and secondly, to advise the Academic Council on the effectiveness of the implementation of the QAF.

In particular, the Academic Standards Committee will:

- monitor and review external regulatory and policy requirements, including changes and developments that may have relevance for the QAF, and advise the Academic Council accordingly making recommendations for amendments as necessary;
- monitor and review compliance with process and reporting requirements of the various elements of the QAF, identify areas of potential weakness and advise the Academic Council accordingly making recommendations for improvement as necessary.

Authority

The authority of the Academic Standards Committee is derived from the Academic Council. Recommendations of the sub-committee are advisory and shall be considered by the Academic Council for adoption.

The lifetime of the sub-committee is aligned with that of the Academic Council.

Membership

The membership composition of the sub-committee is as follows:

- Chairperson, nominated by the Academic Council from among its members.
- The Vice President for Academic Affairs & Registrar or a nominee of the Vice President for Academic Affairs & Registrar.
- Six nominees of the Academic Council from among its members.
- Two registered student representatives, nominated by the Students' Union.

Meetings

The Academic Standards Committee shall meet at least three times in each academic year – once every 10 weeks (approximately).

Meetings will be convened by the Chair and a quorum shall be the Chair and four other members.

The Committee will assign a member to act as Secretary to the sub-committee.

Reporting

The Chair will submit a formal written report on the activities of the sub-committee to the Academic Council annually. This report will include, inter alia: an overview of external developments during the year and of the Institute's response, the Committee's opinion on the effectiveness of the implementation of the QAF and a summary of recommendations for improvement.

The Chair will also report formally to the Academic Council, when this is deemed necessary, to fulfil the purposes of the sub-committee or when invited to do so by the Academic Council.

PROGRAMME AMENDMENTS COMMITTEE

Purpose

The purpose of the Programme Amendments Committee is to advise the Academic Council on amendments proposed by Programme Boards to existing programmes/awards in accordance with the policy and procedures set out in Academic Code of Practice No. 2, Section 5.

The proposed amendments to be considered by the Committee do not involve significant structural changes to programmes, and include proposed changes to an Approved Programme Schedule, the proposed addition of a new module(s) to a programme, and/or proposed changes to an existing module(s).

The Committee will review and evaluate all such proposals and make recommendations to Academic Council.

The Committee will formally review the relevant section of Academic Code of Practice No. 2, dealing with such amendments at least once during the lifetime of the Academic Council, and recommend amendments to the Code if deemed necessary.

Authority

The authority of the Programme Amendments Committee is derived from the Academic Council. Recommendations of the sub-committee are advisory and shall be considered by the Academic Council for adoption.

The lifetime of the sub-committee is aligned with that of the Academic Council.

Membership

The membership composition of the sub-committee is as follows:

- Chairperson, one of two nominees by the Academic Council from among its members.
- Six nominees of the Academic Council from among its members.
- The Vice President for Academic Affairs & Registrar or a nominee of the Vice President for Academic Affairs & Registrar.
- Two student representatives, nominated by the Students' Union.
- Co-opted members, as required for the review and evaluation of particular proposals.

The co-opted members will be persons with the necessary expertise and objectivity to review and evaluate particular proposals. They may be drawn from among the Institute's academic staff or

from outside the Institute. Suitable persons will be nominated by the Vice President for Academic Affairs & Registrar, following consultation with the Chair.

Meetings

The Programme Amendments Committee shall meet as and when necessary to review and evaluate proposals from Programme Boards.

Meetings will be convened by the Vice President for Academic Affairs & Registrar and a quorum shall consist of the Chairperson, the Vice President for Academic Affairs & Registrar, or nominee of the Vice President for Academic Affairs & Registrar, and three other members with the necessary expertise to carry out the review and evaluation.

The Vice President for Academic Affairs & Registrar, or a nominee of the Vice President for Academic Affairs & Registrar, will act as Secretary.

Reporting

The Chair will submit a formal written report on the activities of the Committee to the Academic Council annually. This report will include, inter alia, an overview on the nature of the amendments sought, the number of positive recommendations, the number of proposals rejected and an overview of the reasons for rejection.

The Chair will also report formally to the Academic Council, when this is deemed necessary, to fulfil the purposes of the sub-committee or when invited to do so by the Academic Council.

RESEARCH COMMITTEE

Purpose

The purpose of the Research Committee is to advise Academic Council on the Institute's research strategy, policies and activities, including on quality assurance relating to post-graduate research programmes and research degree registrations.

The Research Committee will:

- review and promote research activity across the Institute;
- advise Academic Council on the Institute's research strategy and policy;
- advise Academic Council on collaboration and networking in research within the Institute and with external partners;
- advise Academic Council on fostering and enhancing a research ethos within the Institute;
- advise Academic Council on education programmes and the academic standards required to support research activity in the Institute.

Specific responsibilities relating to post-graduate research quality assurance include:

- to review postgraduate research degree regulations and suggest revisions if deemed necessary;
- to evaluate, recommend and promote education programmes for post-graduate research students and for post-graduate research supervisors;
- to advise Academic Council on the annual research calendar and on postgraduate fees.

Specific responsibilities relating to research degree registration include:

- to empanel selection boards to evaluate non-standard entry candidates for admission to the post-graduate research degree Registers;
- to evaluate candidate applications for post-graduate research degree registration, and to recommend their acceptance, amendment or refusal;
- to advise Academic Council on the membership of Research Advisory Panels.
- to recommend to Academic Council the transfer of registration between the Master's and Doctoral post-graduate research degree Registers;
- to recommend to Academic Council examiner nominations for research degree assessment.

Authority

The authority of the Research Committee is derived from the Academic Council.

Recommendations of the sub-committee are advisory and shall be considered by the Academic Council for adoption.

The lifetime of the sub-committee is aligned with that of the Academic Council.

Membership

The membership composition of the sub-committee is as follows:

- Chairperson, nominated by the Academic Council from among its members.
- Two nominees of the Academic Council from among its members.
- The Vice President for Academic Affairs & Registrar, or a nominee of the Vice President for Academic Affairs & Registrar.
- Academic Administration & Student Affairs Manager.
- Vice-President for Research & Innovation.
- Senior Administrator – Research Office.
- Two registered post-graduate research students, nominated by the Students' Union.
- A research-active nominee of each Academic Unit.
- Co-opted members.

The co-opted membership, and the criteria and process for their selection, will be decided by the designated members at their first meeting and may include members external to the Institute.

Meetings

The Research Committee shall meet at least three times in each academic year – once every 10 weeks (approximately).

Meetings will be convened by the Chair and a quorum shall be the Chair and five other members, with at least three active researchers among those present.

The Committee will assign a member to act as Secretary to the sub-committee.

When considerations about individual students are on the agenda, the student members shall not be present for these discussions.

Reporting

The Chair will submit a formal written report on the activities of the sub-committee to the Academic Council annually. This report will consider relevant aspects of the Institute's research performance (including, for example, details on post-graduate student enrolment, graduate numbers and funding income) and quality assurance issues.

The Chair will also report formally to the Academic Council when this is deemed necessary to fulfil the purposes of the sub-committee, or when invited to do so by the Academic Council.

COLLABORATIONS COMMITTEE

Purpose

The purpose of the Collaborations Committee is to advise Academic Council on the Institute's collaborations and clusters with other Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) and entities locally, nationally and internationally.

In particular, it will advise the Academic Council on the following:

- developments at local, national and international level potentially impacting on the higher education landscape;
- GMIT's strategic positioning and options within the evolving higher education landscape;
- the status and progress of existing collaborations and clusters, including national and transnational collaborative provision, joint awards and *Erasmus* activities.

In fulfilling its functions, the sub-committee will endeavour to solicit a broad range of opinion, from all Institute stakeholders, to inform its deliberations and to provide a forum for the articulation of a diversity of viewpoints.

Authority

The authority of the Collaborations Committee is derived from the Academic Council. Recommendations of the sub-committee are advisory and shall be considered by the Academic Council for adoption.

The lifetime of the sub-committee is aligned with that of the Academic Council.

Membership

The membership composition of the sub-committee is as follows:

- Chairperson, nominated by the Academic Council from among its members.
- Three nominees of the Academic Council from among its members.
- The Vice President for Academic Affairs & Registrar or a nominee of the Vice President for Academic Affairs & Registrar.
- Vice President for International Affairs & Marketing.
- Two registered student representatives, nominated by the Students' Union.
- Up to three co-options.

Ideally, the sub-committee should have representation from each Academic Unit.

The number of co-options, and the criteria and process for their selection, will be decided by the nominated membership at their first meeting.

Meetings

The Collaborations Committee shall meet at least three times in each academic year – once every 10 weeks (approximately).

Meetings will be convened by the Chair and a quorum shall be the Chair and four other members.

The Committee will assign a member to act as Secretary to the sub-committee.

Reporting

The Chair will submit a formal written report on the activities of the sub-committee to the Academic Council annually. This report will include, inter alia: an overview of developments during the year; a summary of the nature and number of current collaborations and clusters, and their effectiveness; recommendations for improvement.

The Chair will also report formally to the Academic Council, when this is deemed necessary, to fulfil the purposes of the sub-committee, or when invited to do so by the Academic Council.

ACCESS AND TRANSFER COMMITTEE

Purpose

The purpose of the Access and Transfer Committee is to advise Academic Council on quality assurance relating to student access onto programmes, and student transfer internally and across the sector. It will have particular responsibility for advising Academic Council on non-standard entry applicants.

Specific responsibilities include:

- to monitor the implementation of the Institute's policies and procedures for the admission of students to programmes of study, including for non-standard entry applicants, for international applicants and for admissions in the restricted entry category;
- to monitor the implementation of the Institute's policies and procedures for student transfer internally within the Institute and across the higher education sector;
- to make recommendations to Academic Council on special-case applicants for access and transfer;
- to monitor the progress of students admitted through non-standard routes and of transfer students.

The sub-committee will formally review the Institute's Access and Transfer Policy at least once during the lifetime of the Academic Council and will recommend amendments if deemed necessary.

Authority

The authority of the Access and Transfer Committee is derived from the Academic Council. Recommendations of the sub-committee are advisory and shall be considered by the Academic Council for adoption.

The lifetime of the sub-committee is aligned with that of the Academic Council.

Membership

The membership composition of the sub-committee is as follows:

- Chairperson, nominated by the Academic Council from among its members.
- Two nominees of the Academic Council from among its members.
- Academic Administration & Student Affairs Manager.
- Access Officer.
- Two current registered student representatives, nominated by the Students' Union.
- Seven co-opted members, with representation from each Academic Unit.

The co-opted members, and the criteria and process for their selection, will be decided by the designated members at their first meeting.

Meetings

The Access and Transfer Committee shall meet at least three times in each academic year – once every 10 weeks (approximately).

The meeting will be convened by the Chair and a quorum shall be the Chair and five other members.

The sub-committee will assign a member to act as Secretary.

Reporting

The Chair will submit a formal written report on the activities of the sub-committee to the Academic Council annually. This report will include, inter alia, details on the numbers and progress of annual non-standard admissions and transfer students.

The Chair will also report formally to the Academic Council, when this is deemed necessary, to fulfil the purposes of the sub-committee, or when invited to do so by the Academic Council.

RETENTION COMMITTEE

Purpose

The purpose of the Retention Committee is to advise Academic Council on retention.

In particular it will inform and advise Academic Council on the following:

- Institute retention rates with comparisons to target rates, prior years, and national and international rates;
- the status, progress and effectiveness of initiatives undertaken in the Institute to improve retention;
- experiences in the Institute and elsewhere throughout the sector;
- the level of awareness of, and engagement with, retention initiatives across the Institute.

The sub-committee will formally review the Institute's Retention Policy, at least once during the lifetime of the Academic Council, and recommend amendments if deemed necessary.

Authority

The authority of the Retention Committee is derived from the Academic Council.

Recommendations of the sub-committee are advisory and shall be considered by the Academic Council for adoption.

The lifetime of the sub-committee is aligned with that of the Academic Council.

Membership

The membership composition of the sub-committee is as follows:

- Chairperson, nominated by the Academic Council from among its members.
- Two nominees of the Academic Council from among its members.
- The Vice President for Academic Affairs & Registrar or a nominee of the Vice President for Academic Affairs & Registrar.
- Student Engagement & Retention Officer.
- Two registered student representatives, nominated by the Students' Union.
- Seven co-opted members, with representation from each Academic Unit.

The co-opted members, and the criteria and process for their selection, will be decided by the designated members at their first meeting.

Meetings

The Retention Committee shall meet at least three times in each academic year – once every 10 weeks (approximately).

The meeting will be convened by the Chair and a quorum shall be the Chair and five other members.

The sub-committee will assign a member to act as Secretary.

Reporting

The Chair will submit a formal written report on the activities of the Committee to the Academic Council annually.

The Chair will also report formally to the Academic Council, when this is deemed necessary, to fulfil the purposes of the sub-committee, or when invited to do so by the Academic Council.

DISCIPLINARY COMMITTEE

Purpose

The purpose of the Disciplinary Committee is to consider all alleged breaches of the Code of Student Conduct and to make a determination thereon.

The Committee will ensure that all alleged breaches are considered in accordance with fair procedures, as set out in the Code of Student Conduct.

Where deemed necessary, the Disciplinary Committee will impose appropriate penalties as specified in the Code of Student Conduct.

The sub-committee will formally review the relevant sections of the Code of Student Conduct at least once during the lifetime of the Academic Council and recommend amendments if deemed necessary.

Authority

The authority of the Disciplinary Committee is derived from the Academic Council.

The Disciplinary Committee is authorised by Academic Council to make determinations in cases of alleged breaches of the Code of Student Conduct and to impose penalties in accordance with the Code.

The lifetime of the sub-committee is aligned with that of the Academic Council.

Membership

The membership composition of the sub-committee is as follows:

- Chairperson, appointed by the President from among the Academic Council membership having regard to conflict of interest or any previous involvement.
- Three members nominated by the President from among the Academic Council membership, having regard to conflict of interest or any previous involvement.
- A suitably qualified independent person, nominated by the President, as required for particular circumstances, including legal advice.

The individuals appointed to serve on the Disciplinary Committee may vary on each occasion the Committee is convened.

The Vice President for Academic Affairs & Registrar will not be a member of the Disciplinary Committee. The Assistant Registrar will act as Secretary to the Disciplinary Committee, but will not be a member of the Committee.

Meetings

Meetings of the Disciplinary Committee will be convened by the Vice President for Academic Affairs & Registrar as and when necessary.

A quorum shall consist of the Chair and two other members.

Decisions will be made by simple majority with the Chair having a casting vote.

The Chair will communicate the decision of the Disciplinary Committee, to the Vice President for Academic Affairs & Registrar, in writing. The Vice President for Academic Affairs & Registrar will communicate the decision to the student(s) involved in a timely manner.

Reporting

Decisions of the Disciplinary Committee will be formally reported to the Academic Council for noting.

The Chair will submit a formal written report on the activities of the Committee to the Academic Council annually. This report will include an overview on the number, nature and outcomes of the disciplinary hearings.

EXAMINATIONS APPEALS BOARD

Purpose

The purpose of an Examinations Appeals Board is to consider applications for Appeal in accordance with procedures set out in Academic Code of Practice No. 3 *Student Assessment: Marks & Standards*.

An Examinations Appeals Board:

- will consider all appeals on the grounds on which they are based in accordance with the principles of natural justice;
- has no function in relation to the actual marking of scripts;
- will not consider requests that contain allegations against a member of staff or another student.

Authority

The authority of an Examinations Appeals Board is derived from the Academic Council.

Composition

The membership composition of an Examinations Appeals Board shall be as follows:

- Chairperson, appointed by the President.
- Two Heads of Academic Units/Department selected from the Academic Council, having regard to conflict of interest or any previous involvement.
- Two academic staff members, selected from the Academic Council, having regard to conflict of interest or any previous involvement.
- A suitably qualified independent person, nominated by the President.

The individuals appointed to serve on an Examinations Appeals Board may vary on each occasion the Board is convened.

Meetings

An Examinations Appeal Board meeting will be convened by the Vice President for Academic Affairs & Registrar as and when necessary.

A quorum shall consist of four persons including the Chairperson and the suitably qualified independent person.

An Examinations Appeals Board will decide the outcome of an appeal by majority vote.



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