



**Trinity College Dublin**

Coláiste na Tríonóide, Baile Átha Cliath

The University of Dublin

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**Minutes of the Human Resources Committee**

**Friday, 24<sup>th</sup> September 2021, 12 noon to 1pm  
Conducted Remotely on Zoom**

- PRESENT:**
- Prof. Ross Mc Manus (Chair)
  - Ms. Antoinette Quinn (Director of Human Resources)
  - Dr. Siobán O'Brien Green (Vice Provost / Chief Academic Officer's nominee)
  - Prof. David Shepherd (Senior Lecturer)
  - Ms. Patricia Callaghan (Academic Secretary)
  - Ms. Breda Walls (Chief Operating Officer's nominee)
  - Ms. Louise Ryan (Chief Financial Officer's nominee)
  - Prof. Celia Holland, (nominee of the Dean of the Faculty of Engineering, Mathematics and Sciences)
  - Prof. Robert Armstrong (nominee of the Dean of the Faculty of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences)
  - Prof. Gareth Brady (nominee of the Dean of the Faculty of Health Sciences)
  - Ms. Rachel Mathews-McKay (Board nominee)
  - Ms. Rose Gaynor (Equality Committee Representative)
  - Mr. Peter Donohoe (External Representative)
- APOLOGIES:**
- Ms. Gisèle Scanlon (Graduate Students Union President)
- IN ATTENDANCE:**
- Ms. Eimear Reilly (Deputy Director of Human Resources)
  - Ms. Cora Mullins (Human Resources)
  - Ms. Roisin Smith (Quality Officer) for item 5

**Items for specific Board attention are denoted XXX**

**Section A1**

**HRC/21-22/1**

**Minutes of the Last Meeting**

The minutes of 3<sup>rd</sup> June 2021 were approved by the Committee for signing by the Chair.

The Committee welcomed Dr. Siobán O'Brien Green as the Vice-Provost/Chief Academic Officer's temporary nominee in place of Ms. Claire Marshall; Ms. Rose Gaynor as the temporary Equality Committee Representative in place of Ms. Sinead Mac Bride, and Prof. David Shepherd, Senior Lecturer in place of Prof. Kevin Mitchell whose tenure ended. Ms. Louise Ryan was also welcomed to the meeting in place of Ms. Aine Mulcahy as the Chief Financial Officer's Nominee.

## **Section A2**

### **HRC/21-22/2**

#### **Matters arising from the Minutes**

The Director of Human Resources' presentation on HR updates circulated to the Committee after the meeting on 3<sup>rd</sup> June 2021.

The Occasional Staff and Casual Pay Policy was approved by Board at the meeting on 16<sup>th</sup> June 2021. A full engagement and communication plan was developed for the Policy to include information sessions to support the development of understanding the changes.

The Technical Staff Committee's recommendation to the create an Experimental Officer post in CRANN was approved by Board at the meeting on 16<sup>th</sup> June 2021.

Feedback from the Research Committee is currently being examined with a view to developing guidelines to provide opportunities for Research Staff to deliver teaching. Once drafted, HR plan to discuss this with the newly appointed Dean of Research.

The annual leave year that will be configured within the CoreHR system as part of the ongoing project to set up Electronic Recording of Leave in the University is January to December.

The self-evaluation survey for 2020/2021 circulated to the Committee on 3<sup>rd</sup> June 2021. There were 11 responses as of 6<sup>th</sup> September 2021 which are under AOB for the meeting of 24<sup>th</sup> September 2021.

## **Section A3**

### **HRC/21-22/3**

#### **Director of Human Resources Report**

The Academic Induction was carried out in recent weeks and the Learning and Organisational Development catalogue of programmes will launch soon.

The Role Grading Committee under the Career Framework has been set up. It was hoped the process would commence in September, but it is now likely to be late October 2021. To date, 80% of the required roles have been graded and the salary spine is progressing well.

**ACTION:** The updates to the Career Framework process will be presented in further detail at a future Committee meeting.

The Recruitment Process has transformed significantly over the last year. LEAD training for interviewers was launched and good feedback on the many changes made to date has been received.

Researcher Recruitment is something that HR will be looking at with a view to improving and supporting how research staff are hired. To date, such recruitment is carried out a local level by the Principal Investigator, not by HR. To be compliant with Athena Swan, an efficient recruitment process for research staff needs to be developed. The Director of HR indicated that the Dean of Research has been contacted about this and it is now an action item for HR.

Those employed in the Public Sector need to be resident in Ireland to carry out the work they are hired to do which is the case for Trinity staff. As a result of staff temporarily relocating abroad during the pandemic, overseas pay or payments to staff working outside the jurisdiction had to be looked to determine what the University needs to do to be compliant. This will continue to be looked at to see how it may work going forward but it is a complex situation and may not be possible.

**ACTION:** The challenges and complexities of overseas pay will be brought to a future meeting of the Committee.

The Committee were informed that a Hybrid / Blended Working Policy with key principles has been drafted using simplified language. It is not yet finalised and needs to go back to the respective Unions and to the Provost for further review. It will not be a "one size fits all" policy and will depend on many factors including the role of the staff member and the business needs of the area. Elements of roles such as in person teaching or laboratory demonstrations will not form part of the policy, but other elements of such roles might.

Staff must be resident in Ireland, with the status of Northern Ireland residency to be confirmed. GDPR and Health and Safety applies to working from home and any staff member approved to avail of a hybrid/blended work arrangement will be required to carry out a self-based risk assessment of their offsite workspace.

The Committee were advised that peer Universities are approaching hybrid/blended working in different ways; however, all staff will have to be on campus at some point. While the particulars are still being explored, the needs of the University will remain paramount at all times.

It is anticipated that the Hybrid/Blended Working Policy will launch on a pilot basis which will be subject to review. The Director of Human Resources indicated that, if necessary, email approval of the Hybrid / Blended Working Policy may be required from the Committee between scheduled meetings.

The Committee were advised that close to 50% of the staff appreciation gifts had been collected to date and those who hadn't done so yet were being encouraged to do so through reminder communications. HR intend to speak with the School Managers about this and to advise that uncollected gifts will be allocated to each area to be dispersed locally.

A follow up to the Wellness Survey carried out last year, where staff were asked about how they were coping during the COVID-19 pandemic, will issue in due course. It will ask staff how they are coping following their return to work onsite and the challenges faced on their return.

A number of webinars were held on the introduction of an Income Protection Scheme for staff in the Model and Single Pension Schemes which will take effect from 1<sup>st</sup> November 2021. Further webinars will be announced shortly as the initial attendance was poor but those who did attend were reported to have been very engaged.

While the Committee commended the introduction of the Scheme, as it is an opt-out system, the importance of ensuring staff are aware that a deduction will be made to their salary was raised. The Committee were advised that HR are aware that email isn't always the best means of communication and alternative means of

communications would also be used as a result. This includes Heads of Schools and School Managers being made aware to inform the staff in their respective areas of the Scheme and a recording of one of the webinars circulating in the Weekly Wrap-Up.

The Process Improvement Plan in HR is continuing. The Committee were advised that a restructure is likely to take place in HR whereby the Senior Management Team are looking at the current format and how they can best achieve what they want to do.

**Section B1**                      **Oversight of Policy Matters**

**HRC/21-22/4**                      There were no submissions under Section B1.

**Section B2**                      **Any Other Business**

**HRC/21-22/5**                      **Draft Institutional Self Evaluation Report (ISER)**

*The Quality Officer enters the meeting.*

The Academic Secretary informed the Committee that Trinity will undergo an institutional quality review in March 2022 in accordance with the Qualifications and Quality Assurance (Education and Training) Act 2012.

Under the Act, Higher Education Institutions are required to “establish procedures in writing for quality assurance for the purposes of establishing, ascertaining, maintaining and improving the quality of education, training, research and related services the provider provides.” The Committee were informed that the higher education landscape has changed significantly since the last institutional review which took place in 2012.

The Institutional Self-Evaluation Report (ISER) was developed with input from a range of interested parties across Trinity, including staff and management of the Human Resources Department. It was also reviewed by the Global Relations Committee, the Student Life Committee, the Estates Committee, the Quality Committee, the Research Committee and the Graduate Studies Committee.

The Academic Secretary advised that, as part of the consultation process and before submitting the ISER to Council and Board, input from the sub-committees of Council and Board was now being sought which includes the HR Committee.

The Academic Secretary indicated that the section most relevant to the HR Committee is Section 2.2 Staff Recruitment, Management and Development. The Committee were requested to review the ISER, considering four questions in particular and to email any high level comments and advice, as well as any corrections directly to the Academic Secretary up to 30<sup>th</sup> September 2021.

A member of the Committee noted that gender/gender balance and Athena Swan weren't mentioned much, and they wished to identify this as a potential gap. The Academic Secretary indicated that this was not the first time Athena Swan was mentioned and the Equality Office were engaged as a result to ensure an appropriate piece is captured in the document.

A number of Committee members commended the Academic Secretary, the Quality Officer and their team on the huge amount of work that went into the ISER noting that any work which demonstrates what we do as a University is a positive thing.

**HRC/21-22/6**

**Self-Evaluation Survey 2020/2021**

The Self-Evaluation Survey 2020/2021 will be carried forward to the next Committee meeting.

**ACTION:** The Self-Evaluation Survey for 2020/2021 will be added to the agenda for the 18<sup>th</sup> November 2021 meeting.

**Section C**

**Items for Noting**

**HRC/21-22/7**

There were no submissions under Section C.

**Signed:** .....

**Date:** .....