



**Trinity College Dublin**

Coláiste na Tríonóide, Baile Átha Cliath

The University of Dublin

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The University of Dublin**

**Minutes of the Human Resources Committee**

**Friday, 21<sup>st</sup> January 2022, 10am to 12 noon**

**Conducted Remotely on Zoom**

**PRESENT:**

Prof. Ross Mc Manus (Chair)  
Ms. Antoinette Quinn (Director of Human Resources)  
Ms. Patricia Callaghan (Academic Secretary)  
Ms. Breda Walls (Chief Operating Officer's nominee)  
Ms. Aine Mulcahy (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)  
Dr. Siobán O'Brien Green (Vice Provost / Chief Academic Officer's nominee)  
Ms. Rose Gaynor (Equality Committee Representative)  
Mr. Peter Donohoe (External Representative)  
Ms. Gisèle Scanlon (Graduate Students Union President)  
Mr. Andrew Duffin (Group of Unions Nominee)

**APOLOGIES:**

Prof. David Shepherd (Senior Lecturer)  
Ms. Rachel Mathews-McKay (Board nominee) *had to leave the meeting having encountered technical difficulties.*

**IN ATTENDANCE:**

Ms. Eimear Reilly (Deputy Director of Human Resources)  
Ms. Andrea Free (Human Resources)  
Ms. Mary Leahy (Head of Employee Relations, Human Resources) for item **HRC/21-22/11**

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

## Section A1

HRC/21-22/8

### **Minutes of the Last Meeting**

The minutes of 18<sup>th</sup> November 2021 were approved by the Committee for signing by the Chair.

## Section A2

HRC/21-22/9

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

The committee had no matters arising from the minutes.

## Section A3

HRC/21-22/10

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

#### **Policies and processes**

The committee are informed of the following policy and processes updates:

Dignity & Respect policy, which is a joint staff and student policy is nearing completion with 90% complete. Employee focus groups that were open to employees across TCD provided input to the policy. Similar engagements are to take place across the student population to gain their input prior to finalization of the policy.

There will be two distinct policies, Dignity and Respect policy and Sexual Misconduct policy.

While the policy will continue to be a complaints-based policy, there will be opportunity for complaints to be raised on behalf of others. A changed approach to issues raised will also enable culture type reviews to be considered/undertaken should a perceived problem be identified in specific area(s) without formal complaints being raised.

#### **Action- Once finalized, Dignity & Respect Policy to be presented at HRC meeting**

The Domestic Abuse Policy is currently in draft, and HR will commence sharing this with stakeholders (such as Unions and other focus groups). Aim is to have the policy completed in first quarter of this year and it will then progress through TCD approval process.

Chair sought clarity on the scope of the proposed Domestic Abuse policy. HR Director confirms it is to support employees who have suffered domestic abuse at home. This policy reflects a societal issue, and TCD like other organisations is now considering policies which can support their employees who are faced with these challenges.

The Blended Working policy has been approved by Board with communications and information campaign throughout the university during the month of February, with implementation commencing from March. The Policy allows for flexibility with each area tailoring the implementation to fit their needs

HR is also focused on 'Taking time back'. In Quarter 1, HR will be prioritizing process improvement projects.

- a) Casual pay policy has been put in place with amendments to the process in December 2021, based on feedback received.
- b) Weekly paid staff will be moving to fortnightly paid staff, 400+ staff in this category. As part of the transition, an optional advancement in salary of 5 days' pay will be provided to impacted employees.
- c) The committee are informed that HR are working with EDI unit to agree a coherent program of work. HR are also working with Dean of research office on the full suite of support that researchers have and need from a HR perspective and will be prioritizing work.

The HR Director provided an update to the committee on the Role grading project and job sizing. Job sizing is a methodology that is being used to ensure the correct grade is being applied to roles in TCD. Job sizing will not replace personal promotions. HRC will be updated on role grading project.

Supporting the development of culture, our 'wellness during Covid questionnaire' will be circulated next week. This is a joint project between HR and the Business school. Initially run in 2020, this is now the second iteration which will allow comparison of data. Staff engagement survey is a separate item, one which HR would be keen to run in 2022.

Fortnightly meetings have been set up with the group of unions in which they can bring any items/issues to HR and they can be discussed and dealt with, which has been positive.

As discussed in the December meeting, the Provost has committed to a culture transformation project. With C19 and unforeseen challenges with the return to campus other items have taken priority. It is expected to commence in Q1 and HRC will be updated once the approach has been agreed.

**Action-** HRC will be updated once the project is commencing.

HR Director updated that the Speak Out tool launched in November. The committee are informed there are approximately 140 issues raised, the majority relating to bullying and harassment. To note; it is confidential data. It provides a sense of the issues that are occurring across the university, but it is not a formal complaint process. Following a question from the Chair, HR Director confirms that formal complaints can only be investigated when there is a named person, and named persons have the right to hear the complaint made against them (i.e. natural justice).

***Questions and comments are invited from the committee following the HR Director update.***

A committee member comments on great work across HR and poses question on bullying and harassment - will there be an opportunity to deal with these issues formally or informally?

Response is that people will always have the route to go formal or informal.

Further questions on role grading are asked by committee members such as career progression (in the context of Role grading/job sizing update) for professional staff? Another committee member noted that (personal) promotions are gone for existing staff.

The HR Director clarifies that a board decision was taken in 2016 to stop the practice of personal promotions, but many TCD employees have achieved promotion through applying to job advertisements. HR Director confirms the Board decision that personal promotions didn't fit with progression for professional services staff. Progression in academic world is very different to professional services.

**Action-** HRC presentation on role grading at next meeting.

## Section B1

## Oversight of Policy Matters

HRC/21-22/11

*Ms. Eimear Reilly(ER) from Human Resources presents to committee;  
Global Workforce Understanding the Risks & Challenges*

Chair Questions if this policy applies to people working in Trinity who are resident in Northern Ireland; second question related to the recruitment of someone based outside of Ireland.

ER confirmed that DEPR advice is to treat Ireland as an island and as one jurisdiction. Through the pandemic there was flexible application of the regulations regarding working abroad, which no longer apply. If there is a requirement for people to work outside of the jurisdiction issues such as legal and tax matters will have to be taken into consideration before any arrangement is put in place.

In response to the second question, if an employee is struggling to get to Ireland, we are encouraging early engagement with HR. As the pandemic has eased the expectation is when employees are starting with TCD, they will be resident in Ireland. HR/TCD have an obligation to be compliant with employment regulations.

HR Director adds that you cannot be in receipt of an Irish pension scheme residing in Northern Ireland on a permanent basis.

Question raised if you can you have a dual residency within Ireland?  
Response- With social insurance you can only pay/claim in one EU country.

Question raised; as to how HR can understand what the college appetite is in employing people from outside the jurisdiction.

Response: HR will have to set up workshops to engage in relation to this. Plan can be shared with HRC as we develop this.

HR Director confirmed that HR need to know before any engagement commences to employ someone outside of Ireland.

Committee member questions if it is better not to allow for Trinity employees to be resident outside of Ireland at all, it seems to have legally dangerous and potentially costly implications.

ER acknowledges this and states that it is about establishing the need for such arrangements.

Chair agrees with committee members that the expectation would be that Trinity employees would be accessible on site on most occasions and contributing to the Culture of the College. Committee member comments that contracts used to specify that staff need to live within a certain distance of the College. Questions if there are any guidelines from government since we are a publicly funded body, if we pay salaries into another country.

ER confirms that following DEPR guidelines, there is an expectation that public service employees are working from the island of Ireland.

An additional question is asked regarding how performance issues with employees might be managed in a different jurisdiction?

ER confirms that this represents some of the concerns/challenges on employing people outside the jurisdiction, as it can be far more challenging if performance issues arise.

Chair questions whether it is HR's position that employment in a foreign jurisdiction should never be considered or should be considered on occasion?

HR can make a recommendation, but it must be a university decision. A committee member noted that would welcome a HR recommendation.

HR Director adds that HR will put all facts together and will take to various committees and EOG for university opinion.

**Action:** HR will revert to HRC later in 2022 on this item.

*Ms. Mary Leahy (ML) from Human Resources enters meeting to present an update to the committee on Researchers & Teaching.*

*Questions and comments from the committee members;*

Chair questions if, for example, SFI research funding is supportive/prohibitive of researchers giving some lectures in a year, as this could be beneficial to researchers employment prospects and experience.

ML confirmed that there are some grants that won't allow researchers to teach/lecture and it is dependent on the policies of the grant provider.

ML also noted that there is potential for researchers who perform teaching to put forward a claim to the WRC.

Committee member questions whether this proposal has been accepted by unions? Also questions if researchers getting paid for lecturing?

ML confirmed that unions will be consulted once the policy has been fully developed. The HR director confirmed that this has been discussed with the Research Committee.

ML informed the committee that research assistants and research fellows get paid their salary from a research grant. This may allow them the opportunity to give occasional lectures.

For those in receipt of a full-time salary from College, they are not paid for occasional lectures.

For students, i.e. those that are in receipt of a stipend they are a research student and not employees, so this is a different group and this does not apply to them.

A committee member wants to clarify the reason that professional staff can't engage in lecturing is due to the FTE rule- it is confirmed that is correct. They can volunteer or seek to have the FTE in their professional post reduced if that was something that they wished to explore.

The committee were supportive of the update and slides will be shared with the committee.

*Ms. Mary Leahy exits meeting*

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**Action-** The committee members agreed that the update on eLeave which was scheduled for today's HRC will be carried over to the next meeting

## **Section B2**

### **Any Other Business**

**HRC/21-22/12**

There were no submissions under Section B2.

## **Section C**

### **Items for Noting**

**HRC/21-22/13**

There were no submissions under Section C.

**Signed:** .....

**Date:** .....