

**Equality, Diversity, Inclusion & Belonging Sub-Committee of ULT**

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**Terms of Reference**

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| Purpose & Responsibilities |

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| **Strategic Context**The UCC Equality, Diversity, Inclusion and Belonging Committee (EDIBC) is to be established in January 2025 following a review of EDI structures as part of the University’s Athena SWAN Silver application process. This review is also in recognition of the Public Sector Duty (Section 42 of the Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission Act 2014), to ensure an appropriate internal governance structure for EDI is in place to guarantee clear, consistent leadership and accountability for EDI across the University. It builds on the work of the Equality Committee which was in place from 2014 and finished its term in September 2024. The new EDIB Committee sets the strategic framework for EDI across the University. It is underpinned by the UCC Strategic Plan *Securing Our Future: UCC Strategic Plan 2023-28* which is built on a foundation of core values that define our purpose and priorities: Compassion, Agility, Integrity, Respect, Discovery, Equity, Accountability and Sustainability (CAIRDEAS).  |
| **Purpose**To promote equality of opportunity and respect for diversity in all aspects of the University’s business. Specifically, to aim to enhance equality, eliminate discrimination, advance equal opportunities and protect human rights, by tackling prejudice and promoting understanding, thereby ensuring the University avoids the potential for discrimination on grounds of the protected equality strands.To advise the UCC Governing Authority, via the People and Culture, Equality, Diversity, Inclusion and Belonging Committee (P&CEDIB), Academic Council and the University Leadership Team (ULT), on the implementation of all aspects of the University’s Equality, Diversity, Inclusion & Belonging Framework and Equal Opportunities legislation.**Responsibilities**1. To ensure that the University conducts its activities in accordance with statuary obligations and best practice in relation to EDI matters.
2. To develop, prioritise and implement delivery of the University’s Gender Equality Action Plan, inclusive of the embedding of Athena Swan Charter principles across the University, monitoring the mainstreaming of recommendations from the HEA National Review of Gender Equality in Irish Higher Education Institutions (2022).
3. To prepare, update and/or instigate appropriate EDI policies and guidance and to monitor the implementation of such policies, including equality impact assessments.
4. To advise the University Leadership Team (ULT) on progress of the EDI objectives as outlined in the HEA Gender Equality Action Plan, the HEA Ending Sexual Violence and Harassment in Higher Education Institutions Framework Action Plan, HEA Race Equality Action Plan and dedicated working groups. UCC-specific LGBT+ Action Plan, and a Disability and Neurodiversity Action Plan will also be developed.
5. To monitor dis-aggregated data with regard to staff and students by the protected characteristics under the Employment Equality Acts 1998-2015 (the 9 grounds are gender, civil status, family status, sexual orientation, religion, age, disability, race, membership of the Traveller Community) and use this to advise on areas for positive action and inform University decision-making. The university will also include socio-economic status.
6. To make recommendations to the ULT on the development of EDI projects and practices that will benefit staff and students from populations with protected characteristics.
7. To raise awareness of the importance of equality impact assessments of university policies, procedures and practices with due regard to the protected characteristics under the Employment Equality Acts 1998-2015.
8. To drive events and activities to raise the profile of EDI in the University.
9. To advise on, review and determine the impact of changes in equality legislation for the University, amending practice and policy to ensure legislative compliance.
10. To provide advice across the University on the interpretation of key EDI related policies e.g. Gender Identity and Expression Policy
11. To request and/or receive reports relating to EDI issues from across the University.
12. To identify areas that may require EDI work and establish working groups to explore and report on the equality and diversity dimensions.
13. To recognise, communicate and promote examples of good ‘equality of opportunity’ practice from both internal and external sources.
14. To maintain and develop effective networking and liaison in EDI issues. This applies internally to include University committees as well as externally, sector-wide, with working relationships with the IUA VPEDI Group, equality professionals and equality bodies such as the Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission and Advance HE.
15. To report regularly to the UCC Governing Authority (via its P&CEDIB Committee) and the University Leadership Team, providing an update on progress on EDI matters in UCC. Written update reports are also provided regularly to Academic Council by the Director of EDI. To submit an annual report to ULT and GA on the progress of the EDI Committee to facilitate the evaluation of EDI measures, policies and procedures put in place.
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| Decision Making | The EDIB Committee shall report to the University Leadership Team (ULT), with reports items for decision by the ULT and items for communication to the ULT. Items for decision should be accompanied by the recommendation of the Committee.  |
| Duration | Permanent |
| Chairperson | Dr Avril Hutch, Director of Equality, Diversity and Inclusion |
| Deputy Chairperson | Prof Stephen Byrne (ULT Sponsor) |
| Secretariat | Annette Feeney, EDI Unit |
| Membership | Normally EDIB Committee members will sit for a term of no more than three years, with the exception of the ex-officio members (marked in the table below with \*). Certain memberships are tied to posts that may change prior to a three-year term (e.g. SU Officers, HOS, Chairs of Staff Networks). A nominated College representation shall attend until such a time as there is a dedicated Vice Dean in place (marked in the table below with \*\*)The Committee will be empowered to co-opt further members with specialist knowledge, to assist as necessary, and to invite guest speakers to make presentations on specific topics.The Committee will invite interested parties to attend meetings or those parts of meetings of relevance to them.The Chairs of the various staff networks will be members and will be invited on an annual basis to update the Committee on the work of the network.Members have equal voting rights, when relevant, but the Chair has the casting vote.Substitutions for members are permitted in the absence of a member. Named substitutes must be provided five days in advance of the meeting. Where a member is absent for more than three meetings in one year, the member will be asked to step down and a replacement member shall be sought. **Quorum**To ensure that the Committee is quorate, meetings will only proceed if the Chair and half the membership plus one of the Committee are in attendance. The Committee should aim to have gender representation of at least 40% of either gender and broad representation of all faculty/staff groups in UCC The Group may establish, whether from within its own membership or otherwise, such sub-committees and advisory groups as it may think fit, to advise and report on any of the above matters. There will be five standing sub-committees (which align with HEA/Government reporting): Athena SWAN; Race Equality; Ending Sexual Harassment and Violence; LGBT+; and Disability & Neurodiversity.

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|  |  | **Job Title / Representative** |
| 1 | **Chair** | Director for Equality, Diversity & Inclusion\*Dr Avril Hutch  |
| 2 | **Secretary** | Office of the Director of Equality, Diversity & Inclusion |
| 3 | **Members** | Deputy President and Registrar\* |
| 4 |  | Dean of Undergraduate/Graduate Studies\* |
| 5 |  | President’s Nominee  |
| 6 |  | Secretary for Governance and Academic Affairs\* |
| 7 |  | President, Students’ Union |
| 8 |  | Welfare & Equality Officer, Students’ Union |
| 9 |  | Post Graduate Student Rep |
| 10 |  | Vice President – Global\* |
| 11 |  | Chief People & Culture Officer\* |
| 12 |  | Vice President – Research\* |
| 13 |  | Vice President - Teaching & Learning\*  |
| 14 |  | Head of Student Experience\* |
| 15 |  | Head of Access\* |
| 16 |  | Head of Buildings & Estates\* |
| 17 |  | University Librarian\* (Acting/Interim University Librarian) |
| 18 |  | Director of IT\* |
| 19 |  | Athena SWAN Representative |
| 20 |  | Vice-Dean EDI CACSSS\*\* |
| 21 |  | Vice-Dean EDI Medicine |
| 22 |  | Vice-Dean EDI COBL |
| 23 |  | Vice-Dean EDI SEFS |
| 24 |  | Chair of University Mná Women’s Network |
| 25 |  | Chair of LGBT+ Staff Network |
| 26 |  | Chair of Disability Neurodivergence Staff Network |
| 27 |  | Chair of Race Equality Network |
| 28 |  |  University of Sanctuary Representative |
| 29 |  |  International Office Representative |
| 30 |  |  Quality Office Representative |
| 31 |  |  Sustainability Office Representative |
| 32 |  | Research Representative |
| 33 |  | Students Union Equality Committee Representative  |

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| Frequency of meetings | There will be a minimum of four meetings per year, scheduled at the beginning of the academic year. The meetings shall be convened by the Chair with a minimum of seven days’ notice of a meeting. Additional or extraordinary meetings will be convened as may be deemed necessary at the discretion of the Chair.The Secretary will issue a call for agenda items. Items to be placed on the agenda must be received by the Secretary ten working days prior to the meeting. |
| Reporting Line | Governing Authority People & Culture, Equality, Diversity, Inclusion and Belonging Committee (P&CEDIB Committee),University Leadership Team (ULT) |
| Minutes of meetings | Minutes to be shared with ULT for noting within seven days of the Committee meeting. |
| Communication of decision and actions  | Directly to ULT, for onward reference to GA as appropriate. |
| Review  | Annually  |

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| **DOCUMENT CONTROL** |
| ULT approval date: |  28 August 2024 | Due for review: |  28 August 2025 |
| Date of last review: | 6 May 2025 | Notes: |  |