



An Overview of University Structures & Governance

Office of Corporate & Legal Affairs

**A TRADITION OF
INDEPENDENT
THINKING**



UCC

University College Cork, Ireland
Coláiste na hOllscoile Corcaigh

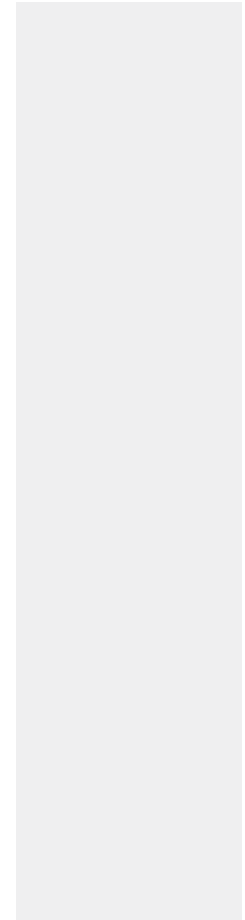
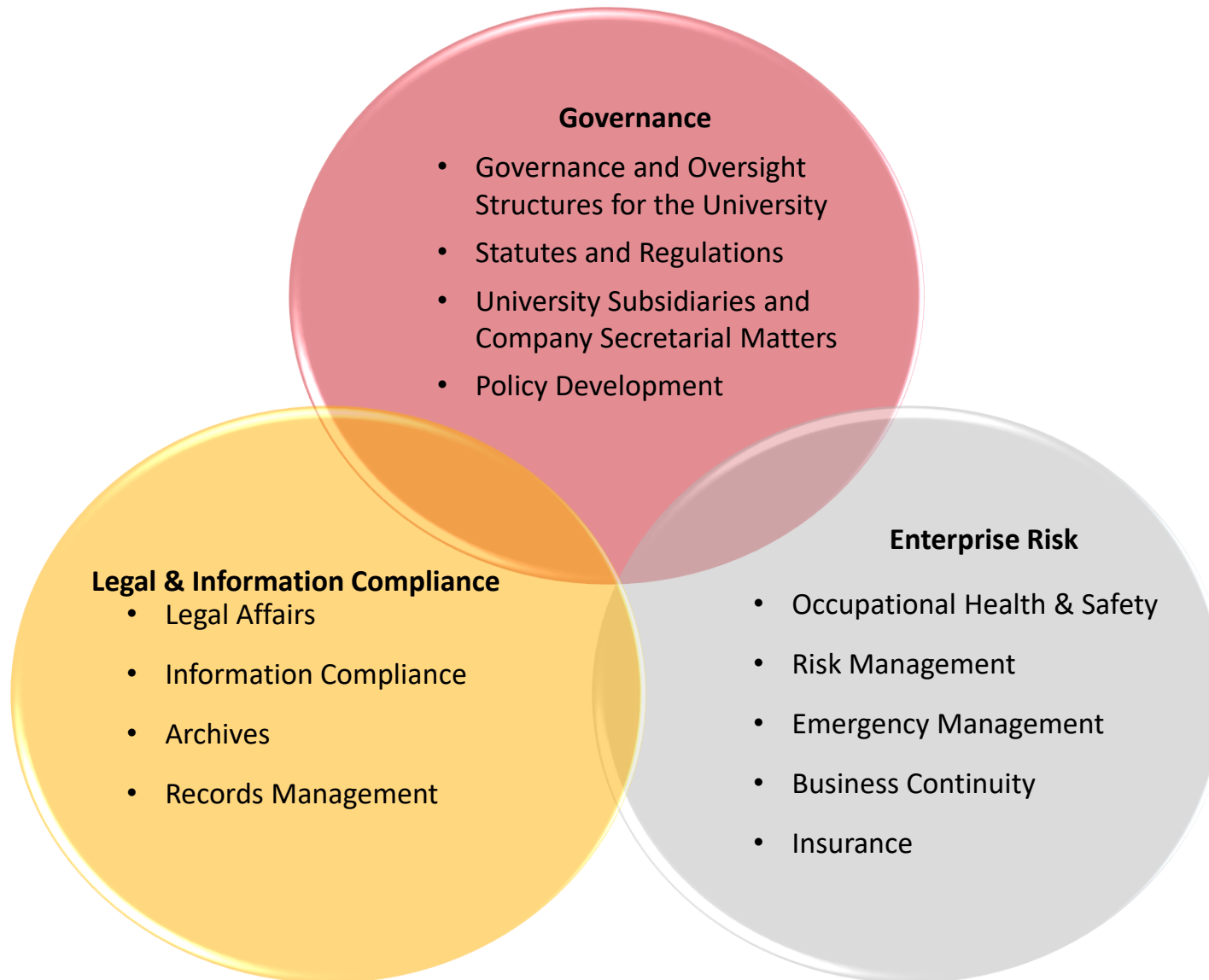
An Overview of University Structures & Governance

- What is the Office of Corporate & Legal Affairs?
- History & Background of UCC
- Statutory Framework
- Governance & Management
- Academic Governance

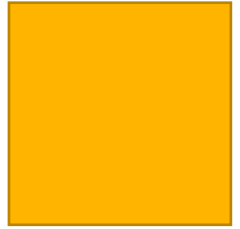
Role and Functions of OCLA

- Support the operation of the Governing Body and its Committees as the governance and oversight arm of the University.
- Deliver on governance agenda by ensuring Governing Body decisions are communicated and implemented.
- Responsible for a number of governance and compliance executive functions.

Executive Functions of OCLA



History & Background of UCC



History & Background of UCC

- 1845

Queen's College Cork – a constituent College of the Queen's University

- 1908

University College Cork, a constituent College of the National University of Ireland, receives its Charter as University College Cork

- 1997

University College Cork – **National University of Ireland Cork**

One of seven Universities recognised under the Universities Act 1997



Statutory Framework

- **Universities Act 1997**

- Reconstituted constituent Colleges of the NUI (UCC, UCD and UCG) as constituent Universities of the National University of Ireland and established NUI Maynooth as a fourth NUI member.
- Created a common statutory basis for all seven Universities in Ireland.
- Prescribes for example, the objects and functions of Universities, the composition of their Governing Body (or equivalent) and the composition of their Academic Councils.
- Recently **amended by the Higher Education Authority Act 2022**.

- **Principal Statute**

- UCC's implementation of the Universities Act 1997.
- Includes staff disciplinary procedures also for example.
- Amended from time to time.

- **Governing Body Regulations**

- E.g. Regulation on Conduct of Governing Body Business.
- Regulations relating to schemes of appointment and promotion to academic posts.

Governance Structure

- **Governing Body**

- Section 15(2) of the **Universities Act 1997**: *"...the functions of a university shall be performed by or on the directions of its governing authority"*.
- Composition of the Governing Body is pre-determined by the Universities Act with some limited flexibility as to its size. In UCC's case, there are currently 39 members (21 of which are external to the University) but this will reduce to 19 members under the Higher Education Authority Act 2022.
- Five main Standing Committees of Governing Body.

- **Academic Council**

- Section 27(1) of the **Universities Act 1997**: *"...control the academic affairs of the university, including the curriculum of, and instruction and education provided by, the university"*.
- Composition of the Academic Council is largely determined by the University's Principal Statute but within parameters set by the Universities Act.

Governance Structure

- Governing Body composition as at January 2023:

Chairperson	1
President	1
Officers	1
Professors/Associate Professors	5*
Other full-time academic staff	5*
Staff (full-time) other than academic staff	3*
Students' Union Officers	2
Postgraduate Student Nominee	1*
External Nominees	4
Minister for Further & Higher Education Nominees	4
Graduate Representatives	3*
Local Authority Representatives	7*
National University of Ireland Representatives	<u>2*</u>
Total	39**

*Governing Body elections are held for these member categories. All other members hold their position ex-officio.

** The composition of Governing Body will be altered under the Higher Education Authority Act 2022.

Governance Structure

- New Governing Body composition following the transition period of the Higher Education Authority Act 2022:

Chairperson	1
President	1
Minister for Further & Higher Education	
Nominees	3
Other External Members	6
Internal Members	5
Student Representatives	<u>3</u>
Total	19

Management Structure

- President

- Section 24(1) of the Universities Act 1997: *"the accounting officer of the University"*.
- Paragraphs. 1 and 2 Fourth Schedule of the **Universities Act 1997**:
"... manage and direct the university in its academic, administrative, financial, personnel and other activities and for those purposes has such powers as are necessary or expedient ... answerable to the governing [body] for the efficient and effective management of the university and for the due performance of his or her functions".

- University Leadership Team ("ULT")

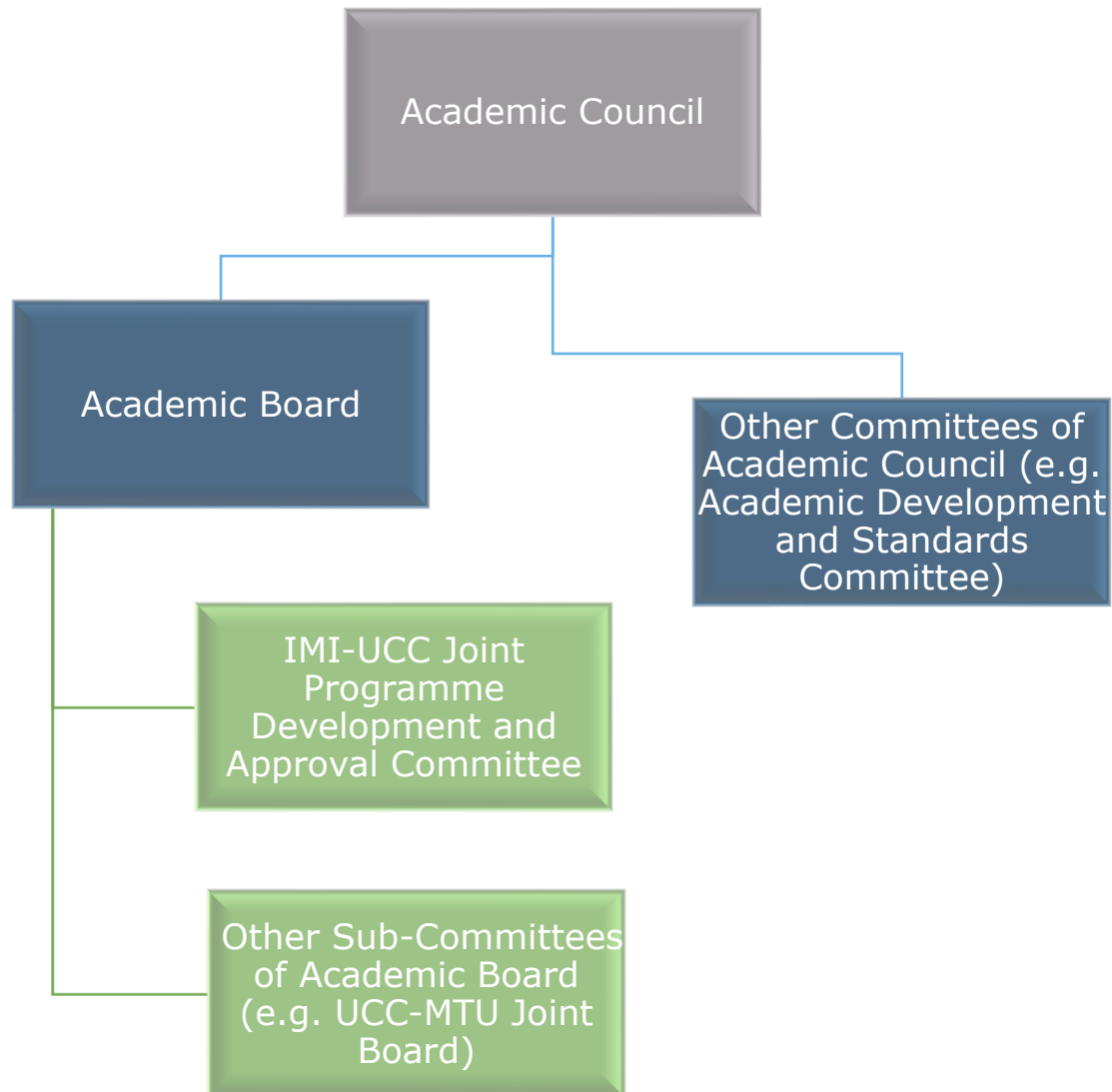
- Fifteen Senior Officers of the University.
- Functions as the executive decision making body of the University, led by the President (*ULT Terms of Reference*).
- Note this was formerly known as the University Management Team/UMT.

Academic Governance

- **Academic Council** is mandated by the Universities Act to “...control the academic affairs of the university, including the curriculum of, and instruction and education provided by, the university”.
- The activities of Academic Council are subject to the financial constraints determined by Governing Body and review by Governing Body.
- **Academic Board is the senior Standing Committee of Academic Council** and itself has sub-committees such as the IMI-UCC Joint Programme Development and Approval Committee and the MTU-UCC Joint Board.



Academic Governance



Academic Governance

- Functions of **Academic Council** are prescribed by Section 27(2) of the Universities Act 1997 and include:
 - to design and develop programmes of study,
 - to establish structures to implement those programmes,
 - to make recommendations on programmes for the development of research,
 - to make recommendations relating to the selection, admission, retention and exclusion of students generally,
 - to propose the form and contents of statutes to be made relating to the academic affairs of the university, including the conduct of examinations, the determination of examination results, the procedures for appeals by students relating to the results of such examinations and the evaluation of academic progress,
 - to make recommendations for the awarding of fellowships, scholarships, bursaries, prizes or other awards,



Academic Governance

- Extract from the [Academic Board's](#) Terms of Reference:

"...responsible for the discharge of functions delegated to it by Council and for the formulation of strategy and policy to meet the University's education and research objectives. The Academic Board, as the senior Standing Committee of Council, shall consider and consult on business from other Council Standing Committees and College Councils prior to bringing forward policy recommendations and proposals to Council for approval.

The Board shall also bring to the attention of Council developments in the national and international higher education arena concerning academic affairs, staff and student matters and may recommend institutional responses as appropriate."



An aerial photograph of a large, historic university building with a grey stone facade and a crenellated roofline. The building features numerous arched windows and is partially covered in ivy. In the foreground, a wide, paved path runs alongside a large, green lawn. A long line of people wearing red and blue academic regalia is walking along the path. Other individuals in academic dress are scattered across the lawn and path. A red bench is visible on the right side of the path. A red rectangular box is overlaid on the image, containing white text.

Office of Corporate and Legal Affairs

<https://www.ucc.ie/en/ocla/>