

Student Experience Committee

Terms of Reference

Purpose

The Student Experience Committee is established to assist the Governing Body in its oversight role of the student experience while, at the same time, ensuring the legal and compliance requirements as they relate to students are being met.

Membership

The membership of the Committee shall be appointed by the Governing Body on the recommendation of the Nominations Committee. Consideration will be given to the available skills, expertise and competencies required to fulfil the Committee's terms of reference. Any gaps in terms of skills required for the Committee may be filled by utilising section 18(4) of the Universities Act 1997 which permits members external to the University to be appointed by the Governing Body.

The Committee shall consist of twelve members including:

- Chair
- 2 internal members of Governing Body
- 2 external members of Governing Body
- 2 members external to the University
- 2 members elected by the Academic Council (at least one of whom shall be a Professor)
- The President, Students' Union
- The Welfare Officer, Students' Union
- The Postgraduate Officer, Students' Union

Gender balance is a key element to membership composition. Accordingly, membership of the Committee shall not be comprised of more than eight members of any one gender.

The Chair and Deputy Chair of the Committee shall be members of the Governing Body. Gender balance will be maintained between these two roles. They shall be nominated by the President, following consultation with the Chair of the Governing Body, and approved by the Governing Body.

Members are required to attend all meetings of the Committee. In the event a member does not attend 3 consecutive meetings, they may be replaced.

A Student Experience Committee effectiveness review will be carried out after an 18 month to a 2-year period.

Conflicts of Interest

Committee members shall take personal responsibility to declare any potential conflict of interest arising in relation to any items on the agenda for Committee meetings.

Where a conflict of interest arises, a Committee member shall bring this to the attention of the Chair and where necessary absent themselves from the meeting for the duration of the discussion and shall not take part in any decisions in relation to the matter in question. Similar arrangements apply in relation to relevant meeting documentation where such documentation is not made available to the Committee member. This shall be noted in the minutes of the Committee meeting.

Responsibilities

On behalf of Governing Body, the Student Experience Committee shall provide oversight of and make recommendations thereon to Governing Body on:

- a) all matters related to student services;
- b) the delivery of strong student-focused support services which address the health, wellbeing and welfare of students;
- c) the implementation of the Academic Strategy as it relates to Student Experience;
- d) the widening of participation and enhancing of access for all students;
- e) the fostering of an environment that promotes equality, diversity and inclusion;
- f) the implementation of the Accommodation Strategy;
- g) the development of a strong culture of student engagement;
- h) the implementation of other University-level strategies that relate to student experience.

See Appendix A for items that shall be included in the Committee's annual work plan.

The Committee shall:

- i) make whatever recommendations to the Governing Body it deems appropriate on any area within its remit where action or improvement is needed. No decision/recommendation of the Committee shall be valid until approved by the Governing Body;
- j) perform any other student experience related duties or responsibilities at the request of the Chair of the Governing Body.

Rights

The Committee is authorised by the Governing Body to investigate any activity within its terms of reference and to seek any information it may require on that activity from any employee of the University or its subsidiaries and all such employees are directed to cooperate with the Committee. The Committee shall be given the necessary resources for this purpose.

The Committee may:

- report concerns and issues related to the student experience and welfare at the University to any University body or Committee;
- co-opt expertise to provide specialist skills, knowledge and experience; and
- procure specialist ad-hoc advice at the reasonable expense of the University, subject to budgets agreed by the Governing Body.

Meetings

- the Student Experience Committee shall meet 6 times a year, three weeks in advance of Governing Body meetings. The Chair of the Students Experience Committee may convene additional meetings, as they deem necessary;
- a minimum of seven members of the Student Experience Committee, including the Chair, will be present for the meeting to be deemed quorate. A duly convened meeting of the Committee at which a quorum is present shall be competent to exercise all or any of the authorities, powers and discretions vested in or exercisable by the Committee;
- the following should attend for all or part of Committee meetings as required:
 - Director of Student Experience
 - Vice-President for Learning and Teaching
- the following may attend for all or part of meetings at the invitation of the Committee:
 - University Officers,
 - Staff,
 - Students' Union representatives,
- the Student Experience Committee may ask any other officials of the University to attend to assist it with its discussions on any particular matter;
- the Student Experience Committee may ask any or all of those who normally attend but who are not members to withdraw to facilitate open and frank discussion of particular matters;
- private sessions, meeting time without executives present, should be included on the Committee's work programme to be a standing item at the start or the end of the agenda of two meetings per annum;
- the Governing Body may ask the Student Experience Committee to convene further meetings to discuss particular issues on which they seek the Committee's advice; and
- administrative support to the Committee shall be provided by the Office of Corporate and Legal Affairs.

Information Requirements

On a regular basis, the Student Experience Committee will be provided with:

- Admissions Report and the First Year Retention Report
- Report of Joint Meetings between Governing Body Student Experience Committee and AC Student Experience Committee
- Minutes of Joint Board for Student Experience

The Student Experience Committee will receive when necessary, and at least annually, for information and appropriate comment, advice and action, reports from support services and recreational and sporting facilities;

As and when appropriate the Committee will also be provided with information/reports/presentations:

- Teaching & Learning Space at UCC
- Student Assistance Fund
- Mental Health and Wellbeing Issues

- Student Engagement and Access to the Glucksman
- UCC Library
- Fitness to Practice Policy/Fitness to Continue in Study Policy
- Accommodation
- Review of Alcohol Programme
- Student HUB
- First Year Undergraduate Student Admissions
- UCC's Sport Strategy

Management shall also ensure that matters of material concern that are relevant to the Committee's responsibilities are brought promptly to the attention of the Committee.

Period of Office

The period of office for Governing Body members of the Student Experience Committee shall be for a three-year period for a maximum of three consecutive terms (nine years).

Student members shall be ex-officio and their membership will end when they cease to hold office.

Reporting

The Chair of the Student Experience Committee will submit a report to the Governing Body one week prior to each Governing Body meeting.

The Committee will also review these terms of reference at least annually and will make recommendations on updating or amending them to the Governing Body as appropriate.

Version	1
Approved by:	Date
Governing Body	11 June 2019

Appendix A: Annual Work Programme

The Student Experience Committee annual work programme shall be agreed at the beginning of the year and communicated to Governing Body in advance of the coming year. It shall include:

- a) **Student Experience:** discuss matters of interest related to the student experience and to make recommendations thereon to Governing Body;
- b) **Student Services and Welfare:** review policy and monitor developments associated with the provision of student services and enhancement of student welfare and the overall student experience;
- c) **Student Support Services:** keep under review University welfare support services provided to students and to report to Governing Body in order to assist it in carrying out its advisory role on the maintenance and operation of such services;
- d) **Student Access:** review progress of the University's Access plans and provisions;
- e) **Student Accommodation:** keep under review the implementation of the Accommodation Strategy;
- f) **Student Issues:** afford student representatives an opportunity to raise issues about student service provision and performance within the University;
- g) **Student Experience Enhancement:** make recommendations to other University committees in relation to the enhancement of the student experience;
- h) **Student Experience Targets:** review the University's fulfilment of strategic targets relating to the student experience, and to make recommendations to Governing Body, University Management and Academic Council, in respect of this;
- i) **International Students:** keep under review the services and supports relating to international students;
- j) **Student Reports:** receive when necessary, and at least annually, for information and appropriate comment, advice and action, reports from support services and recreational and sporting facilities.