



## Draft Minutes of the Human Resources Committee of 11<sup>th</sup> February 2016

**PRESENT:** Mr Dermot Frost (Chair), Professor David Ditchburn (Head of School of Histories and Humanities), Professor Sylvia Draper (Board nominee), Ms Orla Sheehan (Vice Provost/Chief Academic Officer's nominee), Ms Sinead Mac Bride (Equality Committee Representative), Mr Peter Donohoe (External Representative), Ms Lynn Ruane (Student Union President), Ms Aine Mulcahy (Chief Financial Officer's nominee), Ms Kate Malone (Director of Human Resources)

**APOLOGIES:** Professor Linda Hogan (Vice-Provost/Chief Academic Officer), Professor Eoin O'Sullivan (Head of School of Social Work and Social Policy), Professor Gillian Martin (Senior Lecturer), Professor Vinny Cahill (Dean of Faculty of Engineering, Mathematics and Science), Ms Patricia Callaghan (Academic Secretary)

**IN ATTENDANCE:** Ms Aveen Batt (Deputy Director of Human Resources) for all items  
Ms Joanne O'Hanlon (Human Resources) for all items  
Ms Mary Leahy (Employee Relations Team Leader, Human Resources) for items 15, 16 and 17

Items for specific Board attention are denoted XXX

### Section A

**HRC/15-16/12 Minutes of last Meeting**  
The minutes of the meeting held on 22<sup>nd</sup> October 2015 were approved and signed.

**XXX HRC/15-16/13 Matters Arising from the Minutes**

#### **Professional, Administrative and Support Appointments – Contract Type**

The Director of HR presented a paper in relation to this item that was reviewed and approved by the Executive Officers Group. The paper outlined the approach to filling posts on this grade whereby an existing permanent or indefinite duration employee would be appointed on a permanent or indefinite duration basis at the higher grade if successful through competition. However, all external appointments and/or where the work is readily identifiable as short term or the appointment is to cover the temporary absence of a named postholder will be filled on a fixed term contract basis of up to 5 years.

Concerns were raised again by the committee in relation to the ability to attract high caliber talent to join the University on a fixed term contract basis and also the huge demand on the recruitment team within HR due to the significant increase in recruitment activity as a result of these fixed term appointments. The Director of HR acknowledged these concerns but expressed that this was a short term measure and only applicable for the remainder of the academic year 2015/2016 at which time it will be reviewed.

**ACTION: The committee noted the paper on the basis that this practice is a short term measure for the academic year 2015/2016 at which time it will be reviewed.**

**Regulations on Outside Earnings**

The committee noted a memo from the HR Services Manager in relation to regulations on outside earnings for Administrative and Support Staff and agreed that no further action was required.

**HRC/15-16/14**

**Director of Human Resources Report**

The Director of HR provided the committee with a broad overview of the current activity ongoing in the department in terms of resourcing, promotions, staff training, HRIS, mentoring, induction and the Head of School programme.

She advised that the Feedback and Recognition pilot was significantly delayed but a review of the pilot will take place in the coming weeks. Following a query from a committee member in relation to the sub-committee that was established to review the current PMDS system, the Director of HR advised that the Feedback and Recognition pilot was only focusing on administrative areas initially and not academic. The Deputy Director of HR advised that work is due to commence at a very high level in relation to performance management for junior academic staff and she would welcome the input of this sub-committee once this project is underway.

The Director of HR announced to the committee that 2016 will see a Provost's award for Professional and Support staff similar to the teaching award for academic staff in the University.

The Director of HR also announced that HR will host an open day in early March.

In response to a query raised by the committee, the Director of HR confirmed the Board decision to only proceed with promotions for academic staff. She also advised that HR are looking to move to job evaluation for professional and support staff rather than a promotion process but this approach will require HEA approval. The committee will be kept informed on this item as it progresses.

**XXX HRC/15-16/15**

**Sick Leave Policy - Implementation of Circular: Revised Sick Leave Arrangements for all Staff of Universities and other Third Level Colleges under the remit of the HEA dated 1<sup>st</sup> December 2015**

The Employee Relations Team Leader reported to the committee on the revisions to the Sick Leave Policy arising from the circular from the Department of Education and Skills.

The committee noted the changes and approved the amended policy.

**ACTION: Amended policy to go forward to Board for approval.**

**XXX HRC/15-16/16 Annual Leave Policy - Implementation of Circular: Revised Sick Leave Arrangements for all Staff of Universities and other Third Level Colleges under the remit of the HEA dated 1<sup>st</sup> December 2015**  
The Employee Relations Team Leader reported to the committee on the revisions to the Annual Leave Policy arising from the circular from the Department of Education and Skills.

The committee noted the changes and approved the amended policy.

**ACTION: Amended policy to go forward to Board for approval.**

**XXX HRC/15-16/17 Career Break Policy - Implementation of Circular: Revised Sick Leave Arrangements for all Staff of Universities and other Third Level Colleges under the remit of the HEA dated 1<sup>st</sup> December 2015**  
The Employee Relations Team Leader reported to the committee on the revisions to the Career Break Policy arising from the circular from the Department of Education and Skills.

The committee noted the changes and approved the amended policy.

**ACTION: Amended policy to go forward to Board for approval.**

**XXX HRC/15-16/18 Senior Academic Promotions Policy**  
The Deputy Director of HR outlined the proposed minor changes to the policy and advised that a broader amendment to the policy will be presented to a future meeting of the committee.

The committee requested a change to section 2.7.1 on page 4 to amend the word “three” to “third”.

The committee also queried the title of the appeals committee as they felt “ad hoc” causes some confusion and could it be removed.

**ACTION: HR to amend section 2.7.1 as outlined above and to investigate the reasoning behind the title of the appeals committee and revert to the committee.**

## **Section B**

**HRC/15-16/19 Guidelines to Issuing Employment References**  
The Deputy Director of HR presented a paper setting out guidelines to issuing employment references. These guidelines set out the procedure to be followed by employees of Trinity who are requested to provide references.

Concerns were raised by the committee in relation to the purpose of such guidelines and how they would be communicated University wide.

The Deputy Director of HR confirmed that the guidelines provide a safeguard for the University and are a requirement attached to the renewal of the University

Insurance Policy. She also advised that the guidelines will be posted on the HR website and proposed that an email communication is circulated to all staff directing them to the HR website to review any new or amended policies/guidelines.

**ACTION: The committee noted the guidelines but requested that the following amendments are incorporated:**

**Bullet point 8.            Replace the word “policy” with “practice”**

**Bullet point 10.        Remove the “s” at the end of Freedom of Information Acts**

**HRC/15-16/20**

#### **HR Policy Review**

As part of the HR Strategy, HR have committed to a review of all existing policies and to introduce new policies if required. The Deputy Director of HR presented a detailed plan and timeline for the policy review project and requested the committee’s comments in relation to the proposed plan and also if there was anything omitted that they would like to see included.

A committee member raised a concern in relation to the absence of a policy or guidelines in relation to academic staff Conference Leave and/or Offsite Working and requested if this was something that could be developed to offer some guidance to Heads of School.

**ACTION: The Deputy Director of HR agreed to look into what is currently in place and to ascertain if a new policy/guideline should be developed or if an enhancement to an existing policy would suffice.**

**The committee noted the proposed approach and timeline.**

**HRC/15-16/21**

#### **Relocation Expenses**

The Deputy Director of HR presented a paper to the committee in relation to relocation expenses for academic staff. The committee welcomed the paper and thanked HR for addressing this item.

The committee discussed the contents of the paper. A member of the committee queried the benchmarking exercise and why it was limited to just a national perspective and requested that we look to our international counterparts such as London or Zurich for a comparator but another committee member was of the opinion that we would not be comparing like with like. Other suggestions included looking to other companies in Dublin to see what they offer in terms of relocation or perhaps offering a varied sum of relocation based on the level of post - Professor, Associate Professor, Assistant Professor.

The committee acknowledged that relocation is currently not paid out of a central fund and charged back to the School’s so an increase in relocation would impact on School budgets. It was agreed that this item will need to be presented to the Heads of School committee and Finance committee for their input.

The Deputy Director of HR recommended that we do further analysis on the data to ascertain the current cost per head for relocation to Trinity and the projected

cost per head should we adopt the proposed changes and incorporate the findings into this paper. It would then be presented to the Heads of School committee and Finance committee.

The committee agreed overall that the relocation fee needs to be enhanced and was happy with the next steps as suggested above.

**HRC/15-16/22**

**Any Other Business**

**Committee Self-Evaluation**

The Chair asked the committee if they would be willing to participate in a self-evaluation exercise as it has been a number of years since an evaluation has been completed. The committee agreed to this request.

**ACTION: HR to follow up with Internal Audit to commence this process.**

**Trade Union Representation on the HR Committee**

In response to a formal request from the Trade Union representatives in the University, the Chair asked the committee if they see a benefit in having a trade union representative on this committee and opened the floor for comments. It was agreed that this topic should appear as an agenda item at the next meeting of this committee.

**Equality Committee**

The Equality Committee representative advised the committee that the Dignity and Respect policy had been approved by the Equality Committee and thanked the Employee Relations Manager and his team for their contribution to the amended policy.

**HRC/15-16/23**

**Date of Next Meeting**

The next meeting of the Human Resources Committee is scheduled for Thursday 21<sup>st</sup> April 2016 from 11am – 1pm in the Board Room, House 1.

**SIGNED:..... DATE:.....**