



Draft Minutes of the Human Resources Committee of 21st April 2016

PRESENT:

Mr Dermot Frost (Chair), Professor Linda Hogan (Vice-Provost/Chief Academic Officer), 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), Professor Eoin O'Sullivan (Head of School of Social Work and Social Policy), Professor Vinny Cahill (Dean of Faculty of Engineering, Mathematics and Science), Ms Patricia Callaghan (Academic Secretary)

APOLOGIES:

Professor Gillian Martin (Senior Lecturer)

IN ATTENDANCE:

Ms Aveen Batt (Deputy Director of Human Resources) for all items
Ms Joanne O'Hanlon (Human Resources) for all items
Ms Sandra Kavanagh (Assistant Secretary, Acting) for item 27
Mr Ken O'Doherty (Employee Relations Manager, Human Resources) for item 28

Items for specific Board attention are denoted XXX

Section A

HRC/15-16/24

Minutes of last Meeting

The minutes of the meeting held on 11th February 2016 were approved and signed.

HRC/15-16/25

Matters Arising from the Minutes

Committee Self-Evaluation

The Chair advised the committee that we will proceed with a self-evaluation exercise and a correspondence will issue to the committee in the coming weeks.

Professional, Administrative and Support Appointments – Contract Type

Following a query from a committee member on the expiry of this practice, the Director of HR acknowledged this concern and agreed to put together a timeline in relation to this item.

HRC/15-16/26

Tenure-Track System for Entry-Level Academics

The Vice-Provost/Chief Academic Officer presented the approved proposal for a Tenure Track system for entry level academics and advised that an unrestricted circulation of the document is due soon together with a high level two page summary.

An overview of the paper was provided and some of the key elements were highlighted.

Following comments from the committee, the Vice-Provost/Chief Academic Officer provided the following responses:

- Benchmarking criteria would be University wide but will be sufficiently adapted across the different Faculties
- School budgets are expected to be enhanced to cover teaching buy-outs and not expected to come from reserves
- This approach is intended to be the primary method of recruitment going forward but recognise there may be still a requirement for fixed term/specific purpose contract recruitment
- Probation still applies so exists may occur prior to the end of year one
- Mentors act as an informal advisor, while Head of School acts as manager
- Training for Mentors will highlight that the focus is on full engagement and not just research
- Appeals process for Tenure Track still to be fully developed
- EOG to decide when the University starts to advertise Tenure Track

The Vice-Provost/Chief Academic Officer concluded the discussion by thanking the committee for their comments and left the meeting.

HRC/15-16/27

Employee Alcohol and Substance Misuse Policy

The Assistant Secretary presented the updated version of the above policy and following lengthy discussions, the committee agreed to stand down this policy as the introduction of such a policy would expose the University to potential liabilities.

ACTION: Assistant Secretary to inform the Secretary of the College that the recommendation of the HR committee is not to proceed with this policy.

XXX HRC/15-16/28

Dignity and Respect Policy

The Employee Relations Manager presented the updated version of the above policy and provided a summary of the changes including:

- The strengthening of the language throughout the policy
- Confirmation that a formal “terms of reference” document will issue to the investigator, complainant and respondent when a complaint is being formally investigated
- Enhanced guidance notes throughout the policy
- Addition of a two page Executive Summary, which includes a succinct summary of options for resolving complaints and where to access help
- Gender neutralisation of the language in the document

The HR Committee approved the document subject to the removal of the synopsis bulleted paragraph on “What bullying is Not” on Page 12, as it is a duplication of the text on page 11. The trade union request to remove this section had been discussed and agreed (subject to HRC approval) with the Employee Relations Manager.

The committee noted the changes and approved the amended policy.

Following a query from a committee member, it was agreed that HR would communicate this policy revision to all Heads of School and Line Managers following approval by Board.

ACTION: Amended policy to go forward to Board for approval. HR to communicate this policy revision to all Heads of School and Line Managers following approval by Board.

XXX HRC/15-16/29 Probation Review Policy for Professional, Research, Administrative, Library, Technical and Support Staff.

The Director of HR presented the updated version of the above policy drawing particular attention to the expansion of this policy to Research staff.

Following a query from a committee member, the Director of HR confirmed that it was still the case that an employee who moves to a new post on the same grade will not be subjected to a probationary period again and if performance issues arise, they can be managed through alternative measures.

The committee noted the changes and approved the amended policy.

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

XXX HRC/15-16/30 Carer’s Leave Policy

The Deputy Director of HR reported to the committee on the slight revisions to the Carer’s Leave Policy arising from the review of all HR Policies.

The committee noted the changes and approved the amended policy.

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

XXX HRC/15-16/31 Parental Leave Policy

The Deputy Director of HR reported to the committee on the slight revisions to the Parental Leave Policy arising from the review of all HR Policies.

The committee noted the changes and approved the amended policy.

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

XXX HRC/15-16/32 Force Majeure Leave Policy

The Deputy Director of HR reported to the committee on the slight revisions to the Force Majeure Leave Policy arising from the review of all HR Policies.

Following a recommendation from a committee member, the Deputy Director of HR agreed to reference “Emergency Leave” in the title to provide clarity on when this policy applies.

The committee noted the changes and approved the amended policy.

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

HRC/15-16/33

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, ongoing pensions review and the conclusion of the Head of School programme.

The Director of HR advised that HR will launch a Customer Charter at the end of May.

In response to a query raised by the committee, the Deputy Director of HR confirmed that there is flexibility in terms of an external assessor joining an interview board through a video conference facility but stressed that if this approach was adapted, then it would have to apply to all candidates coming for interview.

The Director of HR acknowledged the concerns of the committee in relation to the delays in recruitment.

Section B

HRC/15-16/34

Any Other Business

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. The committee agreed that this request should be facilitated.

ACTION: The Chair of the committee to follow up with the Registrar on this item.

HRC/15-16/35

Date of Next Meeting

The next meeting of the Human Resources Committee is scheduled for Thursday 26th May 2016 from 2pm – 4pm in the Board Room, House 1.

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