

ACCESS, EQUALITY & STUDENT AFFAIRS COMMITTEE

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The AESAC is a sub-committee of the Governing Authority and reports to Governing Authority.
- 1.2 The AESAC will provide its agreed minutes to the Governing Authority as soon as possible for noting and/or discussion as necessary.
- 1.3 The AESAC is charged with the matters set out in its terms of reference.
- 1.4 The Committee is authorised by Governing Authority to obtain outside legal or other independent professional advice if it considers this necessary.
- 1.5 The Committee will meet at least four times per annum.
- 1.6 A quorum for a meeting of the Committee shall be one third of the total number of members, rounded up to the nearest whole number, plus one. The participation of members by tele conferencing and/or video conferencing will be counted for the purposes of a quorum. No meeting will proceed in the absence of a quorum.
- 1.7 At the start of each meeting, the Secretary to the Committee will ask members to declare any conflict of interest, perceived or otherwise, in relation to any matters on the agenda. Where such a conflict is declared, the member will absent him/herself from the meeting during consideration of the agenda item. In addition, any additional documentation will not be made available to the member following the declaration of interest. These matters will be recorded in the minutes.
- 1.8 Decisions taken at any Committee meeting shall be decided by consensus where possible. Where, in the opinion of the Chair, consensus is not possible, then questions will be decided by a majority of the votes of the members present either in person or by tele conferencing and/or video conferencing. Where there is an equality of votes, the Chair shall have an extra casting vote. Where decisions are unanimous, they shall be recorded as such in the minutes. Dissensions and negative votes shall be noted in the minutes.
- 1.9 The AESAC will agree its Programme of Work at least on an annual basis.
- 1.10 The Committee will review its terms of reference and composition on an annual basis and recommend any proposed changes to the Governing Authority for consideration.
- 1.11 The Committee will liaise closely with other Governing Authority Committees and University Committees as appropriate.
- 1.12 The Committee will undertake a self-evaluation process at least every three years and report on the outcome of this assessment to the Governing Authority.

2. Terms of Reference

- 2.1 To agree policies relating to student access and widening participation to the University and student equality statements and submit them to Governing Authority for consideration and approval.
- 2.2 To ensure that policies prepared are in accordance with good practice, student equality, diversity, adherence to Athena Swam principles, Student, University and legislative requirements and in alignment with relevant national policy for consideration by Governing Authority in areas including the following:
 - a) Safety, Health and Wellbeing, Equality, Diversity and Inclusion matters which impact on students
 - b) Improving access to, and progression in the University, for students regardless of their
 - Socio Economic Status
 - Gender
 - Civil Status
 - Family Status
 - Sexual Orientation
 - Religious belief or lack of religious belief
 - Age
 - Disability or the nature of their disability
 - Race, colour, nationality or ethnic or national origin
 - Membership of the Traveller or Roma Communities
 - c) Supporting the participation and progression of students from under-represented groups/communities, particularly those who are socio-economically disadvantaged, and especially within the opportunities that Internationalisation (e.g. University of Sanctuary), flexible and lifelong learning in the University can provide with respect to greater access and inclusion.
 - d) Student support services & service provision for students
 - e) Other policy matters pertaining to the student experience at the University including a Student Alcohol/Substance Misuse Policy.
- 2.3 To monitor and evaluate the implementation, operation and effectiveness of these student-related policies and protocols and to report on each one at least once an academic year to Governing Authority. To recommend to Governing Authority when appropriate, changes to these policies, recommend additional policies and the removal of policies no longer fit for purpose.

3. Composition & Membership of AESAC

1. President or their nominee: **Professor Kerstin Mey**
2. Interim Provost & Deputy President: **Professor Shane Kilcommins**
3. President, UL Student Life: **Ms Maeve Rutledge**
4. Deputy President, UL Student Life: **Ms Maeve Gilmore**
5. President, PSU: **Mr Louis Pemble**
6. Director of Human Rights and Equality, Diversity & Inclusion: **Dr Marie Connolly**

Governing Authority: Three members who are not employees/students of UL
Ms Joan Aherne, Ms Trish Long (Chair), Vacancy

Three members who are employees of UL
**Ms Michelle Breen, Professor Edmond Magner,
Dr Bob Strunz**

External Members: Two members external to the University who are not members of Governing Authority appointed by the Governing Authority on the nomination of the President following consultation with the Chancellor. Their terms of appointment may be flexible and individuals may be replaced during the term of the Committee to provide for changing skills being available to the Committee as required.

Ms Siobhan Long, Dr Shivaun Quinlivan

In attendance: Director, Student Affairs: **Ms Rhona McCormack**
Head of Counselling: **Dr Lucy Smith**
UL Student Life Communities Officer: **Ms Laura Corcoran**

The Chairperson of the Access, Equality & Student Affairs Committee is appointed from amongst its membership by the Governing Authority on the nomination of the President following consultation with the Chancellor.

Approved by Governing Authority 5 May 2022