MINUTES

Board/Committee	:	Governing Authority
Meeting	:	Meeting M25-4
Venue	:	Boardroom, GLISB
Date	:	1 April 2025
Attendance	:	June Arnold; Ronan Cahill; Donal Donovan; Kevin Fleming (MST); Ann Marie Kennedy; Lucy Edith Kiiza; Shane Kilcommins; Brigid Laffan (Chair); Ann Ledwith; Edmond Magner; Aibhlín McCrann; Anne O'Connor; Sinéad O'Flanagan (MST); Mark Southern; Bob Strunz
Apologies	:	Liam Carroll; Síofra Foley
In Attendance	:	Grainne Frain;Ciara Hogan;John Field;John Kelly;Pat O'Neill(MST).

1. GENERAL

1.1 NOTED The Chancellor addressed a preliminary matter with members. She emphasised that the Governing Authority and its committee structures are the designated forums for members to address issues or question the Executive and in order to ensure the effectiveness of the Governing Authority all members must operate within this framework. These forums are the means by which the tone is set and the Governing Authority and Committees will be serviced in line with the recently agreed Service Level Agreement. Any questions can be raised through the Corporate Secretary with a view to them being added to the agenda with the agreement of the Chairs. However, if any issue of a serious nature arises, this can be raised directly with the President and/or the Chancellor as appropriate. The Chancellor encouraged members to ensure that these remain the forums where meaningful oversight and accountability is secured. The Chancellor also invited internal members, who know and work in the University to express and views or concerns that they may have about the effectiveness of the Governing Authority or the Committees.

2. CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

2.1 NOTED The Corporate Secretary requested members to declare if they had a conflict of interest arising in relation to any matters on the agenda. None were declared.

3. MINUTES AND MATTERS ARISING

3.1 AGREED Minutes of M25-2 of 25 February 2025 with amendments proposed by Dr Bob Strunz, Professor Edmond Magner and Ms Lucy Kiiza and the minutes M25-3 of 26 March 2025 as presented.

4. GOVERNING AUTHORITY ACTION ITEMS

4.1 NOTED Document entitled "Sixth Governing Authority Action Items to April 2025 Meeting", previously circulated.

4.2 NOTED Memorandum from the Director, Human Resources entitled “Information request from Governing Authority meeting of 25 February 2025”, dated 1 April 2025, previously circulated. The memo set out a breakdown of academic staff, research staff and professional staff including gender breakdown. In addition, it was noted that academic appointments now indicate whether the appointment is internal or external.

4.3 NOTED At the request of members, the Interim PDP, has conveyed the appreciation of the Governing Authority to the member of staff in Academic Registry who raised the recent awards issue. It was emphasised that individuals should feel empowered to raise any concerns, and in this case the matter when raised was addressed as expected. The Governing Authority will convey its thanks that the issue was raised and emphasise that any such issues should always be raised so that they may be properly addressed and any errors rectified.

5. ACTING PRESIDENT’S REPORT

5.1 NOTED Document entitled “Acting President’s Report to Governing Authority, April 2025, previously circulated. A briefing by the Acting President included the following:

- **Culture**: Forvis Mazars is collaborating with the Governing Authority, Executive Committee, and P&CC to develop a "Working" UL Target Culture document. This document will be shared for wider consultation to gather actionable suggestions on how everyone in UL can embody the target culture. This process will be iterative, supported by training, a cultural framework, and a culture roadmap. Forvis Mazars, along with the executive communications team, is drafting the stakeholder engagement process to ensure comprehensive community involvement and effective feedback loops during the coming weeks.
- **Workload Allocation Model (WAM)**: The centralised WAM aims to ensure consistent data collection and process integration, addressing recommendations from the HEA, internal audits, and quality reviews. This initiative supports UL's commitment to transparency, fair allocation of work, gender bias avoidance, and aligns with its strategic goals, including Athena SWAN accreditation, the Gender Equality Action Plan, and the Equality and Human Rights Strategy. It is currently assisting over 600 academics in planning their workload for the AY2025/26. Additional training sessions and drop-in clinics will be available throughout the planning period. Any changes to the WAM will be considered after its first and second implementation cycles, with a Review Group to provide recommendations based on feedback from academics.
- **Engagements and representation of UL in Washington DC during St Patrick’s week 2025.**
- **Launch of the RespectfUL campaign**: The event included panel discussions and talks on ending sexual violence and harassment in institutions, addressing bullying and harassment in the workplace, and eliminating gender-based violence. The RespectfUL campaign supports these efforts with comprehensive documents, promoting inclusivity and preventing discrimination, bullying, and sexual violence and harassment, while ensuring access to essential support services.
- **UL Director of Marketing and Communications appointed to Limerick Chamber**.
- **HEA Visit:** The meeting on 1 April 2025 covered discussions on the budget and future planning with the Finance Division. During the HEA Board meeting held on 25 March 2025, the Renewal Plan was approved for publication, and the Board expressed their satisfaction with University’s current direction, encouraging continued efforts.

5.2 NOTED The Acting President recounted the widely publicised harassment campaign against a former student of the University. He detailed the University's actions from early September 2024 to the present, including the support provided and the student's prompt relocation to alternative accommodation. The HEA has been updated on the incident. The Acting President together with members of the Governing Authority noted the University's prompt and appropriate handling of the incident, noting that the measures taken to protect the student in question were appropriate. There has also been learning from the incident which will inform how the University will respond to any future instances.

5.3 NOTED The Executive will instruct staff overseeing student accommodation that in the event of any future incident CCTV footage should be preserved immediately, regardless of whether or not a formal complaint is received. This will facilitate taking appropriate action (including disciplinary action) against any individual(s) involved. The Interim PDP, together with SL and PSU, will proactively remind the community of the relevant disciplinary and complaint procedures and that there is a zero tolerance for such incidents.

5.4 NOTED Addressing concerns from a Governing Authority member about the recent Culture Workshop, the Acting President reassured every one of the University's and the Executive's dedication to transformational cultural change and the Renewal Plan. He confirmed that the entire Executive Committee is fully committed to these initiatives.

5.5 AGREED The Governing Authority will be provided with an analysis of the recent competition in the Department of Economics which serves as a good example of a proactive recruitment process. This analysis should include lessons learned, details on how the candidate pool was formed, and an evaluation of the yield at each stage.

6. STUDENT RECORD SYSTEM

6.1 NOTED A briefing by the Interim PDP including the following:

- An update on the Academic Transformation of UL's Operating Model (ATOM) including benchmark meetings and focus groups across the University with very positive engagement to-date. The initial scoping exercise is anticipated to be completed by early May 2025;
- Regarding students awarded incorrect award classifications, a draft Risk Incident Report has been completed and the scope of the Internal Audit agreed. The awards given will be reviewed over a ten-year period. Affected students have been contacted and some have submitted grade recheck forms. The UL Solicitor is collaborating with the Interim PDP to determine how the regulations can support changing any awards. A review of the exam board process will be presented to Academic Council on 29 April 2025 for approval;
- The HEA has been kept up-dated on progress. The final number of impacted awards will be notified to members once the Internal Audit Report is finalised;
- Assurance that all course directors were contacted regarding this issue, and those whose courses were impacted were not individually targeted in any way;
- In response to technical questions from Dr Bob Strunz, the Interim PDP suggested that they be addressed off-line which was agreed;
- The Interim PDP assured the Governing Authority that the University is not dependent on Clarion as a service provider.

7. STUDENT RELATED MATTERS

7.1 Student Life Report

7.1.1 NOTED Document entitled "Report of UL Student Life for the Governing Authority – Authored by Ronan Cahill and Síofra Foley as of 21/03/2025". The President, Student Life highlighted a range of items in the Report including: New Student Centre; Elections with the highest turnout in over six years and the new Executive Team were noted including Ms Siofra Foley as Student President and Ms Orlagh O'Regan as Deputy President & Welfare Officer; Trends on the ground including gambling as a reoccurring issue and the impact of the cost of living; Advice and Advocacy Report with 67% of student engagement related to financial concerns; Clubs & Societies; Events & Engagement including class based Balls; Charity Week; and Jacinta Duffy Memorial Run. The President, SL thanked the Interim PDP for their ongoing support in helping to fund the Commuter Hub.

7.2 Postgraduate Students' Union Report

7.2.1 NOTED Document entitled "Report from UL Postgraduate Students' Union to Governing Authority, 26 March, 2025 – Authored and presented by Lucy Edith Kiiza, President, ULPSU". The President, PSU highlighted a range of items in the Report including: Postgrad Ball; International Trad Night; fundraising; Holi Celebration; RespectfUL Campus Campaign including training on gender-based violence, moderating a session on racial discrimination and partnership with HREDI for promotional videos; Community Clean Up; Events including PhD Student Welcome, International Women's Day, Postgraduate Workers Organisation and coffee mornings. Nominations for the upcoming elections also open shortly.

7.3 NOTED The Acting President and Chancellor expressed their thanks to the Student Life and PSU Officers for their vital contributions, ongoing campaigns and significant initiatives. These efforts include addressing gambling and mental health issues, establishing the Commuter Hub, organising more day events for Charities Week, supporting the RespectfUL Campaign and participating in the St Patrick's Day Parade, which saw the largest student turnout ever. The Acting President also acknowledged the recent GAA Ball marking the many sporting successes of UL this academic year.

8. CULTURE

8.1 NOTED The issue of culture is dealt with under the Acting President's Report in Section 5.

9. COMMITTEE REPORTS

9.1 FINANCE, STRATEGY & PERFORMANCE COMMITTEE (FSPC)

9.1.1 NOTED Document entitled "Finance, Strategy & Performance Committee, Chair's Report to the Governing Authority, 1 April 2025" and documents relating to the Travel and Subsistence Policy, previously circulated.

9.1.2 NOTED The Chair, FSPC, on behalf of the Committee, briefed the Governing Authority on the matters addressed in the Report including:

- Chair's Update;
- Engaging members external to the University;

- Legal Recourse;
- Q1 2024/25 Report on Budget v's Actual Income & Expenditure;
- Update on the Policy for the Acquisition of new Property, Buildings, Land or Infrastructure – dealt with under Item 15;
- Travel & Subsistence Policy – recommendation to Governing Authority;
- Official Hospitality Policy;
- Treasury Policy;
- Subsidiary Board Vacancies;
- Approval of License under Asset Disposal Policy – approved by Committee.

9.1.3 NOTED Discussion on the most effective ways to provide comprehensive context to external committee members who are not members of the Governing Authority, ensuring they have a clear understanding of ongoing activities.

9.1.4 AGREED The following measures with regard to external committee members:
- Governing Authority minutes made easily accessible to them, and they should be informed where these minutes are found;
- Campus-wide emails provided to Governing Authority will be circulated;
- Bi-annual virtual/on campus meeting with President /PDP to provide briefings on UL developments;
- Annual informal meetings with Governing Authority members.

9.1.5 AGREED To approve the revised Travel as Subsistence Policy with one amendment related to Irish Residence Permit (Section 1.2.2.4).

9.1.6 NOTED Discussion on subsidiary boards, covering topics such as visibility by the Governing Authority, membership, composition, quorum, and potential conflicts of interest where Governing Authority members are appointed to a board. It was noted that these issues will be addressed in the S.64 Implementation Plan. However, it was noted that addressing the board composition of subsidiaries should be prioritised and a paper should be brought to the June meeting of the Finance, Strategy and Performance Committee. In the meantime, existing Board vacancies would not be filled, unless an urgent need arose.

9.1.7 AGREED A proposal will be presented to the FSPC and then to Governing Authority prior to the summer. This proposal should outline a timeline for subsidiary reform and rationalisation, with changes expected to be implemented by the end of 2025. The proposal should first be presented to the Executive Committee.

9.1.8 AGREED The next Acting Presidents Report to the Governing Authority should include the costs incurred to-date for S.64 professional services, as well as any forecasted legal or other related expenses.

9.2 STUDENT EXPERIENCE, ACCESS & EQUALITY COMMITTEE (SEAEC)

9.2.1 NOTED Document entitled "Student Experience, Access & Equality Committee, Chair's Report to the Governing Authority, 1 April 2025", previously circulated.

9.2.1 NOTED The Chair, SEAEC, on behalf of the Committee, briefed the Governing Authority on the matters addressed in the Report including:
- Use of approved technology applications for meetings;
- HREDI Strategy Annual Report;

- Accessibility Audit;
- SEAEC Workplan – recommendation for approval;
- Student Health Centre.

9.2.3 NOTED An updated SEAEC Workplan to be added immediately to oneAdvanced.

9.2.4 AGREED To approve Student Experience, Access & Equality Committee Workplan as amended.

9.3 NOMINATING COMMITTEE REPORT

9.3.1 NOTED Document entitled "Nominating Committee, Chair's Report to the Governing Authority, 1 April 2025", previously circulated.

9.3.2 NOTED The Chair, of the Nominating Committee, on behalf of the Committee, briefed the Governing Authority on the matters addressed in the Report including:

- Governing Authority Vacancy – recommendation for approval;
- Campus Development Committee - recommendation for approval;
- Audit & Risk Committee - recommendation for approval;
- Finance, Strategy & Performance Committee - recommendation for approval;
- Terms of Reference for Nominating & Governance Committee - recommendation for approval;
- Self-assessment Questionnaires for Governing Authority and Committees – the Corporate Secretary to provide a draft to Nominating & Governance Committee;
- Competency Framework for Governing Authority – the Corporate Secretary will prepare a specification to obtain external independent perspective;
- Use of Technology.

9.3.3 AGREED The following:

- To appoint Ms Catherine Duffy, current Chair of the People & Culture Committee to fill the casual vacancy (8-month remaining tenure) on the Governing Authority;
- To appoint Dr Sinéad O'Flanagan as Chair of the Campus Development Committee pending the appointment of Ministerial nominees to the Governing Authority;
- Subject to the circulation of [redacted] [redacted] biographies prior to any appointments being finalised that the [redacted] be appointed to the ARC, if unavailable to serve the [redacted] should be appointed. Similarly that a person with recent and relevant experience be appointed to the FSPC;
- The Chancellor will write to the Minister regarding the two ministerial vacancies on the Governing Authority.

9.3.4 NOTED The Acting President acknowledged the work of Ms June Arnold as Interim Chair of the Campus Development Committee.

9.3.5 Nominating & Governance Committee

9.3.5.1 NOTED Document entitled "Nominating Committee Chair' University of Limerick Nominating and Governance Committee, March 2025 V0.4".

9.3.5.2 AGREED To approve the terms of reference as presented. The Corporate Secretary will seek expressions of interest for this Committee.

10. APPOINTMENTS

10.1 Academic Staff Appointments

10.1.1 AGREED In accordance with Section 25(1) of the Universities Act, 1997 to appoint [redacted] as Assistant Professor in Public Administration and Development on a [redacted]

10.2 Support Staff Appointments

10.2.1 AGREED In accordance with Section 25(1) of the Universities Act, 1997, the filling of the following staff posts:

[redacted] Conservator – Special Collections & Archives
[redacted] Administrator [redacted]
[redacted] Business Systems Coordinator

10.2.2 NOTED Research funded contract appointments for March 2025 as circulated.

10.2.3 NOTED Memorandum from the Director, Human Resources entitled “Notification of appointments”, dated 25 March 2025 which set out the appointments approved by Governing Authority online since the last meeting in February 2025.

11. RISK

11.1 NOTED The Corporate Secretary informed members that due to recent issues with student awards, a change in the risk profile on the Fundamental Risk Register is underway. A risk incident report has also been prepared on foot of the award classification errors.

12. ACADEMIC COUNCIL REPORT

12.1 NOTED Document entitled “Academic Council (AC) Report”. The Interim Provost & Deputy President briefed members on the Report including the following:

- Ratification of Examination Board Results;
- Award Classification Inaccuracies;
- Postgraduate Research Student Appeal;
- Academic Integrity Policy & Procedures for Managing Allegations of Academic Misconduct – recommendation to Governing Authority;
- Academic Operating Model Transformation Projects (ATOM);
- Joint Honorary Doctorate Proposal – Governing Authority approved 26 March 2025;
- Presidential Search Board and Selection Board Nominations;
- Academic Council Composition – recommendation to Governing Authority;
- Titling of Non-Major Awards/Moratorium on Development on Professional Diploma;
- Academic Programme Review Committee;
- Academic Regulations Committee Report;
- External Examiners;
- UL Professor’s Forum;
- CoARA Institutional Action Plan;
- Institutional Student Feedback Mechanisms;

- Annual Quality Report University of Limerick Reporting Period 2023-2024;
- Reports noted by Academic Council.

12.2 AGREED On the recommendation of the Academic Council to approve the following:
- Academic Integrity Policy & Procedures for Managing Allegations of Academic Misconduct;
- Academic Council Composition amendments.

12.3 NOTED In response to a query, the Interim PDP informed members that Clarion, the current consultants for student records systems, are involved in the scoping phase of the ATOM project in accordance with the external advisor procurement process. It is anticipated that new consultants will be brought on board subsequently, and a memorandum will be presented to the Governing Authority on this matter.

13. PRELIMINARY DISCUSSION: UL OPERATING MODEL – STRATEGIC AND FINANCIAL CONTEXT

13.1 NOTED Document entitled "University Strategic Planning, Governing Authority, 02.02.2025", previously circulated. Mr Eamonn Moran, Director of Strategic Planning joined the meeting and his presentation included the following:
- **Key Considerations** including what can be done to ensure UL is strategically positioned to meet the challenge of the 21st century;
- **Trends and Best Practice Benchmarking (Qualitative)** what a 'successful' university looks like with an emphasis on (1) A stimulated academic heartland focusing on programme development at postgraduate taught and PhD levels and expanding internationally and through CPE and flexible learning; time for research; strategic investments; high accountability; effective workload, performance and promotion systems (2) A diversified funding base including public core support; student tuition and fees from national and international undergraduates and increasing share from postgrads and doctoral students; CPE and contracted educational; industry partnerships, spin-offs, IP and earned income from campus operations; philanthropic foundations and endowments including alumni; (3) A strengthened steering core;
- **National HE Performance Benchmarking (Quantitative)** with Research and Innovation KPIs across the sector. Of critical importance are (1) Research Income per academic (2) Research Income Total (3) Citation Impact. Key challenge going forward to maintain status quo with regard to research income. The status of EU Research Income was set out and the necessity to focus on opportunities for the next number of years; ranking is intrinsically linked to research performance and the challenges in staying in the top 500 if research does not improve;
- Student intake with cumulative growth by institution was outlined with UL experiencing a higher growth rate over the last number of years compared to others in the sector. This rapid growth is likely having a negative impact on research activity and income and places strains on existing facilities;
- Postgraduate student numbers are growing well, but the ratio of undergraduates to postgraduates needs to increase in the coming years. [redacted]
- There are numerous opportunities to increase the number of international students, particularly postgraduates, over the next few years due to factors like Brexit and visa offerings. This could be a key focus for the next strategic plan;

- Teaching & Learning Student Survey 2023 was noted, with the caveat that participation was very low. There is a need to focus on learning outcomes;
- **Strategic Planning – Status Update:** Key business processes will be informed by the target culture and renewal plan, with a five-year planning cycle commencing in January 2026. The focus will be on three pillars: research, teaching and learning and engagement, preceded by a redefinition of the vision, mission and values;
- **Current hot topics include:** *Academic* - stabilise undergraduate, build research intensity, grow PhD programmes, and implement ATOM; *Operations* - drive performance and efficiency; *Renewal Programme* - improve governance, operating model and culture*; Funding, Capital, Commercial and Philanthropy* - how to accelerate income generation to support core missions.

13.2 NOTED Detailed discussion including the following:

- Appreciation for the opportunity to discuss the data, conduct a stocktake and begin preliminary work on what will be the essential elements for the new strategic plan;
- Emphasising research and considering if and how the University will grow are crucial for informing decision-making and long-term success;
- [redacted]
- Due to UL's strong employability rates, which are the best in the sector, supported by our co-op programme, fewer of our graduates pursue postgraduate studies compared to the rest of the sector;
- The true marker of UL's health lies in maintaining a balanced proportion of undergraduate and postgraduate students, with a strong emphasis on research as the higher value area. With increased competition UL needs to strategically focus efforts to maintain a competitive edge;
- While some faculties have experienced growth, the postgraduate targets set in the last Strategic Plan were not achieved. Future targets will need to be carefully considered;
- [redacted]
- [redacted]
- We need to discuss staff ratios, the financial model, and whether to reward excellence or elevate everyone. The current environment hasn't supported academic flourishing, and this needs to change to foster better research outcomes;
- Successful universities reallocate funds from underperforming areas to invest in high-performing ones, making difficult decisions to prioritise excellence. However, in environments lacking this culture, such changes can face significant resistance and be disruptive;

- UL must clearly articulate its ambition to become research-intensive. This involves defining research-active status of individual academics through rigorous metrics, standards, and behaviours, which should be implemented across all faculties. It is essential that all academics understand, take ownership of, and achieve outputs appropriate to their grade, starting early in their careers;
- The best institutions worldwide maintain single-figure staff-to-student ratios, which presents a sector-wide challenge requiring substantial state intervention. External regulators often dictate these ratios for particular programmes, but areas with very high student volumes are not performing well in research;
- There is a need to motivate students with a positive experience to complete the student survey. Additionally, strategies should be developed to address and improve areas where the survey highlights weaknesses;
- In the coming year, there will be clear engagement around the strategic plan, utilising an evidenced based approach, KPIs, and an implementation plan. Appropriate planning related to the structures such as PDRS, promotion and recruitment will be included. Messaging around research expectations and requirements will be simple and clear;
- Need to identify and focus on UL's unique strengths and academic signature, rather than trying to emulate others with a comprehensive education model. By emphasising what makes us distinctive, we can better define our identity and stand out in the sector;
- Being ranked in the top 500 is crucial for attracting international students. UL should aim for 20%, noting that international student numbers tend to naturally increase as society evolves;
- Consideration must be given to UL's commercial focus, philanthropy and the ULF.

13.3 NOTED The Chancellor and members of the Governing Authority thanked the Director of Strategic Planning for his presentation and his insight. He then left the meeting.

14. S.64 REVIEW RECOVERY PLAN & IMPLEMENTATION

14.1 NOTED Update by the Acting President with regard to the HEA Board meeting on 25 March 2025 approving the publication of the Renewal Plan. This comprehensive change management programme addresses recommendations from several reports, including the HEA Section 64 Review by Deloitte, the Strategic Governance Committee Report, and the Cultural Review. The campus community has been informed, and relevant documents are available on the UL Renewal Hub. Additional steps demonstrating UL's commitment to change include the appointment process for the Renewal Programme Management Office, an updated Acquisition Policy, ongoing development of the framework for organisational culture, the ATOM project and in-person meetings by the Acting President with staff during April.

14.2 NOTED The Chancellor assured members that the remaining HEA reports, including the Maher and Capital Review Reports, will be promptly communicated to the Governing Authority upon receipt.

15. POLICY FOR THE ACQUISITION (INCLUDING LONG TERM LEASING) OF PROPERTY

15.1 NOTED Documentation including memorandum from the Acting CCO, CFPO and FCO&R "Draft Policy for the Acquisition (Including Long Term Leasing) of Property", dated 28 March, "Tracked Draft Policy for the Acquisition (Including Long Term Leasing) of Property", current "Policy for the Acquisition of New Property, Buildings, Land or Infrastructure" and Deloitte letter "Advisory Review of Capital Acquisition Policy and Policy for the Disposal of Assets", dated 28 February 2025, previously circulated.

15.2 NOTED The Chair FSPC and CFPO presented the revised Policy which has been reviewed with the assistance of Deloitte to address recommendations from the C&AG Special Report no.117 and the Deloitte S.64 Report. The Executive Committee has approved the revised Policy, subject to including more detail around training.

15.3 NOTED The Chair FSPC briefed members on the detailed discussion at the FSPC including feedback requesting amendments regarding clarity on training elements, availability and accessibility of related documents for new acquisitions to relevant stakeholders held in one location, and further clarification on the roles and responsibilities of the person appointed by the ARC (but not as a member of the ARC) to serve on an internal panel assessing compliance.

15.4 NOTED Discussion including the following:

- The revised Policy includes numerous checks and balances that were not previously in place, significantly reducing the likelihood of repeated purchase property issues;
- Members expressed the importance of solid evidence that the process has been followed and ensuring that there is no circumvention of the process;
- The CFPO briefed members that procedures will now be developed to support the Policy and independent due diligence. These procedures will be presented to the Governing Authority for approval;
- The revision of this Policy is a positive development demonstrating a commitment to change to our stakeholders;
- A separate policy will be developed for general capital development;
- The Acting President expressed his appreciation to the FSPC and the Finance Division for their extensive work on the Policy.

15.5 AGREED To approve the Policy for the Acquisition (Including Long Term Leasing) of Property as presented.

16. DRAFT RESOLUTION GA-25-02 ON HUMAN RESOURCES - RECRUITMENT

16.1 NOTED Document entitled "Resolution of the Governing Authority Reference No: GA-25-02", which was previously circulated.

16.2 AGREED To approve the Resolution on Human Resources with the addition of a paragraph stating that a competitive field is required for academic positions. If this is not met, the recruitment process should restart. This requirement ensures a sustained focus on quality hires, with exceptions only for outstanding candidates or specialised

fields. Generally, a small pool of candidates should result in the position being withdrawn and readvertised, with only minor exceptions.

16.3 NOTED The Acting President will present this resolution to the Executive Committee, emphasising the views of the Governing Authority concerning academic positions.

16.4 NOTED The necessity to revise any associated HR policies and effects on internal leadership roles can be discussed at a future meeting, once a standard has been established.

17. PRESIDENT – SEARCH BOARD AND SELECTION BOARD

17.1 NOTED Briefing by the Chancellor that further to her request to Academic Council for a nominee to both the Search Board and the Selection Board, one nomination was received for Selection Board. As several nominations were received for the Search Board, a vote will be held by the Academic Council to determine their nominee.

17.2 AGREED That the Selection Board will remain at seven members. The Chancellor will present a proposal for the final member to the Governing Authority at her next meeting.

17.3 NOTED The President, Student Life, expressed disappointment that there would be no student representation on the Selection Board. It was suggested that early consultations take place with student representatives to discuss how to reflect their input in the selection process.

18. FINAL CAO STATISTICS 2025

18.1 NOTED Report from the Undergraduate Admissions and Enrolment Manager, entitled "Undergraduate CAO Report March 2025", previously circulated.

18.2 NOTED The Interim PDP provided a brief update on UL's performance as outlined in the Report noting that while UL has experienced an increase in first preferences it is behind the sectoral increase in market share.

18.3 NOTED Discussion including performance across the faculties and increasing competition from the technological universities.

19. HREDI STRATEGY ANNUAL REPORT

19.1 NOTED Documents including "University of Limerick Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Annual Report 2024", memo from the Director, HREDI entitled "HREDI Strategy (2023-2027) Annual Report 2024", dated 25 February 2025. Dr Marie Connolly, Director, HREDI joined the meeting and her presentation included the following:

- Human Rights/EDI Organisation Chart;
- Four pillars including priority actions and progress implementing HREDI including:
  - (1) Gender Equality: UL Athena Swan Committee Structure; all academic departments hold Athena Swan awards demonstrating progress by UL as the leader in the sector; gender balance in senior academic positions and pay
  - (2) Inclusive Campus supporting equality, respect and belonging for all including actions around access and participation, dignity and respect, bulling and awareness and disability

  - (3) Diversity & Inclusion underscoring commitment to creating an equitable, inclusive and respective environment for all
  - (4) Sexual Health and Wellbeing creating a campus environment that supports informed, inclusive and equitable approaches to sexual health
- HREDI Strategy integrating the values of social justice, empowerment, inclusivity, agency, dignity, and respect across all functional areas, aligning HREDI action plans with the UL Strategy and incorporating them into quality reviews and T&L Strategy. Key KPI to become an Egalitarian University by 2030;
- Sectoral & Institutional Strategies supporting the HREDI Strategy were detailed;
- Public Sector Duty Review 2024 and key achievements with UL the only institution currently in alignment;
- Timeline of Athena Swan and other plans for systematic implementation of the HREDI Strategy was set out;
- Launch of RespectfUL Campus fostering a culture of dignity and respect;
- Challenges faced including broadening of the role over time and issues including that arise including ethnicity, worklife balance, data, more inclusive recruitment process, disability and correlation with actions.

19.2 NOTED The members expressed their gratitude to the Director of HREDI for her comprehensive presentation, highlighting the significance of setting targets and tracking progress. The Chancellor and members also commended her for numerous positive initiatives, such as the establishment of the Sexual Assault Treatment Follow-Up Outpatients Clinic on campus and her collaborations with the student unions. They extended their best wishes to Dr Connolly for her upcoming retirement. Dr Connolly left the meeting.

20. REVISED SCHEDULE OF GOVERNING AUTHORITY 2026 DATES

20.1 NOTED Memorandum from the Corporate Secretary entitled “Proposed Schedule of Governing Authority Meetings 2026”, previously circulated.

20.2 AGREED To approve the following meeting dates for 2026:

Tuesday 20 January	Tuesday 16 June
Tuesday 17 February	Tuesday 22 September
Tuesday 24 March	Tuesday 20 October
Tuesday 21 April	Tuesday 17 November
Tuesday 19 May	Tuesday 15 December (if required)

21. 2026 GOVERNING AUTHORITY WORKPLAN

21.1 NOTED Document from the Corporate Secretary entitled “Governing Authority Workplan”, previously circulated for the information of members.

22. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

22.1 Committee and Delegation of Functions of the Governing Authority

22.1.1 NOTED The Chancellor responded to a query on the Governing Authority Committee established in April 2024 under Resolution GA-24-03 to exercise the Governing Authority’s functions in relation to the consideration of certain matters that may warrant consideration in accordance with the University’s disciplinary procedures.

22.2 NOTED Eight protected disclosures were received in the period 2018 to 2023 and since August 2023 none had been received internally.

22.3 Next Meeting

22.3.1 NOTED The next meeting of the Governing Authority is scheduled for Tuesday 29 April 2025.

Documentation of Note

- Signed UL Consolidated Financial Statements Combined 2023
- Signed UL Consolidated Financial Statements Combined 2024
- Protected Disclosures Annual Report and Returns 2024
- Service Level Agreement Approved by Governing Authority 25 February 2025
- Resolution GA-25-01 Student Record System
- Email from HEA 26 March 2025 re Awards classifications issue, SRS issues.