

IICP Academic Council Terms of Reference

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Revisions	Replacement of Head of School role with Director of Counselling and Psychotherapy, and removal of Deputy Head of School

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Section 1 - INTRODUCTION

Purpose

1. The Academic Council is the academic primary decision-making body in IICP College and is responsible for the formulation of strategy and policy to meet the College's education and research objectives.

Status of the Academic Council

2. The Academic Council fulfils the regulatory requirement set out by QQI to establish an appropriate academic governance work. It is essential to the effective functioning of the College, and it is essential to maintain the College's approval to provide programmes of higher education leading to awards of the Irish State.

Section 2 - COMPOSITION AND MEMBERSHIP

3. The composition and membership of the Academic Council is as follows:
 - a. Ex officio members
 - i. Academic Dean Hibernia Colleges Group
 - ii. Director of Counselling and Psychotherapy
 - iii.
 - iv. Registrar
 - v. Academic Program Leads
 - vi. Clinical Placement Manager
 - vii. Quality Assurance Manager
 - viii. Awards and Assessment lead
 - ix. Admissions Lead
 - x. The Chairpersons of any Academic Council Subcommittees
 - b. External members/appointed members
 - i. Chair
 - c. Nominated members
 - i. There are no nominated members.
 - d. Elected members
 - i. Three student representatives elected by registered students from amongst the class representatives for a period of three years, or less dependent upon programme duration.
 - ii. Six Faculty representatives elected by Faculty for a period of three years.
 - iii. A Vice Chairperson should be elected from the membership of the Academic Council for a period of two years
 - iv. Elections for Academic Council held as required but prior to, beginning November through to December, the commencement of the next Academic Council term, January.
 - e. Co-opted members
 - i. The Chairperson may, with the support of the majority of the members of the Council meeting at an ordinary meeting of the Council, co-opt a member of

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- the College or an external party to the Council for a period of one year, where such a co-option assists in the discharge of the responsibilities of the Council.
- ii. Normally, a maximum of two persons may be co-opted to the Council any one point in time.
 - f. In attendance - by invitation
 - i. The Chairperson may invite any party deemed relevant to the business of a meeting.
 - g. In attendance – secretarial
 - i. Normally, the Quality Assurance Manager or a member of the Department of the Registrar, acts as ex officio secretary to the Academic Council.

Section 3 - TERMS OF REFERENCE

Part A - Functions and Responsibilities of the Academic Council

- 4. The Academic Council carries out the following responsibilities:
 - a. Oversight Function
 - i. Establishes the principles underpinning quality in IICP College and approves the Quality Framework
 - ii. Ensures that a fit-for-purpose academic administration system is in place and applied consistently to the entire student experience and lifecycle
 - iii. Considers the development, management and enhancement of all academic affairs and advises the Chief Executive Officer of Hibernia Colleges Group of their resource requirements
 - iv. Approves the academic management and governance and quality assurance arrangements in any Memorandum of Understanding or Memorandum of Agreement established by the College
 - v. Monitors compliance with and approves applications and reports for accrediting bodies
 - vi. Approves implementation plans following regulatory events and quality assurance engagement and monitors progress towards their implementation
 - vii. Provides annual reports to the Board of Directors and the CEO, which include updates on developments and issues in scholarship, teaching, research and programmes
 - viii. Requests reports from any College departments or the Council's subcommittees reports relating to any aspect of academic activity
 - ix. Approves a public-facing Annual Report, which includes reports of its subcommittees
 - b. Strategic Function
 - i. Approves new and periodically reviews established programmes and maintains oversight of all stages of their development and provision
 - ii. Ensures that appropriate academic standards are consistently adopted, applied and maintained in academic programmes, partnerships and all educational arrangements, and, where relevant, effectively incorporates professional standards and codes of practice

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- iii. Maintains oversight of, and ensures effective implementation of, due diligence processes associated with partnerships and joint programmes
- c. Executive Function
 - i. Has overall responsibility for summative assessment as delegated to the Board of Examiners. Where the need arises, the Academic Council may fulfil the role of the Board of Examiners to make summative assessment decisions.
 - ii. Approves/Renews/ Removes External Examiners for programmes of study
- d. Delegation of Authority: The Council may establish sub-committees to enable it to fulfil its remit
 - i. Approves the establishment of ad hoc committees and panels (and their terms of reference) to deal with specific academic issues e.g. reviews, appeals and disciplinary matters
 - ii. Establishes and approves the terms of reference of various subcommittees including their decision-making powers
 - iii. May delegate some decision-making authority and responsibility to its subcommittees, or other appropriate bodies within the College. In these instances, the Academic Council will consider periodic reports and referrals from the relevant body.
 - iv. May establish other committees to oversee areas of academic import, including the creation of various bodies to which decision-making powers may be delegated in respect of the management and governance of academic programmes

Part B - Meetings

Nature of Meetings

- 5. Committee meetings are held face-to face, videoconference or other electronic means.
- 6. Committee members are required to fully prepare for each meeting, read the documentation in advance and make every reasonable effort to attend each meeting.
- 7. Where attendance is not possible committee members are asked to inform the secretary in advance, upon circulation of the meeting agenda.

Frequency of Meetings

- 8. Committee meetings are held at least four times per year, to coincide with the frequency of the meetings of the Board of Directors.
- 9. The Committee determines its meeting schedule annually in advance and meets as scheduled.

Quorum

- 10. The quorum for a committee meeting is 50% of the membership, plus one.

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11. Every reasonable effort should be made to ensure the quorum includes at least one representative of the student body.
12. Where a loss of quorum is identified, the meeting may be adjourned until a time the Chairperson determines.
13. For a meeting to proceed either the Chairperson or Vice Chairperson must be in attendance.

Decisions

14. Decisions are normally made by consensus but in the absence of consensus, by open vote.
15. Where there is a tied vote, the Chairperson has the casting vote.
16. Decisions may be made at a duly called and constituted meeting or by a resolution in writing to all members which is approved in writing by at least a quorum of members.
17. Any matters for decision considered when the meeting is inquorate must be subsequently ratified at the next Committee meeting before those decisions can be actioned.
18. All decisions must be formally recorded in meeting minutes. In the absence of a formal record, any apparent decision shall be deemed null and void.

Part C - Ensuring Effective Practice

Agenda and Minutes

19. Agendas and associated documentation are distributed at least five working days before the meeting and made available to all members.
20. Items for inclusion on the agenda are set by the workplan for the Council. In addition, a call for agenda items will be made to Councilmembers, by the secretary, two weeks in advance of the next meeting. Only with the Chairperson's permission are late items accepted.
21. Council records shall be retained by the secretary.
22. Minutes are to be prepared of each meeting.
23. The Chairperson reviews the draft minutes and matters arising, after which the secretary circulates the documents to all committee members and includes them in the agenda papers for the next meeting.

Annual Work Plan

24. At the commencement of every year an annual work plan is drawn up by the Chair, Vice Chair, Registrar and Secretary and subsequently agreed by members of Academic Council.

Access to Resources

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25. All members are given access to all resources and artefacts needed to fulfil their duties as members.

Conflict of Interest

26. Where a member has a conflict of interest, either real or perceived, in relation to an item of business and/or a student they must notify the Chairperson.
27. Where the Chairperson acknowledges such as conflict of interest the affected individual is recused from the meeting and all decision making related to the item of business and/or student.

Part D - Evaluation and Review

Self-Assessment

28. The Academic Council undertakes a self-assessment of its performance against these terms of reference every three years.
29. Information arising from that review is provided to a nominated person who is external to the College along with any information the nominee requests to facilitate its review of the Council's performance and its membership.

Review of the Terms of Reference

30. The Chairperson reviews these terms of reference every three years, in conjunction with the Academic Council and amends as appropriate; doing so as part of the self-assessment review.
31. Any amendments are included in the annual report to the Board of Directors.

Part E - Subcommittees of the Academic Council

External Representatives

32. The inclusion of external members on subcommittees of the Academic Council is specified within the Terms of Reference of each subcommittee.

Terms of Reference

33. All subcommittees shall have a terms of reference approved by the Academic Council.
34. There shall be clear allocation of authority, delegated or otherwise, and associated responsibilities.
35. All subcommittees shall provide at the end of the year an annual report to Academic Council.