

Irish Federation of University Teachers

PROCEEDINGS

OF

ANNUAL DELEGATE

CONFERENCE

2018

Cónaidhm Éireannach na Múinteoirí Ollscoile

PROCEEDINGS OF 2018 ADC

1 OPENING

The President Dr Aidan Seery, TCD, opened the **52nd Annual Conference** of the Irish Federation of University Teachers at 11:00am on **Saturday 12 May 2018** in the Gresham Hotel, O'Connell Street, Dublin 1. He warmly welcomed all delegates, observers and guests.

The General Secretary spoke of how very proud and honoured she was to be at her first Annual Delegate Conference as General Secretary of IFUT. She welcomed the Fraternal Delegates: David Robinson, Executive Director, Canadian Association of University Teachers; Jacquie White, Deputy General Secretary, and Carney Cumper, President, Ulster Teachers' Union; Rob Copeland, Policy Officer, University and College Union; Christine Blower, International Secretary, National Union of Teachers, UK and President of ETUCE; Joe Killeen, President, Irish National Teachers' Organisation; Martin Marjoram, Vice President-Elect, Teachers' Union of Ireland; John MacGabhann, General Secretary, Teachers' Union of Ireland; Annette Dolan, Deputy General Secretary, Teachers' Union of Ireland.

2 STANDING ORDERS REPORT

The report of the Standing Orders Committee was presented to the conference and unanimously endorsed. It was also agreed that Michael Delargey, outgoing President, would be the representative of the Standing Orders Committee during the course of the conference and any queries or questions with regard to these should be addressed to him in the first instance.

The adoption of Standing Orders was proposed by Michael Delargey, outgoing President, and seconded by Angela Flynn, UCC, and agreed unanimously.

3 ELECTION OF TELLERS

Rosarii Griffin, UCC, was proposed by Alastair McKinstry, NUIG, and seconded by Hugh Gibbons, TCD. Emma Sokell, UCD, was proposed by Mike O'Keeffe, SPD, and seconded by Angela Flynn, UCC, and their nominations were agreed.

4 ADDRESS BY MS MARY MITCHELL O'CONNOR, TD, MINISTER OF STATE FOR HIGHER EDUCATION

The President warmly welcomed Ms Mary Mitchell O'Connor, TD, and Minister of State for Higher Education, to the Annual Delegate Conference. The Minister thanked the IFUT Council, Executive Committee, and General Secretary for the invitation to address conference. She gave an account of the day to day difficulties facing academics working in higher education. She cited students as being the most important people in the equation. The Minister stated that there are 125K students and 15,200 employees in our universities. The Minister thanked IFUT members for their work and loyalty over the last ten years of savage cuts in higher education and for continuing to deliver high quality education during those years. Education has the power to change the world and shape the future for the better and she remarked that we can pave the way for the rest of society to follow. She cited gender equality as a high priority for her Department and stated that this issue is also a human rights issue. She noted that IFUT is one of the few Trade Unions that has a female General Secretary, as leader in the sector. She stated that on average 21% of professors are female in our Universities and she noted that we still have no female university president. The Minister talked about the Gender Equality Task Force suggesting that this Committee will put greater emphasis on achieving gender equality in HEIs. It will identify good practice in areas which need improvement. The Minister suggested that we are just at the start of the process and much work needs to be done.

The Minister also noted that IFUT had raised concerns arising from the Cush Report of May 2016 and she acknowledged our work in achieving the support of Kevin Duffy to Chair the Cush Adjudication process.

The Minister concluded her speech by commenting on the issue of budgets and funding in higher education and she stressed that her Department's key objective was to ensure that Irish higher education is the best in Europe by 2026. She stated that with the support of IFUT the country is well on the way to achieving this.

On behalf of IFUT the General Secretary thanked the Minister for taking the time to address ADC. The President expressed his gratitude to the Minister for the very interesting material she presented.

5 PROCEEDINGS OF 2017 ADC

The proceedings of the previous Annual Delegate Conference were tabled for approval and on the proposal of Anthony Harvey, RIA, seconded by Hugh Gibbons, TCD. they were agreed unanimously.

6 PANEL OF SPEAKERS (TDs and SENATORS)

The President said he was delighted to have distinguished guests in attendance for a panel discussion and thanked John Walsh, TCD, for agreeing to facilitate the Panel discussion.

The Panel of Speakers were introduced to the delegates by John Walsh, TCD, and he warmly welcomed to the Annual Conference - Fianna Fáil Spokesperson on Education, Mr Thomas Byrne, TD, Senator Ivana Bacik, and Jim Miley, Director General IUA.

Thomas Byrne thanked IFUT for the invitation which he was delighted to accept. He remarked that he was in primary school with John Walsh, TCD, and in college with Senator Ivana Bacik. Thomas said funding is fundamental to the sustainability of universities, the funding crisis in higher education had been identified by his political party. He stressed that the State needed to invest more in education. He wished to echo the Minister's comments on gender equality and acknowledged the fact that more work needed to be done on this issue.

Senator Ivana Bacik said she was delighted to be here at "my own" Union conference. She spoke of the Hunt report in 2011, the Cassels report in 2016, concerning the future funding options. She stated that education should be free for all from the cradle to the grave. She spoke about gender equality and the recent Micheline Sheehy Skeffington case. Ivana finished by stating "I am very glad to be at My Union Conference."

Jim Miley, Director General of the IUA, stated that it had been remarked that historically the IUA and IFUT were regarded as enemies. He was pleased to acknowledge that that was not the case as we are now working as partners. He stated that practical effective solutions to the recommendations that came from the Cush Report had been identified jointly by the trade unions and the employers. He confirmed that the IUA had acknowledged the 'unstructured' career path of Researchers and advised that the IUA had tabled a 'Researchers Career Framework' document with the DES. He noted that the 10-year term of office for Presidents of Universities required attention. On the issue of funding he stressed that teaching environments had changed significantly in the past 20 years. The funding model had not kept pace with these changes. He concluded by remarking that the funding crisis is common to both the IUA and IFUT and that we should continue to jointly work together to address this matter.

7 PRESIDENTIAL ADDRESS

The Presidential Address was delivered by Dr Aidan Seery of TCD (see Appendix III).

Following this the ADC Adjourned for lunch.

8 ANNUAL REPORT 2017/18

The President invited the General Secretary, Joan Donegan, to present the Annual Report for 2017/18. The text of the General Secretary's speech introducing the Report is attached as Appendix II. The Deputy General Secretary then joined the General Secretary to jointly present details of industrial relations' work carried out over the year.

The President then asked the ADC to approve of the Annual Report and on the proposal of Michael Delargey, outgoing President, seconded by Angela Flynn, UCC, the report was unanimously adopted.

9 FINANCIAL REPORT

The Financial Report for the year ended 31 December 2017 was debated in Private Session. It was presented to the ADC by the Vice President-Finance, Dr Angela Flynn. Angela paid tribute to Head Office and thanked the Trustees for their work. IFUT is growing in numbers and strength and there has been a good, solid handover between General Secretaries. She went on to go through the Financial Report in detail.

The Financial Report was then put to the ADC and on the proposal of Michael Delargey, outgoing President, and seconded by Kelly Fitzgerald, UCD, it was adopted unanimously.

10 APPOINTMENT OF AUDITORS

The General Secretary advised the ADC that the Trustees had decided to reappoint Mazars as our Auditors for the coming year.

11 ELECTION OF TRUSTEES

The General Secretary said that the current Trustees; Maureen Killeavy, UCD; Gerard Enright, MICTL; and Cormac Ó Cuilleánáin, TCD, had all been re-nominated and as they were the only nominees for the three positions they were returned as Trustees for the coming session.

Proposer: Angela Flynn, UCC Branch

Seconder: Emma Sokell, UCD Branch

This was unanimously agreed.

12 ELECTION OF PRESIDENT

The General Secretary confirmed that as Dr Angela Flynn, UCC, was the sole nomination received for the position of President of IFUT, she was therefore duly elected.

13 DEBATE ON MOTIONS

The Chair of Standing Orders proposed that Motions 11, 12, 13, 14, 15 and 17 be taken together with Motion 16 being taken separately. Also, the Chair of Standing Orders proposed that Motions 19 and 20 be taken together.

This was unanimously agreed.

1 Collective Bargaining Rights in DCU

“That the ADC calls on IFUT to immediately notify DCU Management of the conclusion of the ICTU Disputes Committee Appeal Process and thus the termination of the Interim Agreement. Furthermore, we call on IFUT to establish a process immediately on reaching agreement providing for Collective-Bargaining between IFUT and DCU.”

Proposer: DCU Branch Committee

Sue Miller, DCU, proposed the motion and said that the General Secretary and Deputy General Secretary had prioritised this issue. However, the interim agreement continues to be a considerable source of grievance for DCU members.

The motion was seconded by Maurice O'Reilly, DCU, and carried unanimously.

2 Permanent Academic Posts left Vacant in DCU

“This ADC calls upon DCU Management to honour the headcount of permanent staff in all disciplines that joined the university as a result of Incorporation, through consistent and transparent processes in the replacement of retired and other vacated posts.”

Proposer: DCU Branch Committee

The motion was seconded by Maurice O'Reilly, DCU, who spoke of the importance of the replacement of posts of retired members' positions. He stressed that decision-making processes need to be transparent.

The motion was put to a vote and carried unanimously.

3 Higher Education Funding

“Conference notes the extraordinary reduction in public funding of higher education between 2008 and 2016 when:

- State investment in higher education declined by 38%, even as student numbers increased by 34,000.*
- Total income per student (incorporating all core income such as public funding and student fees) declined by 22% over a seven year period.*

Conference further notes the devastating consequences of this cut in public funding, including a deterioration in the third level staff student ratio from 16:1 to 20:1 between 2009 and 2015 and a severe shortfall in replacement of equipment and facilities.

The HEA report on system performance in 2016 identified ‘major sustainability problems facing the sector,’ noting that:

- 11 HEIs were in deficit in 2014-15 and at least five were considered vulnerable in terms of short-term financial solvency.*
- Irish HEIs provided 25% less physical space per student than international norms.*

Conference believes that higher education has been systematically neglected since the early 2000s despite much political rhetoric about the knowledge based economy and that the quality of higher education is being seriously compromised by underfunding. Moreover, valuable resources have been wasted on state sponsored reviews and consultancy reports on various elements of the activity of universities and colleges of education since the Hunt report in 2011, while the core functions of teaching and research have been inadequately resourced.

Conference calls upon the Government:

- prioritise public investment in higher education and implement option one of the Cassells report involving a long-term commitment to public funding*
- explore new funding mechanisms such as the ringfencing of a proportion of the tax take from corporation tax for investment in higher education at all levels, as advocated by both employers and trade unions.”*

Proposer: Trinity Branch Committee

John Walsh, TCD, proposed the motion and suggested that we need to reflect on the scale of the crisis and seek to achieve immediate provision of funding for higher education. He remarked that quality of education is being compromised. He stated that there has been a 38% reduction in state investment and noted that capital funding has been slashed by 60%.

He concluded by stating that it is extraordinary how the higher education sector has survived this funding crisis.

The motion was seconded by Rose Malone, MU, and carried unanimously.

4 Equal Pay for Teachers

“That this ADC calls on IFUT to support the “Equal pay for equal work” campaign currently being conducted by members of the teaching profession.”

Proposer: UCD Branch Committee

The motion was proposed by Emma Sokell, UCD, who urged IFUT to fight for equal pay and for equal work for all workers.

The motion was seconded by John Walsh, TCD, and carried unanimously.

5 Metricisation of the HE Sector

“That this ADC calls on IFUT to fight the metricisation of the HE Sector in Ireland and to lobby to ensure that the practice of measuring academic performance through simple metrics/performance indicators is not allowed to become embedded in the management practices of Irish universities.”

Proposer: UCD Branch Committee

The motion was proposed by Emma Sokell, UCD, who spoke about the matter of PMDS and individual KPIs and her concerns regarding the negative outcomes for universities in the UK.

The motion was seconded by Margaret Robson, DCU, and carried unanimously.

14 BREAK IN DEBATE ON MOTIONS

The Conference took a break from the debate on Motions to discuss IFUT’s activity in international affairs.

The President welcomed Christine Blower, International Secretary, National Union of Teachers, UK, and President of ETUCE. Christine stated that she was absolutely delighted to attend as a representative of the NUT and also as representative of the 32 million Education International (EI) members. She suggested that austerity measures in education were a choice but she stressed that these measures were always the wrong choice. She said that

education is the best weapon we have to change the world. Christine also paid tribute to Mike Jennings, former IFUT General Secretary, complimenting him for his role in ETUCE. She noted that he had spoken at two of the three EI Women Committee meetings, he had shown solidarity with Turkish and Kurdish workers, and he had made an outstanding contribution to higher education policy globally. Christine saluted IFUT delegates and congratulated the General Secretary and Deputy General Secretary for all their work in IFUT.

The President thanked Christine for her inspirational words and invited Mike Jennings to address the conference.

15 ADDRESS BY MR MIKE JENNINGS, FORMER GENERAL SECRETARY, ON INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS

Mike Jennings opened his address by saying how great it was to see everyone again and how proud he is of IFUT.

“IFUT for decades has played an influential role in international academic trade unionism. Even before the foundation of EI, IFUT was a leading body in the moves to set up an International Association of Professors and Lecturers.

For more than six years I have had the honour to be a Vice-President (Treasurer) of ETUCE, the European Region of Education International.

Apart from ETUCE our main areas of international engagement include;

HERSC (the Higher Education and Research Standing Committee), the work which I am glad to see is prioritised by the General Secretary and Deputy General Secretary.

IFUT has also been involved in the setting up of another European organisation, Sectoral Social Dialogue (SSDE). Mike stated that IFUT had to facilitate the creation of a European Employers’ Organisation as part of that structure and he remarked that he was very pleased to have participated on IFUT’s behalf, in the Bologna process.

Mike noted that in all of the European bodies IFUT had succeeded in getting special priority for those topics of most concern to IFUT such as;

Precarious Employment, Researchers, Gender Equality, Academic Freedom, the centrality of Teaching, the fight against constant metricisation, etc.

He also remarked that we constantly need to explain to European and International activists the complexities of Brexit. Mike went on to list some of the challenges and opportunities which will arise for the Trade Union movement as a consequence of Brexit.

The President thanked Mike and said that IFUT was very grateful and proud for the work he undertakes internationally and for representing IFUT so well in the EU and abroad.

16 RESUMPTION OF DEBATE ON MOTIONS

6 **Age discrimination**

"In light of the WRC finding (DEC-E2018-009) of age discrimination against Dr. Anne Cleary, a member of IFUT UCD branch, this ADC congratulates IFUT Officers and Executive for effectively highlighting the issue of age discrimination in UCD with regard to promotion and calls on IFUT to continue to make strenuous efforts to ensure that UCD's promotion system is operated without discrimination on age or gender grounds."

Proposer: UCD Branch Committee

Tina Hickey, UCD, who congratulated Dr. Anne Cleary, Joan Donegan, and the IFUT team in winning the age discrimination case at the WRC, proposed the motion. Tina spoke of the disappointment of members with regard to the UCD President's response and management's subsequent appeal of the case to the Labour Court. She noted that women experience gender bias throughout their career, which can give rise to the intersectionality of gender and age in discrimination cases.

She went on to say that IFUT cannot be complacent about the issue of gender equality and must continue to ensure that UCD's promotion system is operated without discrimination with regard to age or/and gender grounds.

The motion was seconded by Emma Sokell, UCD, and carried unanimously.

7 **Poor documentation by Irish Universities criticised by WRC**

"The Equality/Adjudicating Officer of the WRC [DEC-E2018-009] strongly criticised UCD for its failure to furnish notes and grading schemes from the UCAAPT decision-making process on promotions. Similar criticisms have been made in recent years regarding the lack of documentation to clarify how promotion decisions were made in St. Pat's/DCU and other Irish HEI. This ADC calls on IFUT Executive and Council to take whatever steps are necessary to lobby for increased transparency and accountability in promotions processes in Irish universities."

Proposer: UCD Branch Committee

Tina Hickey, UCD, proposed the motion saying the WRC's recommendation was satisfying reading in its criticism of the systems, which pertained at UCD. It echoes the ruling in a previous case in St Patrick's College / DCU.

Angela Flynn, UCC, supported the motion and noted that IFUT also supports members in dealing with cases covered under the **nine grounds** of gender, marital status, family status, age disability, sexual orientation, race, religion, and membership of the Traveller community.

The motion was seconded by Emma Sokell, UCD, and carried unanimously.

8 Inequalities in expenditure in legal disputes in Irish universities

"Irish universities have been criticised in a ruling regarding UL in 2017 for extremely high expenditure on legal fees in disputing cases taken by employees with limited means, without due recognition for the inequality that results. This ADC calls on IFUT to use whatever means are at its disposal, such as FoI, to shed greater light on the extent of the expenditure of Irish universities in recent years in contesting cases brought by members of staff."

Proposer: UCD Branch Committee

Tina Hickey, UCD, proposed the motion. She noted that more openness, transparency and information are required on the quantum of legal fees incurred by the Universities. She cited the onerous situation for the four lecturers in NUI Galway who had to bear the cost of financing their own cases.

Anthony Harvey, RIA, supported this motion noting that Universities are protected from individual financial risk and can avail of advice and support from IBEC.

The motion was seconded by Angela, Flynn, UCC, and carried unanimously.

9 Repeal of 8th Amendment

"That Conference affiliates itself with the "Together for Yes" Campaign and the Trade Union Campaign to Repeal the 8th Amendment, while recognising that it is a matter for individual IFUT members as a matter of conscience to vote in the upcoming referendum as they see fit.

Most of IFUT's female members are in their childbearing years. Without access to reproductive autonomy, women are denied full workplace equality. With a crisis pregnancy, time is crucial. For our female members, taking leave at short notice may be difficult and raise

awkward questions. The extra time needed for travel abroad for an abortion adds to these difficulties. Anything that impedes full workplace equality does not safeguard and advance the terms and conditions of employment of our members. Recognising that this is a potentially divisive issue about which individual members may hold strong personal beliefs, it is also important to acknowledge that it is a matter for individual IFUT members as a matter of conscience to vote in the upcoming referendum as they see fit.”

Proposer: Heather Laird, UCC

Heather Laird, UCC, proposed the motion stating that she is very aware that this is an emotive issue. However, she noted that the motion was an employment related issue as women are forced to take time off work, including unpaid and / or annual leave to deal with matters relating to crisis pregnancies. As a consequence, women are denied full workplace equality.

Orla Murphy, UCC, formally seconded the motion.

Rose Malone, MU, said she was speaking in a personal capacity and wanted to pay tribute to the reasoned manner in which this motion was raised. She outlined two reasons why it is appropriate to support Repeal of the Eight Amendment.

1) In our role as Teachers, students are women of childbearing age. 2) As Academics and Researchers we expect that our Constitution would be clear and explicit concerning this matter.

Philip Rosemann, MU, urged caution in our consideration of the notion of reproductive autonomy. He stated that 'Autonomy' literally means, being a law unto oneself. He suggested that human beings have no control over birth, death, nutrition, human relationships: there simply is no human autonomy. He further questioned whether IFUT is the appropriate body to vote on whether unborn human beings have the right to life.

The President clarified that the Executive Committee had previously debated the issue for three hours.

Rosarii Griffin, UCC, said that she did not believe that this issue was a matter for IFUT and confirmed that she was very uncomfortable with the discussion, noting that it was difficult for men to speak on this issue.

Liam Dowling, TCD, stated that the motion is a very divisive one on which members hold strong personal beliefs. He asked why we were being asked to take sides on such a contentious issue. He stated that the motion should never have been put before the ADC. If this motion is passed what message will that send to IFUT members who strongly believe that

the 8th Amendment should not be repealed. He suggested that if the motion was passed that members would resign from IFUT.

Michael Delargey, UCC, stated that he had been a member of a Trade Union all his life and that he had argued, at the Executive meeting, that this issue was outside the remit of IFUT.

Margaret Robson, DCU, stated that female students in early pregnancy had sought her support. She suggested that Trade Unions should include such issues in our work as we did in the Marriage Equality referendum.

Michael O’Keeffe, DCU, stated that it was a divisive issue and requested that “I move to move to next motion.”

Angela Flynn, UCC, said she noted that there were a lot of questions surrounding the objectives of IFUT and she believed that the proposer of the Motion had clearly outlined that this issue was relevant and appropriate within the wording of the Motion.

The President spoke of the need to give careful consideration to this issue and to any negative repercussions which might arise as a consequence of supporting this motion.

The President stated that Michael O’Keeffe, DCU, had made a proposal under Rule 11 – to move to the next business without a vote, the Proposer may speak for one minute in opposition.

Rosarii Griffin, UCC, seconded the proposal made under Rule 11.

Heather Laird, UCC, stated that she was very torn by the debate and very conscious of the possibility of going back to the Branch with a negative outcome.

Maureen Killeavey, UCD, spoke on a point of information.

The President restated that the Executive had spent 3 hours debating the Motion and that it was admissible on the grounds that it is a workplace issue. The President then put the procedural motion, to move to next business, to Delegates.

In favour	11
Against	20

The Procedural Motion failed.

Rosarii Griffin, UCC, reiterated her view that it was not in the interest of IFUT to support this motion as it stands and she proposed an amendment.

Immaculata Arnedillo-Sanchez, TCD, seconded the amendment and noted that we were reneging on our duties as Trade Unionists.

Elizabeth Culleton-Quinn, TCD, supported the proposed amendment saying that we had to respect both positions.

Rose Malone, MU, opposed the amendment stating that it renders the Motion meaningless.

The President clarified the wording of the proposed Amendment:

“That Conference recognises that it is a matter for individual IFUT members as a matter of conscience to vote in the upcoming referendum as they see fit.

Most of IFUT’s female members are in their childbearing years. Without access to reproductive autonomy, women are denied full workplace equality. With a crisis pregnancy, time is crucial. For our female members, taking leave at short notice may be difficult and raise awkward questions. The extra time needed for travel abroad for an abortion adds to these difficulties. Anything that impedes full workplace equality does not safeguard and advance the terms and conditions of employment of our members. Recognising that this is a potentially divisive issue about which individual members may hold strong personal beliefs, it is also important to acknowledge that it is a matter for individual IFUT members as a matter of conscience to vote in the upcoming referendum as they see fit.”

The President put the Amendment to Conference:

In favour	11
Against	23

The Amendment to the Motion failed.

The President then stated that as President he had no other option but to put the substantive Motion to the floor.

In favour	22
Against	9
Abstentions	5

The Motion was carried.

Michael Delargey, UCC, on a point of order as Chair of Standing Orders, suggested extending conference by 30 minutes to 17:30.

This proposal was unanimously agreed.

Liam Dowling, TCD, stated that “it is very clear that there is no room for me in IFUT, and formally resigned.

10 Strike on Pensions in Queens University Belfast and other UK Universities

“That this ADC calls on IFUT to take action in support of strikes called by the University and College Union (UCU) in Northern Ireland and Great Britain, aimed at protesting proposed changes in their pension system from defined benefits to defined contributions schemes. These changes have a direct impact on wellbeing of many of our colleagues in GB and in the North of this island. If passed, these would set a dangerous and worrying precedent for universities in the Republic of Ireland. Given that many colleagues educated in the Republic also work in the UK higher education, in GB and NI, IFUT members must show solidarity with our UK colleagues, in defence of their, and possibly our pensions. This motion proposes that an open letter of support for their action and against pension changes be sent to UCU presidents in both Northern Ireland universities for distribution to their members. Our colleagues in Northern Ireland universities Queens University, Belfast (QUB) and the Ulster University (UU) have seen a number of unkind steps from their management over the past years, and showing solidarity with their situation would support many of the demoralised colleagues in the sector there. This letter should be published in the principal newspapers of the province, and in the Republic, in order to draw attention to the strike action and to explain why the proposed changes in pensions should not be countenanced under any circumstances in either jurisdiction. Further to this, we should encourage private messages of support to be sent to the union leaders in the province, offering assistance, including financial if necessary, in their struggle to maintain their defined benefits pension scheme.”

Proposer: MU Branch Committee

Liam MacAmhlaigh, MU Branch, told Delegates about the Coffee Morning event organised by the MU Branch to raise funds for this campaign. However, since this dispute has now been resolved, with the support of Una Crowley, MU Branch withdrew the Motion.

The President then proceeded to speak about IFUT's support for UCU.

11 Precarious Nature of Researcher Careers

"That this ADC notes the precarious nature of research careers in Ireland, in particular the use of the pretence that Post-Doctoral Researchers are treated as students to avoid employment law. Conference calls on IFUT to campaign to secure employment rights and a real career framework for Researchers in Ireland."

Proposer: NUIG Branch Committee

Rosarii Griffin, UCC, thanked the IFUT Officials for setting up the IFUT Researchers' Group. Motion 11 is fundamental to the objectives of IFUT.

John Walsh, TCD, seconded the motion.

12 Researchers

"That IFUT produce a statement condemning those Irish Universities that designate postdoctoral researchers as trainees, which de-professionalises their role and is being used to circumvent employment rights like CIDs."

Proposer: Mark Jessop, UCC

John Walsh, TCD, seconded the motion.

13 Researchers/Changes to Designation

"That IFUT to lobby HEA, University Presidents, and funding bodies for changes to this designation."

Proposer: Mark Jessop, UCC

John Walsh, TCD, seconded the motion.

14 Creation of Irish Researcher Career Framework

"That IFUT should lobby for the urgent commencement of the process of creating a Irish Researcher Career Framework. The creation of the framework should have all stakeholders participation: Universities, IUA HEA, IFUT, Researchers."

Proposer: Mark Jessop, UCC

Rosarii Griffin, UCC, proposed an amendment:

Add the following wording to the end of the motion "... and Research Staff Associations which are working with IFUT."

As Chair of UCCRA, Rosarii Griffin stated that she often gets an opportunity to talk about IFUT's work regarding the rights of Researchers at UCCRA. Michael Delargey, UCC, said IFUT has agreed a memorandum of understanding with the Researcher Staff Association. He commended Rosarii for her work as a strong advocate for IFUT.

John Walsh, TCD, seconded the amendment.

John Walsh, TCD, as the former Chair of TCD RSA, confirmed that IFUT had agreed a memorandum of understanding with RSA.

The amendment was put to the floor and carried.

John Walsh, TCD, seconded the motion and the motion as amended was unanimously carried.

15 Researchers

"Conference notes that postdoctoral researchers continue to be employed on short, fixed-term contracts which, by their very nature, result in precarious working conditions with the added liabilities of insecurity in both professional and personal life. Employment contracts of this nature can continue for over 10 years. These highly qualified public sector employees are continuously burdened with inferior rights and conditions compared to other public sector employees. Their exclusion from consideration in the Cush Report is an additional erosion of rights and indicates a lack of Government empathy with their undesirable situation. This negative employment policy implemented by all HEIs is driven by ongoing Government policy. The Department of Education and the Government need to address these many issues.

Conference further notes that a different employment model successfully works in the Broad Institute of MIT and Harvard in Cambridge, Massachusetts and in many of the top tier research institutes globally. Professional Staff Scientists have a career track and the skill-set & time to develop complex research programs. Since 2011 staff scientists led 36% of all federal grants awarded to the Broad Institute.

Conference calls upon the Government to develop a feasible strategy for postdoctoral research careers which will serve to encourage talented researchers to remain in their career of choice. Currently, many researchers ultimately change career to work in a non-research environment or emigrate which squanders the funding required to train the researchers and deprives Ireland of the expertise which they had developed.

Conference further notes with concern the recently proposed SFI Centres for Research Training (CRT). As the Government has not undertaken any longitudinal studies of researchers' career trajectories post-PhD, we are very concerned that this drive to generate more PhD qualified researchers will exacerbate the current precarious employment conditions.

Conference calls for a well-considered and attractive career structure for current and future researchers post-PhD. If the Government really wants to create an Innovation Economy they need to consider the researchers working on the breakthroughs of the future – the postdoctoral employees.”

Proposer: Trinity Branch Committee

John Walsh, TCD, seconded the motion.

16 Teaching Fellows

“Conference notes the increasing number of term-time academic staff employed as Teaching Fellows with contracts of indefinite duration on a part-time or full-time basis.

Conference calls for further investigation and gathering of data by IFUT in relation to the three-month lay-off period of the summer time during which these employees may still be asked to perform administrative and academic tasks (such as student duties and/or research and planning in preparation for the new academic year), without receiving any formal compensation.”

Proposer: Trinity Branch Committee

Florence Signorini, TCD, proposed the motion. She questioned the role of a Teaching Fellow post and stated that there is no transparency around the terms and conditions for such a post and requested that IFUT seek clarification.

Andrew Loxley, TCD, seconded the motion.

John Walsh, TCD, proposed an amendment to “remove the words” *“contracts of indefinite duration.”*

Tina Hickey, UCD, seconded the amendment.

The Amendment was put to Conference and carried.

The Motion as amended was put to Conference and carried unanimously.

17 Temporary/Rolling Contracts

“That the University Sector stop with immediate effect the practice of hiring staff on temporary (yet rolling) contracts and that every attempt should be made to make staff secure in their posts at University through CIDs or permanency.”

Proposer: Mark Jessop, UCC

Darren Fayne, TCD, said that he would be interested to learn more about the IUA Career Researcher Framework discussed earlier at the panel discussions.

John Walsh, TCD, seconded the motion.

Motions 11, 12, 13, 14, 15 and 17 were put to ADC and unanimously carried.

18 Appointments to University/College Committees

“That this ADC calls on IFUT to engage with universities to determine how internal appointments to University/College committees (both for ordinary membership and in particular for the roles of Chair or other officer positions) are made. This action aims to measure how open and transparent such processes are and provide a forum for encouraging universities to ensure that all such appointments are made in an equitable fashion.”

Proposer: UCD Branch

Emma Sokell, UCD, proposed the motion and called delegates’ attention to the first sentence of the motion, in particular.

Tina Hickey, UCD, seconded the motion and the motion was unanimously carried.

19 One Movement and Housing Campaign

"That this ADC notes the growing success of the One Movement, in Cork and Galway, and calls on IFUT to support its campaigns on the Housing Crisis and Precarity of employment, both of which are of concern to IFUT members."

Proposer: NUIG Branch Committee

Margaret Robson, DCU, proposed Motion 20 and Motion 21. She commented on the Prime Time TV Investigative programme in November 2017, which highlighted the issue of gated communities, paying 8K per year for a basic unit. She called on IFUT delegates to support the motions.

Margaret Robson, DCU, seconded the motion.

20 Housing Situation in Ireland

"The housing situation in Ireland poses a national problem which the government has yet failed to address with the vigour and resources that are needed. The impact of this on staff (many of whom are on temporary contracts) and students is seriously detrimental to their studies and their working lives. The response of third-level colleges and the state has been to allow the expansion of private sector, privately funded investor-led provision of student accommodation which has seen properties bought up, developed and renovated and then rented out at exorbitant rates. The recent increase of 27% at DCU's privately controlled accommodation is a disgrace: not only is the accommodation expensive, but the provision of student housing for those able (though often with great difficulty) to afford it makes for further problems in the housing sector and society more widely.

We call upon IFUT to work together with Student Unions, City Councils and Third-Level Institutions to formulate an imaginative response to this egregious issue."

Proposer: Margaret Robson, DCU

Florence Signorini, TCD, seconded the motion.

Motions 19 and 20 were put to conference and were unanimously carried.

17 CLOSING OF CONFERENCE

The President expressed his appreciation to all colleagues and guests for what had been an interesting Conference. Most especially, he remarked on the participation and engagement of delegates in a respectful debate of motions.

The General Secretary thanked the President for his proficiency in chairing the Conference. She thanked the Branch Committees, members of the Executive and Council Committees, the Researchers' Committee, the Equality Committee. She thanked Mike Jennings for his participation at the Conference and said she was personally delighted to see him in attendance at the ADC. She thanked the staff at Head Office for their support and hard work during the year. A formal presentation was made to Phyllis Russell, Secretary/Office Manager.

The conference then concluded.

12 May 2018

Appendix I

DELEGATES 2018 ADC

(As recorded at Conference)

TCD

Darren Fayne	<i>Biochemistry</i>
Florence Signorini	<i>CLCS – French</i>
I Arnedillo-Sanchez	<i>Computer Science</i>
Hugh Gibbons	<i>Computer Science</i>
Andrew Loxley	<i>Education</i>
Aidan Seery (Pres)	<i>Education</i>
Pat Wall	<i>Education</i>
John Walsh	<i>Education</i>
Liam Dowling	<i>Electron&Elect. Eng.</i>
Sonja Hermanns	<i>Electron&Elect. Eng</i>
Cormac Ó Cullleanáin	<i>Italian</i>
Eliz. Culleton-Quinn	<i>Physiotherapy</i>

UCD

John Dunnion	<i>Computer Science</i>
Maureen Killeavy	<i>Education</i>
Kelly Fitzgerald	<i>Irish, Celtic Studies</i>
Rory O'Shea	<i>Management</i>
Russell Higgs	<i>Mathematical Science</i>
Regina Joye	<i>Nursing & Midwifery</i>
Emma Sokell	<i>Physics</i>
Tina Hickey	<i>Psychology</i>

UCC

Rosarii Griffin	<i>Adult Education</i>
Michael Delargey	<i>Education</i>
Heather Laird	<i>English</i>
Edward Lahiff	<i>Food, Business & Development</i>
Virginia Conrick	<i>Library</i>
Anita Wilcox	<i>Library</i>
Angela Flynn	<i>Nursing & Midwifery</i>
(VP-Fin & Incoming Pres)	

NUIG

Alastair McKinstry	<i>ICHEC</i>
Seán Tobin	<i>Mathematics</i>

MU

Úna Crowley	<i>Centre for Teaching & Learning</i>
Rose Malone	<i>Education</i>
Maeve Martin	<i>Education</i>
Liam MacAmhlaigh	<i>Froebel</i>
Aileen O'Carroll	<i>NIRSA</i>
Philipp W. Rosemann	<i>Philosophy</i>
Peter Murray	<i>Sociology</i>

MICL

Gerard Enright	<i>Maths&Computer St.</i>
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DCU

Margaret Robson	<i>English</i>
Maurice O'Reilly	<i>Mathematics</i>
Michael O'Keefe	<i>Special Education</i>
Sue Miller	<i>Library</i>

RCSI

Celeste Golden	<i>Admissions Office</i>
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CB

Larry White	<i>Dictionary of Irish Biography, RIA</i>
Anthony Harvey	<i>DMLCS, RIA</i>
Kate O'Malley	<i>Documents on Irish Foreign Policy, RIA</i>

APOLOGIES

TCD

Seán Hughes	<i>Library</i>
Enrica Ferrara	<i>Languages / Italian</i>

SPEAKERS & FRATERNAL DELEGATES

Mary Mitchell O'Connor, TD
Mike Jennings

*Minister of State for Higher Education, Department of Education
Former General Secretary, IFUT*

Panel of Speakers:

*Ivana Bacik
Thomas Byrne,
Jim Miley*

*Senator, Seanad Éireann
TD, Fianna Fáil
Director General, Irish University Association*

FRATERNAL DELEGATES

John MacGabhann
Joe Killeen
Macdara Doyle
David Robinson
Jacquie White
Carney Cumper
Rob Copeland
Christine Blower

*General Secretary, Teachers' Union of Ireland
President, Irish National Teachers' Organisation
Communications Officer, Irish Congress of Trade Unions
Executive Director, Canadian Association of University Teachers
Deputy General Secretary, Ulster Teachers' Union
President, Ulster Teachers' Union
Policy Officer, University & College Union
President, ETUCE and International Secretary,
National Education Union*

Apologies

Kieran Christie
Ger Curtin
Sheila Nunan
ATL Section
NUT Section
Jens Vraa-Jensen

*General Secretary, Association of Secondary Teachers, Ireland
President, Association of Secondary Teachers, Ireland
General Secretary, Irish National Teachers' Organisation
National Education Union
National Education Union
International Affairs, Danish Masters Association*

APPENDIX II

SPEECH BY MS JOAN DONEGAN, GENERAL SECRETARY

12 May 2018

I want to welcome you all here today to the 2018 Annual Delegate Conference of the Irish Federation of University Teachers and to my first Conference as General Secretary of IFUT. I am particularly pleased to welcome our fraternal guests (see list attached).

I wish to extend a very special welcome to Christine Blower, President of ETUCE and International Secretary of the National Education Union who is with us for the first time.

This Annual Delegate Conference provides an opportunity for us to mark and to celebrate the significant gains achieved in the recognition of the absolute rights for all IFUT members.

As we move towards a new period in IFUT's history, this Conference will help us to focus too, on the considerable work ahead.

There is no doubt, that we are living in a time of momentous change, not just for IFUT, but for the entire higher education sector.

I'm reminded of the opening lines of Charles Dickens' famous novel 'A Tale of Two Cities' - where he says "It was the best of times; it was the worst of times."

As the issues we face present us, with both huge opportunities and successes, but also increasing challenges and dangers.

To begin with the positive, the past year has indeed been the best of times for IFUT.

Our union has never been stronger, never had more members, never been in a better position to work to ensure the future health of third-level education.

The past year has seen IFUT deliver on a number of fronts and begin the process of serious discussion and negotiation on a range of other matters.

Just yesterday we formally signed off with the IUA and other teaching unions on key recommendations from the Cush Report.

This marks a very significant step forward for hundreds, probably thousands, of university staff trapped in a limbo of low pay and insecure employment, with the attendant financial and personal impact on their lives and plans for the future.

The Department of Education and Skills has confirmed improvements to a number of long-standing issues addressed by Cush. These new arrangements are now formally agreed between IFUT, the other university based unions and the Irish University Association.

This includes a reduced waiting period to become eligible for a contract of indefinite duration. It also sanctions additional hours for existing part-time lecturers.

In addition universities have been given freedom to recruit lecturers on fixed-term or fixed-purpose contracts for non-state funded posts.

Most importantly we have an Adjudicator process to assist in resolving all these issues.

The issue of Equality issues has been very much to the fore in IFUT's work in recent years.

We have long demanded action by universities and government to address the ongoing discrimination against women's progression in academic life.

We were delighted then that the specially appointed Minister for Higher Education, Mary Mitchell-O'Connor established a Task Group to discuss implementation of increased equality measures in our third-level institutions.

We very much look forward to Minister Mitchell-O'Connor's address to our Conference this afternoon, on this and other issues in third-level.

Equality issues are hard won in Irish society. The recent agreement reached with NUI Galway to resolve a long-standing promotion grievance involving one of our members, is therefore, very significant.

This was indeed a very long and hard fought battle. But we persevered and reached a comprehensive agreement which includes promotion and compensation for the member involved.

As I said, Equality is hard won. But there is increasing evidence that most university managements are now aware more than ever of the need to address the issue.

This is happening through their participation in the Athena Swan process and a range of other initiatives.

Yet sometimes you get knocked back on your heels. And it is difficult to avoid feeling that we are not, as Dickens said, also living in the worst of times.

The decision only last month by the President of UCD to appeal a clear decision of the WRC that age discrimination was used to deny promotion to one of our members in UCD is shameful and a disgrace.

The gratuitous dismissal of the WRC decision in the UCD President's newsletter shines a glaring light on entrenched attitudes to ageism and equality that exist in third-level education and indeed broader society. And how ageism additionally intersects with gender to compound discrimination against women.

To repeat Professor Deeks' specific words on the WRC ruling verbatim, I can also assure our members in UCD that we, quote, 'do not accept' his finding.

We urge UCD to urgently reflect on its position to appeal this ruling before it brings further discredit and attention onto the college as a centre of backward thinking on Equality.

The problems facing research and researchers may seem never ending. IFUT has long been working to force these issues to the top of the higher education agenda. We have had some notable success in the past, such as the progress related to pay discrimination at the Tyndall National Research Institute in Cork.

Yet at national level there has been an overall reluctance by different authorities to face up to the ongoing disregard for the interests and welfare of researchers.

At last year's pay talks, therefore, it was very significant that IFUT highlighted the need for a discussion between IFUT and the IUA to begin a real effort to progress the long-standing issues affecting researchers.

IFUT has now established a very dynamic Researchers' Committee, with reps from all universities, to play a key role in the work ahead. The fact that we have five motions on the topic for discussion later today shows the extent of the anger and determination of our members on this area.

There is one overarching issue, however, that threatens the very fabric of our third-level education.

Funding!

Our colleges are being slowly starved and strangled.

The detailed analysis on funding contained in the 2016 Cassells' Report is being ignored.

Colleges are expected to obtain their income from just about anywhere but the Exchequer!

From more Internationals Students.

From Philanthropy.

From developing ever more ingenious means to undermine pay and conditions

From requiring staff to devote excessive hours to bringing in research monies at the expense of teaching.

What next? Maybe we should all defer our Conference to go shake some buckets on O'Connell St!

Just recently we again heard renewed proposals for introduction of student fees. As if all students are not currently paying 3,000 euro fees disguised by another name.

The fact is that education is increasingly being viewed by some in authority as a simple commodity, to be handled as if we are dealing with a giant profit-and-loss account.

I recently came across a quote by Benjamin Franklin, a founding father of the United States of America.

He was a renowned scientist and inventor. He was also a successful businessman who knew a thing or two about profit and loss accounts. His image still adorns the American 100 dollar note!

Franklin proclaimed that “An investment in knowledge pays the best interest.”

Our battle in IFUT is to win acceptance by government that their ‘investment in knowledge’ is necessary and vital, for the future of our economy and society.

This is not just our view. A range of papers and statements from organisations as diverse as the HEA, IUA, IBEC and others also seek a reversal of recent policies that have resulted in spending per head at third-level increasingly drop below second-level since 2012.

Despite the effort in the last Budget to emphasise private funding sources, most notably the further increase in the industry levy, we believe that there is a widespread commitment among educational professionals in the Department of Education to preserve the integrity of our higher education system. This must include providing adequate and sufficient state funding at third-level. And I don’t mean just STEM courses!

IFUT, therefore, is committed to developing alliances with all those who value a properly resourced higher education sector. Foresight and adaptability are essential to ensure the provision of a more effective response to this funding crisis, through co-operation with all stakeholders in the education sector. Progress can and must be built and consolidated through partnership, using all the tools and means at our disposal.

The challenges are too great, the risks to the very fabric of our universities are too obvious. It is time that we all worked to agree a common approach to reverse the funding policies that are proving so disastrous for all concerned.

In this regard, I am delighted that today’s Conference will hear some diverse, but hopefully converging views on the way forward for third-level. We will shortly hear from a panel including the Education spokesperson for Fianna Fáil, a university Senator and the head of the Irish University Association. This afternoon we will be addressed by the Minister for Higher Education.

We hope they will learn something new from attending IFUT Conference. But I will also be listening very closely to their comments and views. We all need to develop a better understanding of each other’s positions, in order to resolve the crisis of funding at third-level just now.

Appendix III

IFUT PRESIDENTIAL ADDRESS 2018

DR AIDAN SEERY, TCD

Dear Delegates, fraternal guests, dear colleagues,

At the heart of higher education, and perhaps all formal education, there lies a fundamental, persistent and irreducible tension: it is that one of the key aims at the core of almost all of our work, the aim of intellectual and academic quality in teaching and in research, cannot be forced, compelled or brought about by diktat or administrative schemes. In a deep and significant way, quality teaching, scholarship and research cannot be controlled, or produced by quality assurance or performance measures. However, on the other hand, we do know that the strongest and best universities and colleges in the world are those that actively promote a culture of creativity and autonomy. These two insights, that we cannot force or compel good teaching or good research and that the best of these are produced in a culture of freedom and creativity are surely the materials of managers', many politicians' and policy-makers' nightmares! According to all of the manuals on productivity, effectiveness and efficiency, increased surveillance, accountability, monitoring and measurement should result in improvements in quality. Indeed this may well be the case in many other sectors of an economy, but it would seem not to be the case in education and, in part at least, for the straight reason outlined here. Though it is surely unusual for a trade unionist to invoke the authority of Adam Smith but many years ago he wrote of the problem of introducing external overseers of academic work:

An extraneous jurisdiction...is liable to be exercised both ignorantly and capriciously. In its nature, it is arbitrary and discretionary, and the persons who exercise it, neither attending upon the lectures of the teacher themselves, nor perhaps understanding the sciences which it is his business to teach, are seldom capable of exercising it with judgment...The person subject to such jurisdiction is necessarily degraded by it. {Smith, 1741, p.63]

The social and political culture in which we currently work, however, is one that is dominated by a language and by ideas that do not attend to the fundamental tension sketched here but doggedly persist in advocating even more surveillance, accountability and crude measurement while constantly speaking of quality. Surely if we cannot compel quality, the answer cannot be even greater compulsion!

This tension between quality and compulsion is one at the core also of industrial relations and the interaction between a union like IFUT and the current cohort of university managers and administrators. On the one hand, both parties are agreed that quality in teaching and research are the aim and objective of the university, but the parties are often deeply divided on the means by which these are brought about. It would be simplistic and simply wrong to claim that university managers believe that they can force improvements in quality. Indeed, in many cases those working in universities have well-developed understanding what works in these places and what does not. The problem would seem to lie with those outside of the university but who regard themselves as the overseers of quality and measurement. I doubt that they understand how this tension works and how it is lived out in institutional life and the lives of academics. In the absence of any understanding of this nature, there is a clear tendency to revert to one side and to greater levels of accountability, performance management and measurements. What is missing is an understanding of the very nature of education itself and the way in which it is enhanced.

The consequences of this lack of understanding are manifest in the industrial relations issues that concern our union.

First, the paucity of understanding of the very nature of education and particularly higher education in Irish higher education policy has led to a purely utilitarian and mercantile view of universities and their staff. We have seen the one-sided, large scale dissemination of new public management practices in the sector aimed at achieving ever-greater accountability, transparency, value-for-money calculations, performance-management schemes and most significantly precariousness of employment, especially among researchers. None of these measures enable the autonomy and creativity needed to create a great university, most especially the practice of non-tenure, short term and fixed purpose contracts. How can and why should an academic exercise autonomy and imagination in teaching and research with the shadow of redundancy over their position?

The crash of the economy in 2008 has only exacerbated the agenda to impose these practices on universities, as the public service in Ireland was perversely targeted to pay for the collapse caused by reckless greed in the private sector of the economy. Between 2007 and 2014, the higher education sector in Ireland sustained funding cuts of 29% or over €385m. Over a similar period, student numbers rose by 16% (31,640) while staff numbers fell by 4,500. The imposition of successive employment control frameworks which meant that universities had to seek permission to fill university posts has led to the situation that in some universities up to 50% of all teaching is done by adjunct staff with either zero-hour contracts or part-time, fixed term contracts and 70% of career researchers are on fixed-term or defined purpose contracts. But, in a remarkable postmodernist twist, the language of control, performance and accountability, quite perversely, has insinuated itself into the very core of a generation's self-understanding so that they accept that they must construct their own lives as transactional projects. One of the consequences of this is that despite the huge difficulties faced by early career academics and researchers, it is difficult to

organise them in trade unions or to bring about solidarity as they conscientiously work alone on the project of their own career and lives.

Secondly, and as we all know too well, the Irish higher education system has suffered massive cuts in public funding but this cannot be attributed solely to economic recession and can also be seen in the light of what I have said about the lack of understanding of the nature and aims of higher education.. This is evident, for instance, from the disproportionate way in which higher education has suffered compared with schooled education. As an example, between 2008 and 2014, the number of primary/elementary school teachers increased by 3% but the number of posts in higher education decreased by 17%. It is now well accepted that, once again from the perspective of human capital theory, higher education is viewed by politicians and indeed many others in society as an overwhelmingly private good which should be funded from private means. Students in Ireland now pay the second highest level of contribution to their education in Europe. A report commissioned by government on the future funding of higher education, known as the Cassells Report, favours the introduction of income contingent loans as a key means of providing sustainable funding to the sector. The report, published in March 2016, has not been acted upon to date and the unclear situation is the cause of much frustration and increasing institutional hardship and austerity as universities post annual budgetary losses.

Finally, and continuing the same general theme, the financial situations of the universities mean that there is ever greater competition among them to secure a larger proportion of a fixed pot of funding. These constraints also allow government to intervene more and more in the management of universities to ensure what they regard as fiscal responsibility for the public funding provided. We are experiencing the irony of government providing less funding but insisting on greater control at the same time. This control has not yet reached down to the level of determining or influencing what is taught and how, but there are very disturbing signs of possible legislation that would permit the appointment of 'inspectors' to universities with the powers to dismantle or at least disrupt the governance structures of universities that are already struggling to retain any real sense of autonomy.

And so we re-iterate our regular but still relevant call for us all to be vigilant in defending the autonomy of universities and arguing clearly and convincingly for their importance in maintaining and promoting a critical, liberal, open and generous democracy. This purpose, going as it does so much further than any economic considerations, continues, I hope, to motivate us in our work, to uphold collegiality, and to seek solidarity in difficulties. This purpose, with the claims for respect, dignity and acknowledgement for our members and their profession that goes with it, is at the core of IFUT and the respect that it holds both in the trade union movement and more widely in society.

May IFUT, its work, its officials, its volunteer activists and all its members flourish again this year and for the years to come.

Thank you.

Reference:

Smith, A. (1741). *An Inquiry into the Nature and Cause of the Wealth of Nations*. Basel: Tourneisen & Legrand.