

Irish Federation of University Teachers

PROCEEDINGS

OF

ANNUAL DELEGATE

CONFERENCE

2019

Cónaidhm Éireannach na Múinteoirí Ollscoile

PROCEEDINGS OF 2019 ADC

1 OPENING

The President opened the **53rd Annual Delegate Conference** of the Irish Federation of University Teachers at 11:00am on **Saturday 11 May 2019** in the Gresham Hotel, O'Connell Street, Dublin 1. He warmly welcomed all delegates, observers and guests and advised that there was an immediate motion to amend Standing Orders.

2 STANDING ORDERS REPORT

The report of the Standing Orders Committee was presented to Conference. The President advised Conference that the Royal Irish Academy representative had been nominated by the Executive Committee as the Chair of Standing Orders and any queries or questions in relation to Standing Orders should be addressed to him in the first instance.

The Chair of Standing Orders then addressed Conference on the Standing Orders Report and asked Conference for a technical suspension of Standing Orders in order to facilitate the attendance of Minister of State for Higher Education, Mary Mitchell O'Connor, who was waiting to address Conference. There were no objections to this request.

3 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 and advised the Minister that IFUT was very happy to amend our Standing Orders to facilitate her attendance, due to the time of year and the upcoming elections. He went on to say that the Minister's work and her history as an advocate on gender equality issues is well known in IFUT. The President said it gave him particular pleasure to invite the Minister to address our ADC 2019. See Appendix IV.

The President thanked the Minister very kindly for her wide ranging and very substantive address and said that the Minister would have a partner in IFUT in her work to continue shaping the future of the Irish education system.

As the General Secretary escorted the Minister from the Conference the President invited the Deputy General Secretary to give the welcome address on her behalf.

4 DEPUTY GENERAL SECRETARY WELCOME ADDRESS

For those of you may not know me, my name is Frank Jones and I am the Deputy General Secretary of IFUT. The General Secretary, Joan Donegan, is attending to the Minister at the moment, so on behalf of the General Secretary, I wish to extend a warm welcome to

our fraternal guests: David Robinson, Executive Director, Canadian Association of University Teachers; Séamus Searson, Scottish Secondary Teachers' Association; Jacquie White, Deputy General Secretary, and Susan Thompson, President, Ulster Teachers' Union; Liam Berney, Irish Congress of Trade Unions; Breda Lynch, President of the Association of Secondary Teachers of Ireland; Fergal Brougham, President, Irish National Teachers' Organisation; Karl Byrne, Education Sector Organiser, Services Industrial Professional & Technical Union; Annette Dolan, Deputy General Secretary, and Martin Marjoram, Vice President, Teachers' Union of Ireland.

Apologies have been received from:

Joe O'Flynn, General Secretary, Services Industrial Professional & Technical Union (SIPTU), Jens Vraa-Jensen, International Consultant, Dansk Magisterforening (DM), Larry Flanagan, General Secretary, The Education Institute of Scotland (EIS), Rob Copeland, Policy Officer, University & College Union (UCU).

Joe O'Flynn, the General Secretary of SIPTU, sent his apologies and also said the following:

"Dear Joan,

I wish to acknowledge with thanks receipt of your kind invitation to attend at your Annual Delegate Conference and Conference Dinner which takes place on Saturday 11th May. Unfortunately due to personal reasons I am unable to attend. It would have been good if I had been able to attend given the very positive interaction between our two Unions in recent months. I believe we can build on that work so that our respective members can continue to win with our collective co-operation and action.

I am particularly disappointed to miss Angela's election to the position of President. I have worked with Angela on the ONE project and have found her to be an inspiring and committed trade unionist. She will be an outstanding representative for both your members and IFUT.

May I take this opportunity to wish you a very successful Conference.

Yours sincerely,

Joe O'Flynn"

We have received Messages of Solidarity from Jens Vraa-Jensen who said:

"Dear Joan,

Unfortunately I am in Greenland. I hope you will bring my excuse to your delegates with my warm wishes for a successful conference and for the continuation of the close relationship and collaboration between our unions.

Hope to see you in July at the EI Congress.

In solidarity,

Jens"

We also received a message from Rob Copeland, UCU who said:

“Dear Joan,

First of all, many thanks for the invitation to attend this year’s IFUT Conference. I have really enjoyed my last couple of visits to your conference. Not only is it a good chance to find out what the key issues are for IFUT members, it is also a lovely opportunity to catch up with friends and colleagues.

Unfortunately, I am away in Belgium that weekend and therefore unable to attend this year’s ADC. I hope that it is another successful conference.

However, I am looking forward to catching up with you in Bangkok for the EI World Congress.

Best wishes,

Rob”

5 STANDING ORDERS REPORT

The President called on the Chair of Standing Orders to address Conference.

The Chair of Standing Orders advised that the Standing Orders Report speaks for itself as it has been tried and tested over the years and proposed that Conference adopt the Report. The Chair advised Conference that two motions about rule changes were due to be put before the ADC today. However, the Chair advised that Motions to change the rules must be communicated to members eight weeks in advance of ADC. The proposed amendments to the Rules are now planned to be brought before next year’s ADC.

Proposer for adoption: Chair of Standing Orders

Seconder for adoption: Incoming President

The Standing Orders Report was unanimously adopted.

6 ELECTION OF TELLERS

Darren Fayne, TCD, was nominated and self-proposed and seconded by Hugh Gibbons, TCD. Edward Lahiff, UCC, was nominated and self-proposed and seconded by Virginia Conrick, UCC. Both the nominations were agreed.

7 PROCEEDINGS OF 2018 ADC

The Proceedings of the 2018 Annual Delegate Conference were tabled for approval and on the proposal of Anthony Harvey, RIA, and seconded by Sue Miller, DCU, they were agreed unanimously.

8 PANEL OF SPEAKERS (TDs and SENATORS)

The President said he was confident of the most engaging and thought-provoking discussion with such a distinguished panel, and had no need to introduce Mike Jennings, our esteemed former General Secretary, who had very kindly agreed to act as facilitator for our

panel discussion. The President stated that Mike is here to represent Susan Flocken, the European Director of ETUCE. Mike very capably represented IFUT nationally on the Executive Council of the Irish Congress of Trade Unions and continues to represent IFUT on the ICTU Global Solidarity Committee. In his capacity as Treasurer of ETUCE, Mike also continues his participation in the BIGTU, the British and Irish Group of Teacher Unions. Mike is highly regarded internationally as evidenced by the tribute Christine Blower, President of ETUCE, paid to Mike at our ADC last year. She complimented Mike on his role in ETUCE, and for speaking at EI Women's Committee meetings, showing solidarity with Turkish and Kurdish workers, his outstanding contribution to higher education policy globally. The President stated that this international work is going to be formally recognised this July at the EI Congress in Bangkok when Mike is to be presented with the Education International Distinguished Associates Award. This award is a mark of recognition for the contribution Mike has made to the work and development of EI, and the tremendous commitment he has shown to assist EI and its staff to plan and implement the organisation's policies and programmes. Back at home, Mike's work was also honoured last November when he was appointed as Chair of the Board of TASC, the research and evidence-based, think-tank, which seeks to improve working conditions, and contribute to positive social change in Ireland and the EU. In his role as Chair of TASC, Mike recently spoke in Dublin at the National Forum for the Enhancement of Teaching and Learning in Higher Education on the theme of 'Mental Health in Higher Education'. It gives me immense pleasure to now ask Mike to chair our panel.

Mike Jennings thanked the President for his introduction. He said that when he received the e-mail from EI he thought that it was a mistake, and was absolutely bowled over. Mike thanked the President for the acknowledgement.

Mike went on to ask each of the panelists to briefly give a summary of their background.

Tom Collins, Chair of the Technological University Dublin and former President of Maynooth University, is working on issues of access to higher education, in West Clondalkin where there is 80% unemployment.

Thomas Byrne, TD, Fianna Fáil's Spokesperson on Education said that Fianna Fáil placed a high value on access to higher education

Lynn Ruane, Senator, TCD, member of the Education Committee of the Oireachtas. Lynn was President of the Union of Students in Ireland when the Cassels' report was launched. Lynn is passionate about widening participation in third-level. She teaches in Maynooth University, and attends the World Education Forum each year. Lynn's biggest task now is examining the issue of precarious work and funding in Higher Education.

Aodhain O'Riordáin, Senator and Labour Spokesperson on Education, spent 11 years as a teacher in Sherriff Street and has been in the Oireachtas since 2011. He is critical of the way the system is structured. He said that we should put the student at the centre of education. He said free education at all levels is an aspiration worth fighting for.

Mike Jennings said we should identify the issues that need to be addressed in higher education. He asked each of the panelists to respond.

Aodhain O’Riordain said that we should look forward. In Finland, regardless of the political background, they believe absolutely in access to education for all. He said that we should defend the idea of a fair and progressive tax system.

Lynn Ruane noted the cuts in funding. She said that we are in need of emergency funding in education. We need to see university presidents to be stronger advocates. We need the support of the university sector to highlight that this is a crisis. Lecturers and university staff need to support the students in their demands for third-level funding. Look at the number of graduates in the country, 46% are voters. The national training levy raised 0.1%, more money could be raised from that fund. She said that we should hold government to account for taking no action.

Thomas Byrne said that State Funding in higher education has been cut this year and no one is interested. The Department deny this and the figures are buried in the estimates. Completely under the radar the SUSI scheme was cut by €2 million this year and the government is denying it is a cut.

Tom Collins said historically Ireland had a head-start in education, with the role of female religious from the 1800s taking in poor girls and educating them. O’Malley introduced free education in the 1960s. Education is a public good and we know people have better employment prospects, better health outcomes, less criminality, less state dependency, children have better opportunities. In the 1980s we were spending the same on education in terms of GDP as health, it is half now. €500m in Grangegorman for 22K students = 50% of overrun on children’s hospital. Universities are overcrowded, students over-assessed. A big debate is needed on governance and the emergence of universities as corporations. Universities are the biggest housing owners in Ireland which raises interesting questions.

The debate was opened to the floor.

A UCD representative suggested that the panel had all used the word “education” in their deliveries. In comparison the Minister used the word “skill” again, and again. He sought a response from the panel.

An NUIG representative reminded Aodhain Ó Riordain that it was his Party Leader Brendan Howlin who brought in the FEMPI legislation during the Financial Emergency; this Bill among other measures, unilaterally cut the pension of retired IFUT members, some of whom held their posts for up to 40 years under contracts and statutes that guaranteed their pension. IFUT members supported the Government during the Financial Emergency but it is unfair that the cuts in pensions still continue: indeed the first item pensioners see on their pension slips each month are the letters PSPR – Public Service Pension Reduction. Admittedly there has been some very small payback made by the Minister for Finance of the order of €60 per month, but at this very slow rate of adjustment, pensioners will be dead and will never see their pension brought back to the level it was at before the FEMPI legislation.

The Minister in her speech this morning praised 3rd Level education in Ireland and encouraged staff and students of the future to make every effort to build on what has been achieved for the economic good of our country – it is indeed very hard for education teaching

staff to do this when they see the cynical treatment of the ageing retired 3rd Level teaching staff and their dependents with regard to their pensions.

Teresa Keane, RCSI, made a point about protecting values. She stated that we need to have the guts to stand up for what we believe. SIPTU did stand up within our own organization. IFUT were silent.

Aodhain O'Riordain said he wants to look to the future. The education system is based on inequality. We do not have basic provision for items like school books. School contributions cost €45 million. What do we vote for at election time? Public funding is good and necessary. I don't like the word skills, education is about freeing up the mind and preparing students for what lies ahead.

Lynn Ruane said education saves lives, transforms communities, has a positive effect on mental health, educating a woman can change inter-generational poverty.

Thomas Byrne spoke of the purpose of education. Some of us on this panel would not be here if we had not had the experience of higher education.

Tom Collins spoke about academic solidarity and the impact on institutional management. Employees increasingly do not support and engage with colleagues or students.

The President thanked everybody for their contributions and invited the guests to stay for lunch.

The General Secretary took the opportunity to welcome everyone to the Conference and apologized for not having had the opportunity to do so earlier, (which was due to the media interviews). She confirmed that she would speak to Conference later in the afternoon.

9 PRESIDENTIAL ADDRESS

The Presidential Address was delivered by Dr Aidan Seery of TCD, the text of this address is attached as Appendix III.

Following this the ADC Adjourned for lunch.

The President opened the afternoon session. He asked Conference to sit and relax and enjoy a musical treat. He was delighted to introduce a young man who has served his time in higher education, who is a lifelong learner and an avid fan of classical guitar, and recently graduated with a BA in classical music from RIA Music.

10 ANNUAL REPORT 2018/19

The President invited the General Secretary, Joan Donegan, to present the Annual Report for 2018/19. The text of the General Secretary's speech introducing the Report is attached as Appendix II.

The President then asked the ADC to approve the Annual Report and on the proposal of Emma Sokell, UCD and seconded by Edward Lahiff, UCC, the report was unanimously adopted.

11 FINANCIAL REPORT

The Financial Report for the year ended 31 December 2018 was debated in Private Session. It was presented to the ADC by the Vice President-Finance, Alastair McKinstry, who went through the Report in detail.

The first figure to note is the top-line: income from members is consistently up, from €711,000 to €733,000.

Following from this, the second number is the bottom line: After a deficit last year, we have a surplus of income this year of €80,000, at 1.5 million retained assets.

Both these figures are good news, but in fact better news than anticipated due to skillful management in Head Office and the re-organisation of systems and procedures.

The background to this is that the General Secretary, on taking over, took the opportunity to modernise IT and other procedures. This has been a 2-3 year exercise, for which we had anticipated a drop in finances as computers and office furniture and fittings were replaced, extraordinary work done in archiving and clearing old records, and consultancy work done in training and setting up of systems.

In practice this was done ahead of time and the expected loss this year became a surplus.

In Expenditure, we see a drop in personnel expenditure. This is partly due to an overlap in staff in 2017, as we had the new and outgoing General Secretaries simultaneously. In the 2018 time period, we see Fiona Lee coming on board supporting industrial issues and GDPR work.

From a financial perspective the big event of the year was the maturity of an existing investment, and its re-investment in a Zurich bond. The previous product was a BOI Bond, which delivered a surplus of €61,000. This product was guaranteed, no such product was available this time round, so a measure of risk was involved in the new Zurich Life Bond. A level 3 bond was chosen to give a relatively low risk. Even so, over the lifetime of the bond to date (since June 2018) it did fall slightly by December 2018, by €26,000, but has since recovered.

Committees and conference expenses have remained fairly static; the notable exception is the cost of Executive and IFUT committees, which dropped from €27,000 to €17,000 year on year, due to careful expenditure control. This has been helped by the decision to combine committee meetings onto weekends when Council is sitting.

Consultancies are a significant area. This has included John Gallagher going from €25,000 to €30,000; the Production People from €55,000 to €24,000. IT from €3,000 to €9,000 as part of the upgrade, and a large drop as Fiona Lee moves from Consultancy to personnel.

In General expenses, we see a drop in costs of office supplies from €10,000 to €5,000, and a similar increase in electronic communications from €5,000 to €10,000. This covers the cost of licenses for Microsoft Office and Dropbox, which now handle communications and files not just at Head Office but also in the Branches.

Upcoming expected costs include: Updating the website, a planned event for retired members, and preparing for new staff as the workload increases. Our one main concern is that of rent: We currently pay €3,000 per month in rent, which for Central Dublin is very low. This is up for renewal in January 2020. The General Secretary has been investigating other opportunities, but as we have been very good tenants to date (including replacing furniture, etc.) we are on good terms with the landlord. This appears to be well in hand.

So, all in all, the finances for IFUT are healthy and have a positive outcome. The Executive and Trustees are happy with the directions and actions made by Head Office.

The President asked Conference for any queries on the Financial Report.

A TCD representative queried expenditure details of the consultancies.

Alastair McKinstry, Vice President-Finance, clarified that the Consultancies represented an increase for John Gallagher, Media Consultant, from €25,000 to €30,000, the Production People for media work increased from €24,000 to €25,000 and the biggest change was the IR&DPO who moved from consultancy to payroll.

The Financial Report was then put to the ADC and on the proposal of Anthony Harvey, RIA, and seconded by Angela Flynn, UCC, it was adopted unanimously.

The President thanked Alastair for all his work as Vice President-Finance.

12 APPOINTMENT OF AUDITORS

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

13 ELECTION OF TRUSTEES

The General Secretary advised ADC that the current Trustees' term of office has come to an end and thanked in particular, Gerard Enright, MICL, for being such a wonderful support and keeping an eagle eye on everything we have done, and Maureen Killeavy, UCD, a stalwart and loyal member who came to all the meetings.

The President announced that Cormac Ó Cuilleanáin, TCD, has been re-nominated and two other nominations have been received - Finian O'Shea, retired from CICE, and Peter Murray, retired from MU. These are the only nominations for the three positions of Trustees.

Proposer: Úna Crowley, MU Branch

Seconder: Hugh Gibbons, TCD Branch

They were unanimously elected.

14 DEBATE ON MOTIONS

The President reminded Delegates of the Standing Orders Report and the need to state their name and branch when speaking.

1 **Casual/Precarious Employment**

That IFUT redoubles its efforts to organise and represent casual/precarious academic staff in the Irish universities, while supporting such staff to gain visibility and speak out on their concerns.

Proposer: UCC Branch Committee

Angela Flynn, UCC, proposed the motion stating that it was very fitting that the first motion debated today is on casual/precarious employment. This is a very important motion and has been a concern for IFUT for a long time. She used the adage “the hurt of one is the concern of many of us.” The hurt of one in a vulnerable position is a feature of modern capitalism and modern neo-liberalism.

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

2 **Precarious Employment**

Universities are using precarious employment practices to shift the burden of risk onto staff. These practices include, but are not limited to extended probation contracts and employing staff on an hourly basis to avoid issuing contracts. IFUT should take national level action to address and publicise the continued and unacceptable proliferation of precarious work in the University sector and the stress this places on members.

Proposers: Robert Galavan, Aileen O’Carroll, Liam MacAmhlaigh, MU Branch Committee

Mercedes Carbayo-Abengoza, MU, proposed the motion as a first-time delegate and advised ADC that this motion is very similar to the UCC motion. In particular, she highlighted the stress precarity is causing our colleagues. She said that she worked in a very precarious department, languages, and casual work is very high. She said that this fact was overlooked by the public, who think that university lecturers work in an ideal world. The stress levels are very high. I would be grateful if you would support this motion.

The Deputy General Secretary spoke to the motion stating that ‘extended probation contracts’ and employing staff on ‘an hourly basis’ avoids the issuing of contracts.

Firstly, there is a legal responsibility on all employers to issue contracts of employment to all employees, there is no differentiating between hourly, monthly or occasionally paid in the legislation. It is unacceptable that certain Universities remain uncompliant with this

legislation and as members come to us we will continue to take cases for them under the appropriate legislation.

1. Extended Probation Contracts

Tenure Track Contract, widely in operation across the University Sector internationally.

Google: Academicpositions.com

“Tenure Track

The tenure track is a professor’s pathway to promotion and academic job security. It’s the process by which an assistant professor becomes an associate professor and then a professor. The tenure track exists in most American and Canada universities, however, not all teaching and research positions at these institutions are on tenure track. An assistant professorship is the entry-level tenure-track position; lecturers and adjuncts are not on the tenure-track.”

(According to the same website):

“Tenure grants a professor permanent employment at their university and protects them from being fired without cause. The concept is closely tied to academic freedom, as the security of tenure allows professors to research and teach any topic—even controversial ones.”

So, what’s the issue with the contracts? The actual contracts that are being referred to in this Motion are being used in one University are entitled;

Five Year Fixed term (Tenure Track) in the School of

The contract contains clauses such as:

- The University may, at the discretion of the University and subject to you achieving agreed outcomes in research, teaching and service, offer you a permanent contract of employment before or upon termination of this fixed-term contract.
- The University will indicate, no later than the end of the fourth year of your employment under this fixed term contract, whether or not the University intends to exercise its discretion to offer you a permanent contract of employment.

Another University is focusing on recruiting Ad Astra Fellows. There are

Lecturer/Assistant Professor positions on 5-year Fixed Term contracts similar to the Tenure track used in the earlier example in that permanency will be considered after 4 years’ continuous employment subject to reaching certain targets:

“These targets will include applying for a minimum of one externally-funded research grant each year, and there will normally be an expectation that at least one of these grant applications is successful for the four-year review to be satisfactory.”

The Motion calls on all of us to take action at national level to address and publicise the unacceptable proliferation of precarious work across the sector.

Most here will be aware of the “*Report to the Minister for Education and Skills of the Chairperson of the Expert Group on Fixed-term and Part-Time Employment in Lecturing in Third-Level Education in Ireland*” of May 2016, aka The Cush Report. Most here know that

there were 7 recommendations contained within the Report which have been accepted by the Minister, the most important, from IFUT's perspective remains the first recommendation i.e.:

"I recommend that the qualification period for the granting of a contract of indefinite duration be reduced for a period of continuous employment in excess of three years to a period of continuous employment in excess of two years."

Note: The above is for Lecturers (only).

Regrettably, despite enormous efforts on our behalf and substantial engagement with the other Unions operating in the University sector we have been unable, to date, to secure agreement with the Employers' side on a Dispute Resolution Procedure for any disputes that we have in the event that members, engaged under these contracts are not offered CID's after 2 years of continuous employment.

I remain hopeful that we will agree upon this process soon, and before the next ADC, and hopefully be given the opportunity to test the 'Ad Astra' and the 'Tenure Track' contracts through this adjudication process for any individual member who is refused a CID after 2 years of working under such a contract.

Margaret Robson, DCU, seconded the motion which was carried unanimously.

3 Precarious Employment / OneGalway and OneCork Movements

This ADC notes that IFUT is part of the OneGalway and OneCork movements, where the Unions and Civil society campaigning organisations come together to work on common causes affecting our whole communities. These issues include precarious work and homelessness, affecting IFUT members.

Precairety is a major problem in the University sector, with the majority of those teaching earning hourly rates as PTTAs, and as researchers with no security of tenure by design. There are already active campaigns within IFUT, and via the One Movement where we all come together in Solidarity to fight this together. In this spirit, we support the precarity campaigns in OneGalway.

As part of the work against precarious employment in Galway, the OneGalway movement has been campaigning for tips in the hospitality sector to go to staff as customers intend. We note that the Private Members bill has been put before the Seanad, and we call on IFUT to support this, and the OneGalway and OneCork movements generally.

Proposer: NUIG Branch Committee

Alastair McKinstry, NUIG, proposed the motion and noted that Trade Unions and civil society have come together to work on issues across the community. We all face the issue of precarity. One Galway decided to highlight two significant issues - Precarity of Employment and Tipping. Tipping does not affect us in the academic community but workers in the hospitality sector are tipped by customers who are unaware that the tips are being taken by management. This motion asks IFUT to support the legislation going through the Oireachtas.

Angela Flynn, UCC, spoke of the importance of Trade Unions working together and advised delegates that if it is not happening in your city it is coming soon.

Angela Flynn, UCC, seconded the motion which was carried unanimously.

4 IFUT'S Membership Structure in Relation to Members in Precarious Employment

This ADC calls for IFUT to consider its membership structure to reflect the current precarious nature of the job for members who are required to change institutions to remain employed. Specifically, it calls to make it as easy as possible for members who change institution to transfer their membership to the relevant branch and for those members who are temporarily unemployed to retain their membership.

Proposer: UCD Branch Committee

Deirdre Flynn, UCD, proposed the motion and advised ADC that she is a precarious member of staff and that last year she moved between three Unions. She stated that each time you leave your employment and then return, you have to re-join your union. When not working during the summer you are no longer a member of a Union. We need to have a type of membership to reflect this. The Social Welfare office sends out forms at Easter and Summer. The UCD member said that when she was a member of the NUJ while (a freelance worker) she received these forms. She suggested a particular membership rate, perhaps 4 euro per month.

A TCD representative supported the motion and explained that postdocs are in similar positions as research staff and are badly affected by this issue and streamlining of membership would assist retention.

The General Secretary thanked Deirdre and said IFUT is trying really hard to support members who are in these situations. The difficulty is that in law due regard must be given to authorization for deduction from salary.

A UCC representative said that in the spirit of the motion, the General Secretary presents practical difficulties regarding deductions and payments, branch membership and the difficulty of joining/re-joining. He suggested that we can tease out these elements and come back with practical suggestions.

A DCU representative who also works in TCD and is a precarious worker in both places, said she pays an annual membership rate so does not have to join and re-join.

An NUIG representative expanded on the point of the UCC representative. He said that IFUT are flexible in retaining people out of employment when they are engaged in defending unfair dismissals cases. There is some scope, i.e. some members are affiliated to the Central Branch rather than a university. He suggested that we could temporarily park members there and not apply a subscription rate.

A UCD representative responded saying deduction at source shouldn't be an issue. Not all members pay through salaries. They pay by direct debit.

Emma Sokell, UCD, seconded the motion which was carried unanimously.

5 IFUT's Commitment to Precarious Workers

This ADC calls for IFUT to reaffirm its commitment to precarious workers, short-term contract workers, fixed and specific term and calls on universities to give pay restoration to hourly paid and precarious employees.

Proposer: UCD Branch Committee

Deirdre Flynn, UCD, proposed the motion and said, that she is a member of staff in many universities. I work in the gig economy and will be back out of work on 31 May. Last year I worked in 3 institutions, my annual income was under €20K, with no sick leave, no carers' leave, this is not addressed by the Cush report. Hourly paid staff received 47 cent per exam paper corrected in MICL, which is less than €2 per hour. I am not paid enough to pay tax. I want to know that I can pay my rent in September.

Emma Sokell, UCD, thanked Deirdre, on behalf of IFUT and the UCD Branch, for being prepared to speak about something so personal. The Casualisation Charter can make a difference and we should all remind our colleagues to stop and think about these issues.

A TCD representative said that there is a serious problem with how the public view the salary of staff in Higher Education. Many believe all staff are well paid.

A DCU representative said that more and more precarious jobs are being introduced and we need to appeal to our colleagues to help stop this injustice.

An RCSI representative said that we are part of the problem and we have to be part of the solution.

An NUIG representative stated that he was disgusted that we have universities which act like supermarkets. There is a problem with the word 'deplore', motions should use the word "action."

A representative from UCC said - Every day I am working on a precarious work issue. There is a role for everyone to campaign and we need to handle tricky personal issues with caution.

A representative from UCC raised the issue of Athena Swan and queried that if there are so many different systems of payment, barriers in work, no sick leave, then these issues should be raised within Athena Swan.

A representative from UCC said IFUT UCC have no data on precarious employees, however they did receive data from Athena Swan.

An MICL representative taking up the NUIG representative' point, said we need to find a way to take action on this. Employees want security and want to plan for the future. HEIs are not advertising jobs, they are advertising part time jobs for maternity cover.

A representative from TCD said universities are invested in Athena Swan and suggested an annual ugly duckling award.

A representative from UCC said - Before working in universities generally I thought universities were the best places to practice equality and then I worked in universities and realised that they are the worst place for equality. Not being paid during summer is an injustice. Universities should introduce full time positions for their workers.

A representative from UCD said - Every year we have the same conversation. Very few of us are in a Union and you can't represent us if we are not in a Union. In some universities 50% are precarious teachers.

Darren Fayne, TCD, seconded the motion which was carried unanimously.

The President thanked Deirdre for her impassioned speech.

6 Third-Level Boycott of the WRC Adjudication Process

Traditionally issues related to regularisation of individual staff contracts were dealt by adjudication at the WRC under the provisions of the Industrial Relations Act. Adjudication provides that the outcome of that process can be appealed to the Labour Court where the eventual decision becomes binding on both parties.

The Department of Education has now instructed university HR departments to refer such cases to conciliation at the WRC. This is on the basis that appeals to the Labour Court from this process are non-binding. The University Sector is now effectively boycotting the WRC adjudication process when dealing with precarious staff contracts which makes the entire process meaningless.

This ADC calls for IFUT to ensure that the WRC Adjudication process is accepted by the university HR departments as the appropriate mechanism to deal with individual industrial relations cases.

Proposer: Executive

The General Secretary proposed this motion on behalf of the Executive Committee.

As delegates will know, we in IFUT fight more cases on behalf of individual members than any other Trade Union in Ireland (and, given that Ireland's industrial relations system is different to that of any other country that I know of, this means that we probably fight more such cases than any other Trade Union in the world!)

The reasons for this state of affairs are various and include our own ethos and culture as a Union but a very significant factor is the extraordinary prevalence of precariousness and exploitative job contracts in Higher Education

You would possibly have thought that, given this shameful situation that our Department of Education would be trying to reduce these disgraceful statistics by tackling the most common source giving rise to them. Well, I'm sorry to tell you that you are naïve if that is your expectation.

No, what our esteemed Department of Education does is, not to promote or support any initiatives to tackle precariousness, but rather to instruct our university management to make

it more difficult for IFUT and other Trade Unions seeking justice for individual members to have such cases examined by a third party!

Allow me to explain the details of this extraordinary and disgraceful response.

Ever since 1969 Rights Commissioners (now called Adjudicators) have been available to trade Unions as a fast and efficient means of getting recommendations which resolved grievances concerning individual employees. This system, administered by the LRC (now the WRC) provided a quick, less formal, less stressful forum for the resolution of injustices concerning individuals. The system worked as evidenced, in part, by the huge number of successful cases taken by IFUT over the years.

You might have thought that the Department would be pleased. But, oh no!! What they have done is, in effect, to instruct universities not to agree to these cases being heard by an Adjudicator at all!

In a circular letter sent by the Department to all universities on May 31st 2018 university managements have been instructed to force Unions taking on such cases to take them instead through the much, much slower, more cumbersome and vastly more stressful procedures of Conciliation and appeal to the Labour Court.

An RCSI representative asked if IFUT could go to the Irish Human Rights & Equality Commission, that there may be a route there for precarious workers? IFUT can make statements but we need to look at ways at having some influence.

The General Secretary responded to the debate and thanked the RCSI representative for her suggestion. She advised Conference that IFUT have set up meetings with the Department of Education. IFUT have to be able to represent our members in a forum which tax payers pay for.

Alastair McKinstry, NUIG, seconded the motion which was carried unanimously.

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

The President invited Mike Jennings, former IFUT General Secretary, to address Conference on International Affairs.

The text of the speech is attached at Appendix V.

The President thanked Mike for the compassion and commitment to this work in international affairs.

The President introduced a raffle for four prizes, two donated by Seán Couch (Financial Consultant), one by Cornmarket, and one by the Teachers Union of Ireland Credit Union.

Incoming president.

Una Crowley, MU, won the Amazon Dot which she donated back to the Conference and Anita Wilcox, UCC, then won the prize.

Séamus Searson, SSTA, won €150 voucher.

Regina Joye, UCD, won €100 voucher.

Gerard Enright, MICL, won €50 voucher.

The President then returned to order of business.

7 Metricisation of the Higher Education Sector

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 faculty members' academic performance through simple metrics/performance indicators is not allowed to become embedded in the management practices of Irish universities. This ADC stresses the importance of recognising that academic careers are and should remain multi-faceted in nature and consequently impossible to quantify with simplistic measures.

Proposer: Executive

Emma Sokell, UCD, proposed the motion and said we should vigorously fight against any initiative that seeks to measure faculty members' academic performance through simple metrics/performance indicators.

Virginia Conrick, UCC, seconded the motion which was carried unanimously.

8 Funding of Higher Education

IFUT calls on government, political parties and other stakeholders to engage urgently with the recommendations of the Cassells report (Investing in National Ambition: A Strategy for Funding Higher Education. Report of the Expert Group on Future Funding for Higher Education, March 2016) in order to fully restore public funding to the Irish universities and ensure the continuation of higher education as a high quality public good, accessible to all, regardless of ability to pay.

Proposer: UCC Branch Committee

Edward Lahiff, UCC, proposed the motion.

The precipitous decline in state funding to our universities is well known, and with it the deterioration in staff-student ratios and the increasing financial burden on students and their families. Ours is a sector in considerable crisis.

In 2016, the Cassells report identified the need for an extra €600m a year by 2021 — whether from public coffers, students or a mix of both — to maintain quality in higher education, rising to €1bn annually by 2030.

Cassells reported that “A significant increase in investment is needed ... for the next phase of Ireland’s economic, social and cultural development. Countries at similar levels of development ... devote more attention and resources to ensuring high-quality education that is free at the point of access to students from a range of social backgrounds.”

The Expert Group recommends an increase in investment targeted in three areas over the next 15 years, but the urgent need to restore and enhance quality means that the annual increase in funding needs to be higher in the next three to five years.

This is necessary in three key areas:

- Core Funding
- Capital Funding
- Student Support

Cassells put forward three funding options:

- A predominantly state-funded system;
- Increased state funding with continuing student fees;
- Increased state-funding with deferred payment of fees through income contingent loans.

Since then, our politicians, and specifically our government, have failed spectacularly in moving this agenda forwards.

Research by Thomas Estermann of the European Universities Association shows third-level funding in Ireland as a share of gross domestic product was half of what it was in 2017 compared to 2012.

This was despite a growth in student numbers, which has seen enrolment at third-level climb by a quarter between 2008/9 and 2017/18. Estermann argues that Ireland is one of just two European countries where the third-level education system is “in danger” due to a funding shortfall and rising student numbers.

“Funding per student has declined, and third-level capital infrastructure is underfunded. Meanwhile, restrictions remain on staff recruitment, leaving Ireland near the bottom for the autonomy of its universities to recruit staff. Ireland’s GDP growth suggests possibilities for renewed investment in its universities.”

For over two years, the Oireachtas Education and Skills Committee has been discussing the options set out in the Cassells report: Minister for Education Richard Bruton has repeatedly said that a “consensus” on a new higher education funding model is needed. A year ago, Peter Cassells himself declared that it was now time for a decision on the way forward. “We are probably coming to the stage”, said Cassells, “where decisions need to be made”.

A year ago, the Coalition for publicly funded education, of which IFUT is a part, called on the Irish government and the Joint Oireachtas Committee on Education and Skills to make a long-term decision and invest in the publicly-funded third-level education model as outlined

in the Cassells Report. In April this year, Students Unions and their allies again took action to highlight the problems faced by students in particular.

Public funding is a fundamental principle of good quality higher education, as recognised throughout Europe and much of the world. This is not just a matter of fairness, but goes to the heart of the values that associate with quality university education .

As international experience shows, without proper public funding, we cannot hope to achieve:

- real equality of access
- decent academic careers
- academic freedom
- universities that meets the needs of the wider society and economy in terms of courses, research and wider public participation.

Our current drift to private funding and a corporate structure is severely eroding these values. Chasing foreign students on the basis of their ability to pay high fees, I suggest, is not a value we can support, and nor is the pursuit of research on the basis of its financial return to the university. Creeping privatisation, and corporatisation, means not just a change in our funding model, but a fundamental reorientation of university management culture, of how students are perceived, and of the role of universities in society.

Without necessarily prescribing the details of what a sustainable funding model for the Irish University sector would like, IFUT should demand urgent action by government and all political parties.

I commend this motion to this conference.

Emma Sokell, UCD, seconded the motion which was carried unanimously.

9 IFUT Membership of Eurodoc

Conference notes that on April 3rd 2019 IFUT was voted in as the official representative of postdoctoral researchers in Ireland.

Eurodoc represents the European Council of Doctoral Candidates and Junior Researchers. It is an international federation of 29 national organisations of PhD candidates, and more generally of young researchers from 28 countries of the European Union and the Council of Europe.

Eurodoc's objectives are:

- To represent doctoral candidates and junior researchers at the European level in matters of education, research, and professional development of their careers.
- To advance the quality of doctoral programmes and the standards of research activity in Europe.
- To promote the circulation of information on issues regarding young researchers; organize events, take part in debates and assist in the elaboration of policies about Higher Education and Research in Europe.

- To establish and promote co-operation between national associations representing doctoral candidates and junior researchers within Europe.

Eurodoc are actively representing Early Career Researchers (ECRs) to UNESCO, the Directorate-General (DG) for Research and Innovation (RTD), Council of Europe, Expert Group (EG) for Education and Skills under Open Science (OS) at the EC, MEP Dan Nica who is responsible for drafting the legislation for HorizonEU (successor to H2020), EUA, the European Parliament, Nature Careers and various other stakeholder organisations.

Conference calls on members to engage with Eurodoc to help achieve common goals.

Proposer: TCD Branch Committee

Darren Fayne, TCD, proposed the motion and advised Conference that Eurodoc is a European federation of 18 countries representing early career researchers, PhD candidates right up to Professor. Darren attended the Eurodoc ADC where he was successful in achieving official representation for IFUT within Eurodoc. He said that he hoped that this forum would provide additional data which could help change research in Ireland.

Elizabeth Culleton-Quinn, TCD, seconded the motion which was carried unanimously.

The President wished Darren well and stated that this was a major achievement.

10 Collective-Bargaining Rights for IFUT Members in DCU

That this ADC welcomes the recent agreement between IFUT and SIPTU that provides for the establishment of mechanisms which will vindicate the collective-bargaining rights of IFUT members at DCU. Further, ADC echoes the DCU Branch Committee in acknowledging the work of the General Secretary and Deputy General Secretary, and the solidarity of colleagues in all IFUT branches, both of which were so vital to this achievement.

Proposer: DCU Branch Committee

Sue Miller, DCU, proposed the motion and said that IFUT members in the former Colleges of Education, CICE, MDI and SPC engaged constructively with the incorporation process with DCU from 2013 onwards. Under the leadership of the former General Secretary, Mike Jennings, they eventually reached a collective agreement in August 2016 and the support of Council and Executive was much appreciated throughout this period. At the point of incorporation, the right to collective representation and recruitment had not been agreed on behalf of IFUT DCU members. IFUT entered a further period of prolonged negotiation on these issues led by General Secretary, Joan Donegan, and Deputy General Secretary, Frank Jones, with the support of Fiona Lee and Phyllis Russell. Throughout this difficult time IFUT members in DCU were encouraged by the support of IFUT President, Aidan Seery and the Executive and Council and the solidarity shown by individual branches and their members.

We do not take this support lightly and on behalf of the IFUT DCU Branch I extend our gratitude and thanks.

We welcome the recent agreement with SIPTU and acknowledge the work done by so many to reach this point. A recent blog post by American academic Paul Thomas referring to strike action by secondary teachers in South Carolina on May 1st notes that ‘teaching conditions are learning conditions’ and DCU IFUT Branch looks forward to working with SIPTU colleagues in representing our respective members on the many challenges facing all workers in higher education today.

Anthony Harvey, RIA, proposed an amendment to the Motion

“This ADC also salutes the wisdom, patience, tenacity, dignity and resilience displayed over several grueling years by Sue Miller and her colleagues on the committee of what is now the DCU Branch. At all times they worked tirelessly for the good of their members, and indeed for the best possible outcome for the combined institution, even though the process of the merger was as stressful for themselves as it was for those they represented. We are grateful for the commendable example they have set of IFUT principle and practice at its best.”

Margaret Robson, DCU, seconded the amended motion which was carried unanimously.

The President said it had been the defining issue of his presidency and it gave him great pleasure to leave his post with what promises to be a renewed solidarity with our sister Unions, and he thanked Sue for all her work.

11 Academic Freedom

This ADC notes the threats to academic freedom in Hungary under the government of Prime Minister Orbán. The ADC notes in particular the 2017 law which has seen the independent Central European University effectively forced out of Hungary, as well as the 2018 decree which gives the government powers to prevent universities from offering politically unpopular programmes. This ADC calls on the Hungarian government to uphold academic freedom as explicitly guaranteed in the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union.

Proposer: UCD Branch Committee

Emma Sokell, UCD, proposed the motion.

Anthony Harvey, RIA, asked how could IFUT achieve such an outcome. He asked would a letter on our headed paper to the President of Hungary be sufficient?

The President advised on a point of information that we would write to the Prime Minister and Hungarian ambassador outlining this motion.

Angela Flynn, UCC, suggested a strategy to involve the organisation of Scholars at Risk, an international network which supports academics throughout the world whose work is in danger. It offers academics opportunities to come to safer countries to complete their research. Their Head Office is in New York.

Tina Hickey, UCD, seconded the motion.

Cormac Ó Cuilleanáin, TCD, proposed an amendment to the motion as follows:

To insert the words “and the institutions of the European Union” before the words “to uphold”.

The amendment was put to the floor and unanimously carried.

Dónal MacDónaill, TCD, seconded the amended motion which was carried unanimously.

12 Grading - “Below the Bar”

This ADC calls for IFUT to campaign vigorously for Universities to scrap the “below the bar” grade for Lecturers/Assistant Professors, when it is used, as it is in UCD, to pay people performing the same role on different pay scales.

Proposer: UCD Branch Committee

Emma Sokell, UCD, proposed the motion and advised Conference that the motion deals with academic grading. UCD have four academic grades, the lowest being lecturer, then assistant professor, then associate professor. In the lowest grade UCD have two different pay scales so people doing the same role are paid differently. It is at the discretion of the school or the unit to appoint below or above the bar. Appointments made after the economic crash were placed below the bar. The situation has improved as now posts are advertised above the bar. Below the bar has a 12-point scale.

A UCC representative stated that this is a common problem across universities.

Alastair McKinstry, NUIG, on a point of information advised that below the bar is being abolished in NUIG, who are merging pay scales.

Alastair McKinstry, NUIG, seconded the motion which was carried unanimously.

16 CLOSING OF CONFERENCE

The President spoke of the Minister’s speech and the fact that she chose to make extensive and substantive remarks on the challenges to the sector. The-President said that he looked forward to IFUT working with Minister Mary Mitchell O’Connor in the years to come and he wished to record our thanks to the Minister for her words this morning.

The President noted the dominant theme of conference ‘precarity of working conditions in Irish higher education’ and he was aware of the deep concern that had been expressed at the ADC today. He said that we need to do something urgently about the matter. The President paid particular thanks to the UCD member for the way she presented her own situation. He said that her speech would remain as the abiding impression of this conference.

The President paid thanks to the staff in Head Office. He said that their friendship to him will stay with him going forward.

The President said that his last duty was to introduce the meeting to a remarkable woman and the new President of IFUT, Angela Flynn of UCC. A committed Trade Unionist, active beyond IFUT and known for her work in Cork particularly. The President referenced Joe O'Flynn, in the letter of apologies from SIPTU and his quote re Angela.

The President said that he had the pleasant duty of handing over the keys to the new President. "We all wish you well, all our best wishes and congratulations. I welcome you to take over as President."

Angela Flynn, incoming President, thanked Aidan Seery, outgoing President, and said it is absolutely her pleasure and privilege to take over this role in IFUT. She thanked her nominators and spoke of the enormous shoes she must fill. She expressed enormous gratitude to Aidan who led the Union, with the support of Head Office staff through such a difficult time with dignity and calm. I have no idea how I will follow that but I will try Aidan. I grew up in a family of trade unionists where my mother and father were active in ASTI. The motions today fill me with excitement as this is the work we have for the year ahead. She noted the sheer excellence of the Head Office staff. Thank you to all of you

The General Secretary said that she is so looking forward to working with Angela Flynn as President and wished her well.

The General Secretary thanked Anthony Harvey (Chair of Standing Orders), the Executive Committee, Council, Trustees, Tellers, Branch Committees, John Gallagher (Media Consultant), Seán Couch (Financial Consultant), Mike Jennings, Úna Crowley, Seán Mooney (Tweeter), Ross Madden (guitar man), Jo and the rest of the hotel staff and she thanked the Delegates for coming to the ADC on a Saturday, supporting their Branch and this wonderful organization.

The General Secretary made a formal presentation to Phyllis Russell, Fiona Lee and Frank Jones.

The conference then concluded.

11 May 2019

Appendix I
DELEGATES 2019 ADC
(As recorded at Conference)

TCD

Darren Fayne	<i>Biochemistry and Immunology</i>
Dónall MacDónaill	<i>Ceimic</i>
Hugh Gibbons	<i>Computer Science</i>
Aidan Seery (Pres)	<i>Education</i>
Cormac Ó Cuilleanáin	<i>Italian</i>
Eliz. Culleton-Quinn	<i>Physiotherapy</i>

UCD

John Dunnion	<i>Computer Science</i>
Deirdre Flynn	<i>English, Drama</i>
Joe Brady	<i>Geography</i>
Regina Joye	<i>Nursing & Midwifery</i>
Emma Sokell	<i>Physics</i>
Tina Hickey	<i>Psychology</i>

UCC

Edward Lahiff	<i>Food, Business & Development</i>
Virginia Conrick	<i>Library</i>
Anita Wilcox	<i>Library</i>
Angela Flynn (Incoming Pres)	<i>Nursing & Midwifery</i>
Amin Sharifi Isaloo	<i>Sociology</i>

NUIG

Alastair McKinstry (Vice Pres-Finance)	<i>ICHEC</i>
Seán Tobin	<i>Mathematics</i>
Breandán Ó Cochláin	<i>Physical Chemistry</i>

MU

Úna Crowley	<i>Centre for Teaching & Learning</i>
Mercedes Carbayo-Abengozar	<i>Modern Languages - Spanish</i>
Peter Murray	<i>Sociology</i>

DCU

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

MICL

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

Celeste Golden	<i>Admissions & Student Recruitment</i>
Siobhán McCarthy	<i>Leadership in Health Professions Education</i>
Theresa Keane	<i>Institute of Leadership</i>

CB

Anthony Harvey	<i>DMLCS, RIA</i>
Kate O'Malley	<i>Documents on Irish Foreign Policy, RIA</i>
Karin Bacon	<i>SESE, MIE</i>

APOLOGIES

TCD

Pat Wall	<i>Education</i>
Seán Hughes	<i>Education</i>

UCD

Maureen Killeavy	<i>Education</i>
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MU

Liam MacAmhlaigh	<i>Froebel</i>
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MICL

Des Carswell	<i>Education</i>
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OBSERVERS

MU

Rose Malone	<i>Education</i>
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SPEAKERS

Mary Mitchell O'Connor, TD	<i>Minister of State for Higher Education, Department of Education & Skills</i>
Mike Jennings	<i>Former General Secretary, Irish Federation of University Teachers</i>

PANEL OF SPEAKERS

Thomas Byrne	<i>TD and Spokesperson on Education, Fianna Fáil</i>
Tom Collins	<i>Chair, Technological University Dublin and former President, Maynooth University</i>
Aodhain O'Riordain	<i>Senator and Spokesperson on Education, Labour Party</i>
Lynn Ruane	<i>Senator, TCD Panel Member</i>

FRATERNAL DELEGATES

David Robinson	<i>Executive Director, Canadian Association of University Teachers (CAUT)</i>
Séamus Searson	<i>General Secretary, Scottish Secondary Teachers' Association (SSTA)</i>
Jacque White	<i>General Secretary, Ulster Teachers' Union (UTU)</i>
Susan Thompson	<i>President, Ulster Teachers' Union (UTU)</i>
Liam Berney	<i>Industrial Officer, Irish Congress of Trade Unions (ICTU)</i>
Feargal Brougham	<i>President, Irish National Teachers' Organisation (INTO)</i>
Karl Byrne	<i>Education Sector Organiser, Services Industrial Professional & Technical Union (SIPTU)</i>
Annette Dolan	<i>Deputy General Secretary, Teachers' Union of Ireland (TUI)</i>
Martin Marjoram	<i>Vice President, Teachers' Union of Ireland (TUI)</i>
Seán Couch	<i>Financial Consultant</i>
John Gallagher	<i>Media Consultant</i>

Apologies

Breda Lynch	<i>President, Association of Secondary Teachers Ireland (ASTI)</i>
Séamus Lahart	<i>President, Teachers' Union of Ireland (TUI)</i>
Joe O'Flynn	<i>General Secretary, Services Industrial Professional & Technical Union (SIPTU)</i>
Jens Vraa-Jensen	<i>International Consultant, Dansk Magisterforening (DM)</i>
Larry Flanagan	<i>General Secretary, The Education Institute of Scotland (EIS)</i>
Rob Copeland	<i>Policy Officer, University & College Union (UCU)</i>

APPENDIX II

SPEECH BY MS JOAN DONEGAN, GENERAL SECRETARY

11 May 2019

We have just listened to the most wonderful performance of music and art at its best.

It most definitely is a more uplifting way to return to our conference than to solely focus on motions of what needs to be done, what isn't being done and what IFUT demands should or must be done.

It's worth recalling again the poem of James Oppenheim from the early part of the last century, when he wrote:

*"Hearts starve as well as bodies
Give us bread, but give us roses."*

As we discuss our strategy today for the coming year and indeed for the 2020's, it is important to highlight the situation in which the trade union movement finds itself today.

Again, as in previous years, we see that IFUT's membership happily continues to grow and expand.

However, for the overall trade union movement, membership numbers are declining rapidly.

According to OECD figures Ireland's union membership figures dropped to between 23% to 27% in 2016, (depending on the data used) compared to 36% in 2010. An example of what may await us are the latest statistics from the USA showing union density at just 10.6%. Even in Sweden, the 'home' of trade unions, membership has fallen by almost 20% from a high of 86% two decades ago.

In short, the trade union movement nationally and internationally is losing ground.

The reasons are complicated and the forces weighted against us are immense. But was it ever different?

We can hardly argue that the men and women who fought for trade union rights in the 19th century had it easy!

One of our failures has been an inadequate response to the concept of individualisation, launched on society during the Thatcher and Reagan years in the 1980's. This ideology emphasises the individual and the selfish - in place of the collective and communal.

Individual entrepreneurship and initiative is vital in any economy and society. But, it is wrong and exploitative when applied to lecturers and researchers in our universities who are expected to survive on precarious, often annual contracts or compete against each other to deliver the next research project.

One of the reasons why IFUT's membership is growing is that we have given priority to focusing on the issue affecting precarious work in higher education. Let me tell you it's not easy!

Every case is different. The majority of cases involve individuals. Considerable time and effort is required to progress the cases. Many of the people we take cases for, feel isolated, alone and in fear of unemployment.

But again we have to ask ourselves was it ever any different?

Our work as trade unionists must extend beyond annual pay talks, beyond meetings with government, employers and other bodies that are scheduled weeks or months in advance.

We must learn again to respond quickly to the immediate and real needs of real people, whenever, however and wherever they arise.

We have to focus from an understanding that the ideology launched on the world by Thatcher and Reagan still underpins a drive towards individualisation. The outcome has been to concentrate wealth among fewer people and drive down income and job security for more and more of our members.

Oxfam recently published figures showing that in 2018 the world's 26 richest billionaires own as many assets as the poorest half of the world's population - 3.8 billion people!

A 2015 detailed study on 'Inequality and Labour Market Institutions' by the International Monetary Fund - hardly a friend of the trade union movement, showed a clear link between unionisation and reduced income inequality as unions lift the wages of the lowest paid.

So, Trade Unions do deliver!

They do this by arguing for objective criteria regarding the rate for a job and campaigning for increases in minimum wage.

The key, however to turning the tide on falling union membership must be, to focus on those workers whose very marginalisation keeps them out of union membership.

As I mentioned earlier IFUT has given priority to the area of precarious working conditions.

The more we work in this area, the more the issues keep arriving to us into our "In Box" in e-mails. Data on this topic is so poor that we do not know how many staff are precariously employed in our universities.

They might as well be statistically redacted from society!

This work isn't easy.

Many such workers are not in union membership, which makes the task of fighting for such workers that more difficult. This work is placing increasing strain on our time and resources. It often clashes with the myriad of other issues that, as a trade union, we are obliged to undertake for our members.

But it is the right thing to do.

And ultimately it will help IFUT to grow stronger and more effective for all our members.

There is another argument that unions are past their 'sell by' date.

That the levels of education in society and the raft of labour laws and regulations make old style union activity redundant.

But we have seen that even in the most viciously anti-union employments, employees, eventually organise to fight for their rights.

For example, Google employees may be regarded, as in a higher paid category for an employer that regards itself as 'above' trade unions and industrial relations disputes. But in 2018 Google staff in a number of countries protested over harassment, equality and racism issues.

At the opposite end of the pay spectrum, there has been collective action by workers in the 'gig economy', for example, such as the Deliveroo workers, striking over pay and conditions.

Yet the absence of unions in these workplaces means workers who seek to raise issues face serious challenges from management. There is greater safety and strength in working collectively rather than on an individual or on an ad-hoc basis.

Trade unions have to find new, imaginative and meaningful ways to respond to these situations and to recruit and support these workers. Indeed it would be interesting to compile data on the number of Google staff who have previously worked as researchers and the number of Deliveroo workers who are struggling to pay post grad or other such fees.

Many of these workers are young and have grown up in an environment where trade unions are not the norm. We must speak and, more importantly, listen to them in their language, not in the often very, very staid language of the branch committee meeting or minutes. The old traditional way of working needs to change with a more creative approach adopted.

Trade unions must also learn to work together.

Old and territorial positions regarding who can join what union, where and when - needs to be tackled. This genuinely is a remnant of 19th century thinking and must be addressed. Individual unions can help a lot in this regard.

And it is an area where the role of the Irish Congress of Trade Unions must be strengthened and become more effective in this regard.

I would like to take this opportunity to pay particular tribute to our members in the new DCU and to our counterparts in SIPTU, for the positive and constructive trade union agreement reached following recent discussions and deliberations. As a result, both unions are now in a much stronger position to advance the issues and rights of our combined membership. Any other outcome would have served to only weaken and disillusion employees and union members in the new DCU.

Well done to all!

As trade unionists, we must also be brave enough to identify and take on the range of issues that confront the modern-day workplace. We still need to work incessantly to address hidden bias, stigma and suffering of individuals and categories of workers within the workplace, from whatever source.

But we also need to learn to recognise and celebrate our victories, to make our organisations part of and relevant to the everyday activity of the people we represent. And to appreciate that, in addition to the pile of problems that arrive daily at our desks, there is a parallel mountain of achievement, success and inspiration within our membership and in our universities.

The record of our work and achievements as set out in our report today proves our capacity in this regard.

It is indeed a case of bread and roses!

I commend the report to you for adoption.

Appendix III

IFUT PRESIDENTIAL ADDRESS 2019

DR AIDAN SEERY, TCD

My reflections today on completion of two years as President of IFUT are influenced, as you might expect, by my disciplinary background in educational theory and philosophy. I hope this notice does not alarm and I promise that I will approach my thoughts with great care for my audience. Unsurprisingly and perhaps less alarmingly, they are also influenced by the fact that I have been a trade unionist for almost all of my working life, beginning as an active member of the Deutsche Angestellten Gewerkschaft [DAG] in Munich, from the mid-80s, and continuing as an active member of IFUT since 2004. These two perspectives give a particular view of the university and the work that takes place within it.

Some of my reflections today are influenced also by some recent reading, especially of the work of Ronald Barnett, Emeritus Professor of Higher Education at UCL. Ron was in Trinity recently and addressed a conference on postgraduate lives. He is a leading figure in the field of the philosophy and sociology of higher education and I recommend his most recent book 'The Ecological University' to you and wish to refer to this now briefly. In this book, he puts forth the thesis that the contemporary university is connected to what he refers to as seven ecosystems: 'knowledge, social institutions, persons, the economy, learning, culture, and the natural environment.' The work is rich and offers a bold new perspective that speaks to me not only as an educational theorist but also as a trade unionist and I would like to extract from it a couple of very high-level ideas about who we are and what we do in our universities and colleges but also in IFUT.

The first idea is that who we are and what we do has extraordinary scope and reach. It cannot be said of many professions or work that they are connected to the very nature of what it is to know, what it is to be a person, to be a critical member of a liberal democracy. Few professions are so closely connected to schools, hospitals, social and public services. Universities and our profession are connected to the worlds of literature, poetry, theatre, film, and of course to commerce, industry, and entrepreneurship. As a result, the gaze is firmly on universities and our profession to begin to provide leadership in the solution of some of the most challenging issues facing humanity: energy, climate change, clean water, waste, species extinction and soil degradation.

The second idea that occurs to me from Ron's ecological idea is that our connection with all of these areas is not one of neutral, disinterested 'delivery' of knowledge, skills, competences and attitudes. It is much more the case that we and our universities stand in a relation of knowledge-power and influence-power in these fields. It is expected of us that we speak with authority based on knowledge and evidence in our fields. We expect to influence policy-, decision-makers and actors in the shaping of these fields, as a result of our expertise, grown out of research. With these power-relations comes, however, the imperative for ethical and moral thought, prudent decision-making and right action.

This view of our profession and of universities could be dismissed as utopian and, indeed to return one last time to Ron Barnett, the subtitle of his book is 'A Feasible Utopia' and I want to emphasise the idea that a broad ecological perspective on who we are and what we do in universities is a feasible one also. For too long now and especially in Irish higher education policy, we have been corralled into one eco-system, that of the

economy. Classical human capital theory, adopted nearly 50 years ago as the guiding and the principle idea to support investment in higher education, is no longer adequate to understand our universities and what we do in them. But we do not have a successor theory, neither we, nor the policy-makers, and I do not believe that this is a result of us all rejecting meta-narratives and becoming committed post-modernists.

No, it is much more the case that we have fallen into the slumber of 'common sense'. It makes simple sense to regard universities as places where people are prepared for work; but precisely because it is simple, this sense is not sufficient. It surely is time now to awaken, to open our eyes and to look on our university worlds in a new, broader, richer way and to develop a deeper understanding of who we are and what we do.

IFUT has an important role in the work of both re-imagining the Irish university and bringing about a new self-understanding and new ways of working. Uniquely, it brings together colleagues from across all disciplines and from all the universities, colleges of education and other institutions of higher learning. These are colleagues who not only are creative thinkers but are also people of action; and it is action that is called for as well as imagination and new language and theory. The kind of activity that is demanded here is to bring about the conditions for a feasible utopia and I believe that we know already what some of the actions might be. First, there can be no broad, confident assertion of the university in society without fundamental academic freedom within it. This is the freedom to engage with all of the eco-systems, but especially that of knowledge, in a way that is critical, fearless and responsibly in the service of the solutions to our challenging human issues. IFUT has always and will continue to advocate and act to secure and defend academic freedom and will remain vigilant to the origins of new sources of threat. We may be fortunate to live in a society in which overt oppression and suppression of thought is not a feature of our political life. This kind of threat is relatively small in most European countries but recent political decisions and actions in Hungary are very concerning and I wish to extend an expression of solidarity with our academic colleagues there. There are, however, many more subtle threats to academic freedom. Politicians and policy-makers calling for more influence for industry in constructing curriculum and research funders directing resources in particular directions and to the neglect of fundamental research and individual Principal Investigator projects are obvious threats to academic freedom. These challenges to academic freedom are, of course, also challenges to the very understanding of the university itself.

One of the most significant threats to academic freedom on a personal level, however, is the now ubiquitous practice in universities of placing and keeping academic and other staff in precarious working conditions. This is simply an unacceptable and reprehensible exercise in power abuse. To keep workers in a state of constant insecurity and thus effectively limiting their normal life prospects of attaining a mortgage, of settling children in schools, of being close enough to care for aging parents is one of the most distasteful features of late capitalist employment practices. I wish to note here especially, that our career researcher colleagues are particularly affected by this practice and wish to re-iterate the commitment of this union to the cause of achieving an acceptable career structure for researchers.

A second activity that IFUT has already embraced and can expand upon in order to bring about the feasible utopia of a new kind of university is the collaboration and cooperation between unions in the universities and colleges. I wish to highlight this today since one of the key features of my time as President has been the troubled relationship with our fellow trade unionists in SIPTU in the new DCU. We have had to work very hard to change the nature of this relationship and we have had some very difficult decisions to make in the last two years that could have threatened the very existence of IFUT. Before I expand a little more on this, I would like to welcome again Karl Byrne from SIPTU and

to thank him for accepting our invitation to attend our ADC. We have come to an arrangement in DCU with our colleagues that will see both unions at the table with management on collective issues, we are planning a joint campaign to bring more colleagues into membership of our unions and we look forward to a future of close cooperation. To this project, I wish to offer also the following: remaining with the theme of the new university as a feasible utopia, I suggest to our comrades in all of our sister unions in the universities that in us and in IFUT they have partners who have a rich tradition in knowledge of academic life and work. Over years of work reflecting on and analysing the work of universities and engaging closely those who work in them, IFUT has gained an expertise and even a specific wisdom that no other union has. We are justly proud of this body of knowledge and of the way in which we have and continue to use this to the benefit of our members. Today, I offer this expertise, this knowledge and wisdom to the new relationship with our colleagues and comrades in SIPTU and in our other sister universities, in the hope that they will regard it for its great value, that they will respect it as we do and that they will work with us to enhance it to the benefit of many more. I hope that we can record this Annual Delegate Meeting as the formal date of the beginning of our new relationship and that each ADC that follows can report on many shared achievements and successes.

Colleagues, delegates, it has been my privilege to serve as President of this wonderful and important trade union that plays such a significant role in the life of our universities and colleges. Long may it prosper and grow. I have a little more work to do on your behalf today but my final joyful task will be to introduce you to my esteemed successor and I will do this at the closing of proceedings later this afternoon.

Thank you

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

Good morning and it must be a good omen that you have invited me back a second time to your ADC. Aidan Seery, President, Joan Donegan, General Secretary, also incoming President, Angela Flynn, and also a very good friend of mine, Professor Tom Collins. International guests and speakers, Thomas Byrne, Senator Lynn Ruane, Senator Aodhan, Council and members of IFUT. This is my third event this morning, darkness into light. All of us this morning are in the business of education, you are at the coalface of our higher education system. You are the people who serve our students and education system and thank you for that work you do. You have made a huge contribution to our educational system, students and international reputation. 1 in 15 adults are studying at HEIs. The highest proportion of students in EU are progressing to higher education. 45% have a third-level qualification. The student should always be at the epicentre of what we do. There are real people behind the statistics who want to progress and ensure future generations have a better life style. The Irish Universities Association (IUA) launched a report last week showing that Irish graduates earn more than in the UK. They make an €8.9 billion contribution to the Irish economy. It is not just about earning capacity. Education ensures our workforce has major success and attracts foreign direct investment and supports growth in indigenous countries. Education transforms people's lives. The higher education sector can be extremely proud and it is the work that you have done. Students from all social backgrounds, disabilities, get challenges that they rightfully deserve. Without HEIs and their commitment to giving best education possible this societal growth would not have happened. Education is the foundation of our thriving and productive society and the University sector is at the epicentre of this development. Universities are at the forefront of research and development. As the higher education system expands so too does the government commitment, with an increase on expenditure of €250 million extra since 2016. This equates to an increase of 17% over that period. The nett increase of €67 million allocated for HEIs is in the estimates for 2019. This additional funding is for increased demographics, increased pay, and funding measures in the Budget. The government plan to spend €138 million in 2019 on capital investment in higher education and this compares to €70.6 million in 2017. Welcome EU Commission under structural support programme on future funding options for higher education to be undertaken this year. The government is committed and we want a further improvement. The EU Commission play an important role in this process. The Taoiseach is reluctant to see student contributions made and reluctant for a student loan model. The government and I cannot leave students graduating with debts as other countries do. Student loans are off the table during the lifetime of this government. The agreement on new entrants pay provides for incremental jumps for new entrants, for lecturing staff, and for recruitment grades. There are measures to improve progression which is a cross-sectoral issue and not just for the education sector alone. The government supports a gradual FEMPI abolishment. Restoration measures achieved throughout continued collective bargaining through the Public Service Stability Agreement. I am particularly pleased to see the ongoing progress in pursuing the implementation of the recommendations in the Cush Report which will address Union concerns. The eligibility for a CID, from a period of continuous employment reduced from 3 to 2 years. It also requires that HEIs, whenever there are available lecturing hours, be offered to existing part time lecturers. Where part time lecturers are employed for

additional hours, they should be offered a CID. In non-exchequer funded posts universities can now offer positions on a Fixed Term or permanent basis. The HCI (Human Capital Initiative) provides for an investment of €300 million in higher education over the period 2020-2024. It ring-fences an allocation of €60 million each year in response to Brexit. The HCI should meet future skills needs of the economy and provide additional investment in higher education. Realise objectives of Project 2040 and Future Jobs Ireland programme. Additional capacity across higher education sector. Flexible and blended learning. Focus on employability. Help to future proof our graduates and greater focus on higher education provision. The future world of work – Artificial Intelligence, etc., are a reality now in the workforce. Competitive call for the new courses to be aligned with key objectives of the HEI fund. The Gender Equality Task Force has reported. Crystallises and you know. To achieve gender equality balance at professor level in our HEIs would take 20 years. The government is taking action and will soon have in place a mechanism for HEIs for under-represented professor posts for suitably qualified academics. More than 50% of students are female. A Centre of Excellence for Gender Equality will provide centralised support for HEIs. Tackling gender equality benefits men, women and our society. I look forward to the continuing support of IFUT in this regard. Sexual violence and harassment have a huge effect, traumatise student, wreck wellbeing and academic attainment, and student retention. Appropriate behaviour on campus we are failing, therefore failing society. The figures tell a distressing story. 46% of those who presented to sexual trauma units were students. 25% of females received unwanted sexual contact. 1 in every 4 of our students. The issue is not new, students have decided that enough is enough, times need to change. We need to change the entire culture across the country so all of our students feel safe and secure. Consent Framework document is a comprehensive roadmap to a brighter and more positive culture on our campuses. I know IFUT is extremely supportive of this framework.

Research undertaken in universities is core to our education system and to the success of our economy. Collaboration with enterprises of all sizes. In 2018 – IND competitive yearbook Ireland placed 9th in world in terms of our university education to meet. Launch Research – Quality of teaching and learning in education. Investing. Future world of work is in a state of complete and utter flux, graduates will need to be adaptable, flexible, ethical, creative, have empathy and a life long journey of education. Reskilling and upskilling is vital in having a vibrant workforce. Robots, AI, virtual reality, competing with future students. Social, creative and emotive skills cannot be replaced. The higher education sector and members of IFUT will be at the heart of these trends, IFUT members have enormous responsibility in shaping the graduates of the future. I would like to thank each and every one of you here this morning for that work and I look forward to working with IFUT.

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

Colleagues,

Today, apart from giving this scheduled talk I have also been asked to deputise for Susan Flocken, European Director of ETUCE. So, let me start by imparting the standard greeting of solidarity to this ADC on behalf of the 132 Education Trade Unions in 51 countries representing 11,000,000 members who constitute the Membership of ETUCE which is the European Region of Education International.

Brush Shiels used to say that his band, Skid Row, were the “best small Irish rock band in the world”.

Well, I can demonstrate in this report that IFUT is the best small education Union in the world even without the qualifier “Irish”.

The reality is that IFUT punches way above its weight internationally.

IFUT’s primary forums of activity are:

TUAC (the trade union advisory committee of the OECD).

Joan Donegan represents us exceptionally well on this body.

IFUT’s singular achievement in TUAC is that, working with our close allies in the Canadian Association of University Teachers we defeated a concerted attempt by the OECD to introduce an international system called **AHELO** (Assessment of HE Learning Outcomes). This would have introduced a crude metrification in to HE teaching such as one of our resolutions at today’s ADC pledges us to oppose.

Sectoral Social Dialogue in Education is supported by the EU Commission and is a joint employer/trade union forum to deal with issues of joint concern. Interestingly, Education was the very last area of EU economic activity without such social dialogue structures and, as this was primarily due to the absence of a body representing European education employers, ETUCE took the very brave and forward-looking decision to foster the creation of what is now EFEE (the European Federation of Education Employers). Frank Jones is the IFUT representative in SSDE. IFUT has consistently focussed here on the issues of Precariousness and the treatment of Researchers.

Frank also represents us on **HERSC** the ETUCE standing committee on Higher Education and research. Here IFUT has consistently focussed on the treatment of Researchers and on Academic Freedom.

Fiona Lee is a very good rep for IFUT on ETUCE’s **Standing Committee on Gender Equality**.

I represented ETUCE on one of the Advisory Bodies of the **Bologna Process**. This AB advised on policy vis a vis the HE systems in the rest of the world.

BIGTU is the British & Irish Group of Teacher Unions. It co-ordinates the policies and activities of all eleven teacher Unions in the UK and Ireland (now down to 9 or 10 due to mergers). Joan and I are the IFUT reps here.

ETUCE is the name of the European Region of EI. It stands for “European Trade Union Committee on Education”. IFUT holds the one Irish seat on the European Committee of ETUCE. I have been that nominee since 2012 and the reason why our colleague Unions have allowed me to stay on in to a second term of office is because I used my membership of the Committee to be elected as European Treasurer which, ex-officio, gives IFUT the status of Vice President of ETUCE and a place on the ETUCE executive council which is known as the Bureau.

Education International (EI) is the world body of education Unions and we also have distinguished record of service there.

Rose Malone (then IFUT President) and I represented IFUT at the very first **EI Women's Conference** and I believe that our role there was influential in EI's decision to have the second Women's' Conference in Dublin where IFUT was given the honour of making the welcoming speech on behalf of all the Irish affiliates.

Our partnership and deep friendship with the **Canadian Association of University Teachers** has been tremendously gratifying and beneficial for us. I am especially delighted that David Robinson, Executive Director of CAUT is with us today as he has been at several of our ADC's and other IFUT events. In recent years the friendship of IFUT and CAUT has been formalised by the institution of an annual visit by the officers of each Union to the other on a rotational basis.

At CAUT's invitation I had the great honour to participate in a solidarity and Union-building visit to the education Unions in Ghana.

At the 8th World Congress of EI which will be held in Bangkok next July I will have the huge honour of being presented with EI's Distinguished Associate award which I see as a recognition of the wonderful spirit of generosity and internationalism of IFUT.

I will mention quickly some other aspects of IFUT's great participation in building HE trade unionism across the continent of Europe.

I chaired part of the seminar on "**Enhancing Gender Equality Through Education**" in Baku, Azerbaijan.

We participated in a solidarity visit to witness the political trial in Istanbul of teacher Union activists who had angered the Turkish government merely by signing a petition calling for restraint in dealing with the people of the Kurdish region.

We were requested to attend as solidarity guests of CGIL in Italy.

IFUT was honoured to be asked to chair an international training seminar in Copenhagen on the issue of the *integration of migrants*. At this I was hugely chuffed to be able to bring to the discussion and the final documents insights in to the crucial importance of the mother tongue which I had learned at the wonderful "Linguistic Diversity" conference organised by Aine O'Neill, Rose Malone and Joan Donegan as part of IFUT's response to the migration and refugee crisis.

Those of you who are aware of the fractious nature of the relationship between me and all aspects of IT will be amused that I was asked to chair a seminar in Berlin dealing with Social Media, Cyber bullying, Radicalisation and On-line abuse.

I was as surprised as any of you, but the word was that it went well.

The Norwegian Association of Researchers asked me to deliver a lecture on **Slow Science** dealing with the demand for researchers to have more academic freedom and autonomy.

I finished by offering the following as a rallying slogan for the cause
What do we Want?

The job security, time, freedom and space to conduct original, ground-breaking research!

When Do We Want It?

Following consultation with our peers, in an atmosphere of Academic Freedom, in the context of institutional autonomy!!

*(I subsequently got an email from the Norwegian Association for the Promotion of More Street Protests to Highlight and Raise Public Awareness of Important Issues and to Build Support for Bigger Demonstrations (Oslo Branch) who told me my slogan was extremely popular on the streets and sounded even catchier in Norwegian!!

By the way the title of the above association used also to include the promotion of civil disobedience but they dropped that on the instruction of the city council!)*

(* None of that is true!)

Finally here is a quick sample of current ETUCE Campaigns and research in areas of interest to us;

“Shaping the Future of Europe with Teachers” (aimed at the elections to the EU Parliament)

“Europe needs a Pay Rise” (in conjunction with the European Trade Union Confederation)

European Semester, implications of.

TTIP

Bologna Process

Copyright & Intellectual Property Rights.

SDG’s

Conclusion.

Outside on O’Connell Street there is a statue of Jim Larkin who famously said that “the great only appear great because we are on our knees. Let us arise!”

Well, Irish University teachers have every reason to arise and to walk tall and their Union, our Union, the Irish Federation of University Teachers walks tall in Europe and in the wider world.

Go raibh mile maith agaibh.