



**IFUT**

Irish Federation of University Teachers  
Cónaidhm Éireannach na Múinteoirí Ollscoile

# **ORGANISING FOR EQUALITY**

AND DECENT WORK IN HIGHER EDUCATION

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## **ANNUAL DELEGATE CONFERENCE 2022**

**11:00 SATURDAY, 14TH MAY 2022**

GRESHAM HOTEL,  
O'Connell Street,  
Dublin 2.

# A STRONG, COHERANT & UNIFIED APPROACH TO HIGHER EDUCATION – Anthony Harvey, President



For the first time since 2019 the Irish Federation of University Teachers is able to meet in person at this, our Annual Delegate Conference. It is no exaggeration to say that the tumultuous three years since we last did so have seen

our whole world change in many ways that could not have been foreseen, with repercussions that will be permanent. The Covid pandemic has affected everyone in terms of how work is carried out and human interactions conducted. More recently a horrible war has been unleashed upon Ukraine. Each of these afflictions has been and still is causing terrible suffering to huge numbers of our fellow human beings. I suspect we all look back on our previous selves of 2019 as having then lived in a kind of age of innocence.

Through all of this, and alongside our fellow Teacher Unions, IFUT has continued to pursue its objectives: in our case the advancement of higher education and research, the promotion and protection of academic freedom, and the safeguarding and advancement of the terms and conditions of employment of our members. An outsider might be tempted to think that these goals are abstruse and elitist, far removed from the matters that are really troubling the world. But that outsider would be wrong. Through today's debates and addresses, particularly that of our eminent guest speaker Professor Andrea Pető, it will become clear how the ideals we fight and campaign for are actually of fundamental importance for the very existence, in the long term, of the liberal, democratic and peaceful society in which (thankfully) we in Ireland are still embedded. As for the directly practical matters that IFUT engages with, we apologize to no-one for taking up the cudgels on behalf of our members: in terms of pay and conditions, employment in Higher Education can be one of the most precarious callings in any sector of our society. This ADC will review what has been achieved and what is being aimed for; it will also reveal

how IFUT's ideals as a professional association and its goals as a trades union together provide the necessary strong, coherent and unified motivation for all that we attempt to do.

## **“WE APOLOGISE TO NO-ONE FOR TAKING UP THE CUDGELS ON BEHALF OF OUR MEMBERS”**

As someone who has been involved in IFUT since the mid 1990s I can testify that its consistently warm, friendly and constructive ethos is among the outstanding characteristics that make our organization so rewarding to work in. The fact that our Union can accommodate these characteristics so readily is not luck: they easily find a home here thanks to IFUT's collegial, democratic structures. But the fact that those positive characteristics are there to be accommodated is entirely thanks to the dedicated individuals involved, whether our professional Head Office staff or our wonderful cohort of volunteer activists in every Branch.

In almost every walk of contemporary life, finding volunteers to help is becoming increasingly difficult. IFUT often bucks this trend, sometimes even having a plurality of cheerful and able people willing to represent us on an external body, or on one of our various committees or working groups. There have been recent signs that this ready availability is, unfortunately, declining; and that is perhaps not surprising, considering that everyone involved has also had to continue to conduct, in parallel, all aspects of their working lives as employees in Higher Education, and in dramatically changed circumstances, over the past couple of years. Having said that, there is a good number of outstanding individuals who, despite all the pressures, have continued over that period not only to devote time and effort to helping their colleagues by helping the Union, but have even launched highly successful new initiatives, bringing benefits to us all that will long outlive the pandemic. In the special session that will close this ADC, specific recognition will be accorded to these heroes of IFUT, who have necessarily remained unsung throughout the period



when we could not meet; in the meantime all I'll say here, to them but particularly to others, is: please (continue to) sign up to help! You will find it most rewarding ...

As for our Head Office team, the fact is that IFUT would soon both grind to a halt and probably fall apart were it not for their unparalleled professionalism, dedication, supportiveness and efficiency. Each individual one of them seems more than a match for an entire administrative, HR or financial department in the average institution where we organize (and with whom, unfortunately, we so often need to contend). What is more, they provide this wonderful service to us, the members, with compassion, helpfulness and sensitivity.

Elsewhere, even well-intentioned people are often unable to combine those qualities with a professional approach, as such individuals tend to compartmentalize their lives into the official and the personal; but none of the IFUT staff does that. Instead, they seem as willing as even our most committed volunteers are, to do extra whenever called upon — or even before! Again, this afternoon's special session will provide an opportunity to express our collective gratitude by name to all in our wonderful Head Office team, either still

serving or having left since the last time we had a chance to thank people properly.

Finally, I would like to give an assurance to all IFUT members reading this, and attending and participating in ADC 2022: just by doing so, you are playing a key role in the life of our Union! IFUT consists of its members, and at ADC more than at any other time this becomes apparent as they — you — learn more about how we work and what we are doing and striving for and, by debating and voting, help to set the detail of our course for the coming year and for longer.

*Tá muid an-bhuíoch dhíbh uilig; anois, bainigí taithneamh as an lá!*

**ANTHONY HARVEY,  
PRESIDENT.**



# IFUT IS A FORCE FOR GOOD

## Frank Jones, General Secretary

Colleagues,

Over the past 12 months we have seen considerable change to our working environment, change that has taken place at a pace that we never experienced in pre-Covid times. I want to thank all of our members for the huge efforts that each of you made over the past year to ensure that the vital service that we provide to students, and society in general, was delivered in the most professional manner possible.

As we return to face to face meetings and to our first ADC since the outset of Covid I want to extend a warm welcome to each of you. The vast majority of the work that we in head office have been engaging in over the past two years has been in the virtual arena. This hasn't been the same for those that we represent with many having returned to face to face teaching with new controls and restrictions for some time now. This is the first opportunity that many of us have had in over two years to meet each other in person, and for this I am grateful.

### "IFUT IS THE UNION OF CHOICE FOR ACADEMICS"

I am pleased to present to you the Annual Report of IFUT for the past 12 months. This report provides a flavour of many of the issues that we have been engaging in on behalf of all of those that we represent. This work, carried out by head office staff and by many of our Representatives from across all of our sections, is vital in ensuring that our union remains valid and relevant and the union of choice for Academics. While much of the work of IFUT representatives at all levels was in relation to the safe return to campus, we continued to discuss core issues of concern to our members including promotions, staffing, precarious employment and the need for robust policies addressing issues from sexual misconduct to dignity at work. All the while, in the background and out of the eye of most members, IFUT representatives tirelessly represent individual members. Most of these members are seeking contracts of

indefinite duration. The amount of time devoted to tackling this issue in all institutions is an indictment of the increasingly precarious employment across the sector and is an issue which many branches will prioritise in the year to come. The report is only a flavour, each branch knows the amount of work that has been ongoing in each of their sections.

Despite how it feels it has only been 8 months since I began in the role as General Secretary. In this time I have more clearly and closely witnessed the massive contribution that our Executive Committee, Council, Trustees, Branch Committee Members and other Lay Activists perform for IFUT. The commitment demonstrated by these Activists is what drives us in head office to deliver for IFUT and I wish to thank each and every IFUT member for inspiring us to perform our roles to the best of our abilities.

In IFUT we maintain that our Universities and Higher Education Institutions are a public good, and through our enduring commitment to campaign and lobby for increased funding, increased staffing and better conditions in the sector, IFUT is a force for good. As a union our active and engaged members throughout all branches drive our fight to protect and advance the quality of higher education in Ireland. Our ADC is an opportunity to consider the work we have already done, and the work we will continue in pursuit of our objectives.

I hope that you find this Conference Booklet useful and I look forward to chatting with each of you over the course of our conference.

Kind regards,



**FRANK JONES**  
GENERAL SECRETARY





## Organising for Equality and Decent Work in Higher Education

### AGENDA

- 10:15**     **REGISTRATION OPENS – TEA AND COFFEE WILL BE AVAILABLE**
- 11:00**     **(PUBLIC SESSION)**  
Opening of Conference  
Welcome Address – Anthony Harvey, President  
Welcome Address – Frank Jones, General Secretary  
Standing Orders Report – Emma Sokell, Chair of Standing Orders  
Election of Tellers  
Proceedings of 2021 ADC
- 11:15**     Address by Minister for Further and Higher Education,  
Research Innovation and Science – Simon Harris, TD
- 11:40**     Presidential Address
- 12:00**     Address by General Secretary Proposing the 2021/22 Annual Report
- 12:10**     Address by Professor Andrea Petö  
Department of Gender Studies at Central European University, Vienna,  
Austria and Doctor of Science of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences
- 13:00**     Lunch Break
- 14:00**     **(PRIVATE SESSION)**  
Adoption of IFUT Accounts  
Appointment of Auditors  
Election of Trustees  
Comments on Section 2 of Annual Report
- 14:15**     **(PUBLIC SESSION)**  
Debate on Motions and Comments on Sections 1 & 3 of Annual Report
- 16:30**     Closing Remarks
- 17:00**     Conference Closes



## LIST OF FRATERNAL DELEGATES AND INVITED GUESTS

## GUEST SPEAKER – PROFESSOR ANDREA PETŐ

### SPEAKERS

<b>MINISTER SIMON HARRIS, TD</b>	Department of Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science.
<b>ANDREA PETŐ</b>	Historian and Professor at Central European University, Vienna, Austria, a Research Affiliate of the CEU Democracy Institute, Budapest, and a Doctor of Science of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences.

### FRATERNAL DELEGATES AND INVITED GUESTS

<b>LARRY FLANAGAN</b>	President, ETUCE
<b>STEPHEN MCCORD</b>	Deputy General Secretary, Ulster Teachers' Union (UTU)
<b>LOUISE CREELMAN</b>	President, Ulster Teachers' Union (UTU)
<b>KIERAN CHRISTIE</b>	General Secretary, Association of Secondary Teachers Ireland (ASTI)
<b>ÉAMONN DENNEHY</b>	President, Association of Secondary Teachers Ireland (ASTI)
<b>JOHN O'DRISCOLL</b>	President, Irish National Teachers' Organisation (INTO)
<b>MICHAEL GILLESPIE</b>	General Secretary, Teachers' Union of Ireland (TUI)
<b>ANNETTE DOLAN</b>	Deputy General Secretary, Teachers' Union of Ireland (TUI)
<b>MARTIN MARJORAM</b>	President, Teachers' Union of Ireland (TUI)
<b>JOAN DONEGAN</b>	Former General Secretary, IFUT
<b>JOHN GALLAGHER</b>	Media Consultant for IFUT
<b>SEÁN COUCH</b>	Pensions Consultant for IFUT
<b>NORMAN CROKE</b>	Industrial Relations Educator
<b>PADDY COLE</b>	Communications Specialist
<b>ROBERT MCNAMARA</b>	Incoming Assistant General Secretary, IFUT

IFUT are delighted to welcome **Professor Andrea Pető**, Professor in the Department of Gender Studies at Central European University, Vienna Austria and a Doctor of Science of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences, to our Conference as a guest speaker.

**Academic Freedom is a core value for IFUT**, so any threat to it is a core concern. In Andrea Pető, our 2022 ADC will have the rare privilege of listening to someone who, working in Hungary, has had personal experience of fighting for Academic Freedom under oppressive regimes of both the Soviet-style Left and, more recently, the nationalist Right. Her insights and good-humoured tips may well prove useful even in our own less extreme situations – as well as helping us to detect any larger threats in a timely fashion.





## UCC LEADS THE WAY ON ACADEMIC FREEDOM

In his address to the Scholars at Risk Conference last year, President Michael D Higgins called on Irish universities to teach a module on the role of the university and academic freedom. President Higgins spoke of the many threats the university and academic freedom faces. From the threat to tenure arising from increasing precarious employment, to threats to academic freedom from the market-driven funding model for research, and the pressure universities will experience post-Covid in terms of funding and international enrolments, the President argued that we were at a “perilous junction in the long history of the academy”. He argued that our universities have “for several decades now, been under continuous attack from a variety of sources, some overt, others covert, have suffered an attrition of range and depth, loss of interdisciplinary exchange, leading in too many cases to a degradation of the very scholarship and teaching for which they were established”.

The President stated a “core enabling feature of academia has been that of academic freedom, a moral and legal concept expressing the conviction that the freedom of enquiry by faculty members is essential to the mission of the academy as well as the principles of academia, and that scholars should have freedom to teach or communicate ideas or facts, including those that may be inconvenient to external political groups or to authorities, without facing repression, job loss, or imprisonment.”

He suggested that his modest proposal to teach a module on the role of the university could raise awareness of the “importance of such freedom and the critical, now precarious, position of the university in contemporary society.”

IFUT is the only union in Ireland to consistently work to promote and defend academic freedom and IFUT members in UCC were among the first to rise to the challenge posed by President Higgins. Starting in January, UCC introduced a university-wide module titled The Value of the University and Academic Freedom, delivered in person and online, which could be taken for credit or out of interest. The role of IFUT and Scholars at Risk were included in the module content and demonstrates the central importance of IFUT in the debate on the need to defend academic freedom within our universities. The module team in UCC, Dr Angela Flynn, Prof Kieran Keohane and Mr Paul O'Donovan were very happy with the success of the module and are very grateful to the superb interdisciplinary colleagues who contributed to the lessons. It is hoped this module will be on offer in alternate academic years.



Angela Flynn



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**MOTION 1: FUNDING OF HIGHER EDUCATION SECTOR**

It is crucial that the Government prioritises investment in higher education as a public good. This ADC calls on IFUT to continue to stridently lobby for increased funding of the sector and to ensure that this funding is directed to the frontline in the delivery of teaching and research in our HEIs.

*Proposer: UCD Branch*

**MOTION 2: PUBLIC FUNDING OF UNIVERSITIES**

This ADC calls on IFUT to engage with government and the HEIs on the proposed reform of the sector to ensure sufficient public funding to maintain academic standards and uphold the principles of accessibility and affordability for all; as well as structures of governance that respect the role of HEIs as autonomous public bodies, with broad representation that includes academic staff.

*Proposer: UCC Branch*

**MOTION 3: HEA BILL 2022**

This ADC calls on IFUT to continue its engagement with the relevant Ministers and the government on the HEA Bill of 2022, particularly relating to university governance and academic representation on governing authorities across HEIs.

*Proposer: UCD Branch*

**MOTION 4: PRECARIITY**

IFUT calls on government and the HEIs to take urgent measures to reduce the reliance on short-term and precariously employed staff and to extend the benefits of full-time permanent status to all academic staff. In addition, we call on IFUT, throughout its various structures, to support initiatives to counter precarious labour practice, such as the Precarious Employment Campaign Steering Group, and that each branch committee appoint a representative with responsibility for precarious staff.

*Proposer: UCC Branch*

**MOTION 5: PRECARIOUS EMPLOYMENT CAMPAIGN STEERING GROUP**

That this ADC supports the foundation and work of IFUT's Precarious Employment Campaign Steering Group and calls on the Union to address precarity as a priority - and engage with all the key stakeholders to bring about change (DFHERIS/IUA, etc.).

*Proposer: Dr Deirdre Flynn*

*Seconder: Dr Rosarii Griffin*

**MOTION 6: REMOTE AND FLEXIBLE WORKING**

We call upon this ADC to acknowledge the extraordinary commitment, dedication and flexibility displayed by our members in moving to online, blended and other working practices during times of lockdown and restriction. This ADC calls on IFUT to continue to engage at a local, sectoral and national level with employers to reach agreement on remote and flexible working, drawing on the successes and expertise gained during lockdown. Wholesale return to workplace practices must not happen without agreement, and appropriate accommodations must include the worker voice.

*Proposer: DCU Branch*

**MOTION 7: WORK-LIFE BALANCE AND POSITIVE MENTAL HEALTH**

This ADC encourages IFUT to use World Mental Health Day 2022 (10/10/22) as an opportunity to promote work-life balance and positive mental health among its members and all workers in the HE sector.

*Proposer: UCD Branch*

**MOTION 8: SURROGACY LEAVE**

Conference instructs the Executive Committee to negotiate the same leave provisions for parents who have children by surrogacy as to those provided to parents under the Adoptive Leave Scheme.

*Proposer: Executive Committee*

**MOTION 9: TECHNOLOGY-ASSISTED LEARNING**

This ADC recognises the important role that technology played in ensuring continuity of teaching and learning during the pandemic. Technology for teaching and learning - in particular, lecture-capture, presents enormous potential but also opens up serious unintended consequences. This ADC calls on IFUT to engage with stakeholders at the highest level to develop a framework for technology-assisted learning, for implementation at the sectoral level.

*Proposer: Lennon Ó Naraigh (UCD) & Miranda Corcoran (UCC)*

**MOTION 10: LECTURE RECORDING**

This ADC calls on the HEIs to engage with IFUT branches to develop a strategy on streaming and recording of lectures that fully respects the autonomy and freedom of academic staff and affirms the importance to students and lecturers of in-person teaching.

*Proposer: UCC Branch*

**MOTION 11: UNIVERSITIES AS SANCTUARIES**

Universities should be places of sanctuary offering a safe place for students to learn and an environment where academic freedom is respected. This ADC calls on IFUT to engage with all Irish Universities and the IUA to proactively implement structured, sustainable supports that will enable scholars and students seeking refuge in Ireland to be adequately supported, resourced, and welcomed within Irish Higher Education

*Proposer: Dr Angela Flynn, UCC Branch*

*Seconder: Dr Dug Cubie, School of Law, UCC Branch*





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€200,000	€966	€300,000	€1,449

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**Example:** Let's assume you are borrowing €250,000 over 30 years. Your repayments at 2.1% would be €937pm. But the bank will need to verify that you can pay €1,208pm. Therefore, if your current rent is €750 per month you need to be saving €458 pm over the last 6 months.

**Tips for getting loan approval:**

- ▶ Do not go overdrawn on your bank account
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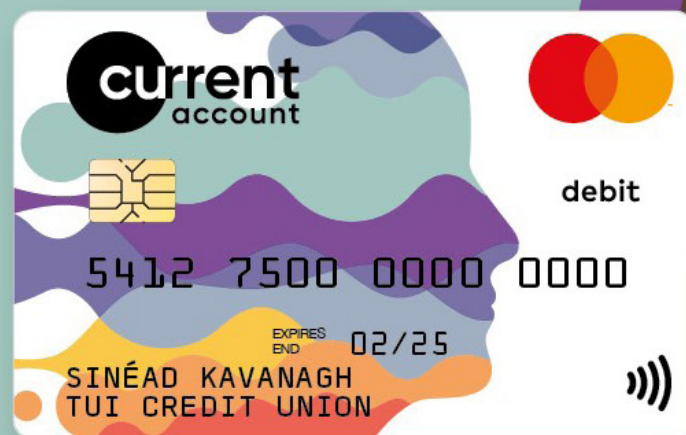


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## ORGANISING FOR EQUALITY AND DECENT WORK IN HIGHER EDUCATION

"I have a Voice in Matters of Importance in my Sector, through Lobbying and Campaigning."

"I AM PART OF THE IFUT COMMUNITY IN MY UNIVERSITY."

"WE BELIEVE IN ACADEMIC FREEDOM."

"I AM REPRESENTED BY SKILLED NEGOTIATORS IN COLLECTIVE BARGAINING WITH MY EMPLOYER."

"My Interests are represented at National Level, including through membership of the Irish Congress of Trade Unions."

"I AM SUPPORTED IN MY WORKPLACE."

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