

Bunreacht na Aontas  
na Mac Léinn

Ollscoil  
Theicneolaíoch na  
Sionainne

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Constitution of the  
Technological  
University of the  
Shannon Students'  
Union

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## **Article 1      Name of the Organisation**

- 1.1**      The name of the organisation shall be the 'AIT-LIT Consortium Technological University Students' Union', hereinafter referred to as 'the Union', or in Irish, Aontas na Mac Leinn, Olscoil Teicneolaíochta, AIT-LIT Consortium. It shall be an un-incorporated association.

## **Article 2      The Mission, Vision and Values of the Union**

- 2.1**      The Mission of the Union is to be the independent representative organisation for students of the AIT-LIT Consortium Technological University (hereinafter referred to as "the University"), to act in the best interests of its members, to advance and defend their rights, primarily in relation to their education and welfare as students of the University, and also as active participants in Irish society.
- 2.2**      The Vision is that each student of the University will have a positive and transformative experience to assist members in reaching their full potential both academically and professionally, to become socially responsive and politically aware, and to develop as ethical and informed individuals.
- 2.3**      The Values of the Union are that it will be student-led, democratic, inclusive, transparent, accountable, ethical, respectful, empowering and professional.

## **Article 3      The Aims and Objectives of the Union**

- 3.1**      To act as the recognised voice of students and to be the means of communication between the members of the Union and the University.
- 3.2**      To represent students of the University at all levels of society including locally, regionally, nationally and internationally.
- 3.3**      To support all members in the advancement of their education.
- 3.4**      To provide and manage a range of services and activities for the benefit of its members.
- 3.5**      To promote the welfare and well-being of its members.
- 3.6**      To encourage the participation of members in clubs, societies, sports, social and recreational activities and volunteering, as an integral part of the student experience in the University.
- 3.7**      To promote the Irish Language amongst its members and throughout the University.

- 3.8 To promote, support and demand equal and fair access to education for those who come from disadvantaged backgrounds, minorities and marginalised groups.
- 3.9 To endeavour to work in partnership at all levels with the University in the best interests of the members.
- 3.10 The Union shall practice the above aims independent of political parties, religious organisations, lobbying groups and in accordance with the law.

## **Article 4 Principles for Union Operations**

- 4.1 The Union shall strive to ensure equal access for all of its members to its democratic processes and policy forming structures, the services and supports of the Union and the University and shall seek to ensure that service is delivered to a high standard, and on a fair and equitable basis across the campuses of the University.
- 4.2 The Union Executive shall organise surveys and other methods of conducting research into the opinion, practices and procedures of the University and the Union on a regular basis. Such research may be used for the purposes of improving the quality and delivery of services and supports to the membership by the Union and the University.

## **Article 5 Membership**

- 5.1 All registered students of the University, including current sabbatical (full-time) Officers of the Union shall be members of the Union with equal rights to participate, to vote and to seek to be elected to relevant positions within the Union. All members are subject to the terms of this Constitution.
- 5.2 The Student Council may award, as a token of honour to such persons or organisations, as it sees fit, honorary membership of the Union. Honorary membership shall confer no rights, privileges or obligations on an honorary member or on the Union as to an honorary member.
- 5.3 The Union does not charge a membership fee and relies on income generation and a block grant allocation from the University to fund its activities.
- 5.4 Any student may choose to disassociate from the Union by notifying the President of the Union by email of the student's wish so to do. Upon receipt of such notification the Union shall take steps, insofar as same are within the control or power of procurement of the Union, to remove the student's name and contact details from the electoral register and from the Union's communications database(s). The Union is committed to supporting all students of the University whether or not associated with the Union and will notwithstanding a notification of disassociation remain available to support any disassociated student should the student subsequently so wish.

- 5.5 On the establishment date of the Union any student who was a member of the Students' Unions of the Athlone Institute of Technology and the Limerick Institute of Technology immediately prior to this, shall be deemed to be a member of this Union, for so long as they remain current registered students of the University.

## **Article 6 Powers of the Union**

- 6.1 All powers of the Union derive from the members whose right it is to decide all questions of policy and (s)elect their representatives and Officers in accordance with this Constitution.
- 6.2 The Union is empowered to own and acquire assets and to create liabilities, subject to the terms of this Constitution.
- 6.3 The Union will establish a company incorporated under law with limited liability, of which it is the beneficial owner. It shall be known as AIT- LIT Consortium SU CLG ("the Union Company").
- 6.4 The Union Company shall hold the funds, assets, and liabilities of the Union and manage all commercial services or other financial or trading activities on behalf of the Union. The Union Company is empowered to establish, acquire and dispose of any subsidiary companies to act on its behalf.
- 6.5 All revenues of the Union, from whatever source arising, shall be the property of the Union Company and shall be managed in accordance with the law.
- 6.6 The sole and exclusive power to bind the Union to a lawful contract is hereby vested by the Union in the Board of the Union Company; no other authority, body or person so elected or established under this Constitution has the power to bind the Union to a lawful contract. The Union Company shall regulate its own affairs subject to the laws of Ireland and shall be cognisant of the policies of the Student Council in its deliberations.
- 6.7 In establishing and maintaining the Union Company, the Union shall exercise its powers as beneficial owner to ensure that the Constitution of the Union Company provides as follows:
- 6.7.1 There shall be seven directors of the Union Company comprising the President, the three Deputy Presidents, and three independent directors who shall not be or have been members of the Union or members of the University staff in the preceding five years prior to appointment, with one of the three independent members to be the Chairperson of the Board of Directors of the Union Company.
- 6.7.2 There shall be fifteen members of the Union Company comprising the five Vice Presidents of the Union and ten current students nominated by Student Council, on the basis of the following campus allocation: Athlone (three members), Moylish

(three members), Clare Street (one member), Ennis (one member), Thurles (one member), and Clonmel (one member).

- 6.8 The Board of the Union Company and any subsidiary or associated companies shall be governed in accordance with the laws of Ireland, and its Board shall consist of such persons as are set out in the Constitution of the Union Company, which Constitution shall be included as a schedule hereto. Any alterations to the Constitution shall prior to being approved by the members of the Union Company, be presented to the Student Council in a consultative process.
- 6.9 The Student Council and the Board of the Union Company shall agree a written protocol which shall form the basis for mutual understanding and co-operation between both parties. This protocol shall be included in a Schedule of this Constitution.
- 6.10 The President of the Union in conjunction with the Board of the Union Company shall cause to produce an Annual Operations Plan for the Company in tandem with the Programme of Work of the Union that is then submitted by the President to the Student Council, for its consideration and approval, at its first meeting of each academic year.
- 6.11 The Student Council shall note the appointment of auditors to the Union Company, and any other company so established by it, and shall note any accounts, reports or other communications so produced by the Union Company, any subsidiary of the Union Company or from an auditor thereto. The Student Council, upon receiving the prior consent of the Union Company, shall cause all such reports to be published.
- 6.12 The responsibility for identifying and overseeing the work of the Union is exercisable by the Student Council and where appropriate by the Executive and Sabbatical Officers under the leadership of the President, in accordance with this Constitution. The Constitution of the Union Company is at Schedule E

## **Article 7      The Operational Structures of the Union**

### **7.1 - Overall Operational Structures**

The Union shall be organised in the manner set out in this Article.

- Class Meetings
- Course Representative Meetings
- Departmental Representative Meetings
- Faculty Representative Meetings
- Student Council
- The Union Executive

## **7.2 Class Representatives**

- 7.2.1 Every class in the University, whether for full-time or part-time students, shall elect one class representative, or two if there are more than 60 students in the class. Class Representatives shall act as the official representative(s) of that class and will attend meetings of the Union and meetings relating to their University Department. Class Representatives will be responsible for giving regular feedback to their classmates.

## **7.3 The Course Representative Meetings**

- 7.3.1 All of the Class Representatives for every Course in the University shall meet collectively in Course Representative Meetings (CRM's). There shall be at least two CRM meetings per semester to consider and decide on matters relevant to the students' experiences relating to their Course and to give advice to, or mandate, their representatives to Departmental Representative Meetings, the Faculty Convenor, and or Union Officers in respect of matters relating to their Course only.
- 7.3.2 Course Representative Meeting shall be open to members; however, no person other than an elected Class Representatives, Faculty Convenor, current Sabbatical and parttime Officers of the Union or other persons so invited, may address and be heard at a Course Representative Meeting. CRMs shall be a physical meeting unless otherwise required by Union Policy.
- 7.3.3 In exceptional circumstances, the Executive may consent to allow a CRM to hold a private meeting.
- 7.3.4 Class Representative Meetings will operate as far as is it possible within the terms of the Standing Orders of the Union and shall be convened and chaired by the Faculty Convenor or a Sabbatical Officer or part-time Officer as decided by the Executive.
- 7.3.5 CRMs may establish ad hoc working groups with written objectives, membership and reporting timeframe as deemed necessary. Such groups may seek support from the Executive who will have absolute discretion about providing such support, conscious of resource implications.
- 7.3.6 Each Class Representative Meeting shall, elect three representatives to be members of the Departmental Representative Meeting within a time frame set out in the Electoral Regulations Manual. As far as is possible the representatives so chosen should be from different years of the Course and such representatives will be required to attend the Class Representative Meetings from which they were elected for the remainder of the academic year.

## **7.4 Departmental Representative Meetings**

- 7.4.1 All of the Representatives elected to represent their Course shall meet collectively in Departmental Representative Meetings (DRM's). There shall be at least two DRM meetings per semester to consider and decide on matters relevant to the students' experiences relating to Courses in their Department and to give advice to, or mandate, their representatives to Faculty



Representative Meetings, the Faculty Convenor and/or Union Officers in respect of matters relating to their Department only.

- 7.4.2 Departmental Representative Meeting shall be open to elected Course Representatives, Faculty Convenor, current Sabbatical and part-time Officers of the Union or other persons invited with the agreement of the Faculty Convenor. DRMs shall be a physical meeting unless otherwise required by Union Policy.
- 7.4.3 In exceptional circumstances, the Executive may consent to allow a DRM to hold a private meeting.
- 7.4.4 Departmental Representative Meetings will operate as far as it is possible within the terms of the Standing Orders of the Union and shall be convened and chaired by the Faculty Convenor or a Sabbatical Officer or part-time Officer as decided by the Executive.
- 7.4.5 DRMs may establish ad hoc working groups with written objectives, membership and reporting timeframe as deemed necessary. Such groups may seek support from the Executive who will have absolute discretion about providing such support, conscious of resource implications.
- 7.4.6 Each Departmental Representative Meeting shall, elect three representatives to be members of their Faculty Representative Meeting within a time frame set out in the Electoral Regulations Manual. As far as is possible the representatives so chosen should be from different Courses within the Department and such representatives will be required to attend the Departmental Representative Meetings from which they were elected for the remainder of the academic year.
- 7.4.7 Each Departmental Representative Meeting shall, elect representatives to be members of their Student Council within a time frame set out in the Electoral Regulations Manual. Each Department will be entitled to elect one representative for every 250 students, or greater part thereof, registered on courses within the Department.

## **7.5 Faculty Representative Meetings**

- 7.5.1 All of the Representatives elected to represent their Department above shall meet collectively in Faculty Representative Meetings (FRM's). There shall be at least two FRM meetings per semester to consider and decide on matters relevant to the students' experiences relating to Courses in their Faculty and to give advice to the Student Council, or to advise or mandate the Faculty Convenor and/or Union Officers in respect of matters relating to their Faculty only.
- 7.5.2 Faculty Representative Meetings shall be open to elected Departmental Representatives, Faculty Convenor, current Sabbatical and part-time Officers of the Union or other persons invited with the agreement of the Faculty Convenor. FRMs shall be a physical meeting unless otherwise required by Union Policy.

- 7.5.3 In exceptional circumstances, the Executive may consent to allow a FRM to hold a private meeting.
- 7.5.4 Faculty Representative Meetings will operate as far as it is possible within the terms of the Standing Orders of the Union and shall be convened and chaired by the Faculty Convenor or a Sabbatical Officer or part-time Officer as decided by the Executive.
- 7.5.5 FRMs may establish ad hoc working groups with written objectives, membership and reporting timeframe as deemed necessary. Such groups may seek support from the Executive who will have absolute discretion about providing such support, conscious of resource implications.
- 7.5.6 Each Faculty Representative Meeting shall elect one representative to be a member of each of the Standing Committees of the Union within a time frame set out in the Electoral Regulations Manual. Such representatives will be required to attend the Faculty Representative Meetings from which they were elected for the remainder of the academic year.

## **7.6 The Student Council**

- 7.6.1 The overall decision and policy making body of the Union will be known as the Student Council (the Council) The membership shall be made up of;
- A) The sabbatical President of the Union,
  - B) The sabbatical Deputy and Vice Presidents of the Union,
  - C) The sabbatical Post Graduate Officer
  - D) The Part-time Officers of the Union elected from and with responsibility for specific areas of policy and services and specific campuses,
  - E) The Faculty Conveners,
  - F) The Representatives elected by each Departmental Representative Meeting.

Schedule B sets out the specific titles and geographic locations of the Officers at b), d), are elected.

- 7.6.2 Meetings of the Student Council shall happen on-line unless at least 66% of the current members request in an email to the President that it should be a physical meeting.
- 7.6.3 The Council will be chaired by an Independent person nominated by the Council for a three year term following a process as set out in Schedule D . At a minimum meetings of the Council will be held before the end of October, before December 8th, before January 31st, before March 8th and during the month of April in each academic year. The actual dates will be decided by the Executive no later than the end of August and will be published on the Union website before the holding of Class Representative elections. The Council may meet on such further or other occasions as it by its own motion, or the Chairperson following receipt of a request to convene, deems necessary

- 7.6.4 Meetings of the Council will be open to all current members of the Union but only members of the Council will be permitted to speak and vote at any meeting.
- 7.6.5 The Quorum for Council meetings shall be 25 members. Meetings shall operate within the terms of the Standing Orders for the Council as in Schedule C
- 7.6.6 Policy adopted by the Council shall be valid for a period of two years following its adoption, after which it shall automatically fall unless having been re-presented it is readopted by the Council.
- 7.6.7 Any mandate adopted by the Council shall be valid for a period of two years following its adoption. Once the Council has deemed this mandate as complete, it shall expire. If the mandate has not been completed within this period, it shall automatically be presented before the Council for review where it can be adopted as is, amended or rejected as a continuing mandate on the Union.
- 7.6.8 The Chairperson shall act in an independent capacity and shall oversee the implementation and abide by the terms of Standing Orders. The Chairperson shall be the interpreter of this Constitution. If the Chairperson is unable to be present at any Council meeting the Chairperson shall nominate a replacement chairperson to chair the meeting.
- 7.6.9 The Chairperson may be removed from their position, by way of a motion moved before the Council, which gains the support of 66% of the total membership of the Council. Any such motion shall require at least two weeks' notice and that part of the Council meeting where the removal motion is being considered shall be chaired by the Chairperson of the Electoral Commission or their nominee.
- 7.6.10 All questions in the Council shall, unless otherwise provided for by this Constitution or Standing Orders, be determined by a majority of the votes cast. Unless an alternative method it is requested by a member and is supported by more than 66% of those present polls shall be by a show of hands.
- 7.6.11 In the case of an equality of votes on any matter the Chairperson shall not have a casting vote and the matter shall be deemed to not have been passed.
- 7.6.12 The Chairperson shall produce an agenda in conjunction with the secretary and President, as per the Standing Orders of the Council. Members of Student Council may submit items to the Chairperson and/or secretary for inclusion on the Agenda.
- 7.6.13 The agendas, reports, policies and mandates to be considered by a Council shall be posted on the Union's website no later than 72 hours before every meeting and draft minutes shall be posted on the Union's website no later than five days after the meeting after they have been approved in draft form by the Independent Chairperson and the, save where a motion to defer

publication for a stated period of time has been given assent by 66% of the members present.

7.6.14 A secretary shall be appointed by the President to provide such technical and administrative supports as may be necessary to ensure the effective and efficient operation of the Council.

7.6.15 The Council shall not enact any policy which is in any respect repugnant to this Constitution.

7.6.16 The President must present to the Council, at its first meeting in each academic year, a Programme of Work, which shall set forth the priorities for the Union in the coming year. The Programme of Work may at any time be scrutinised by Council or its sub committees.

7.6.17 The Chairperson of the Council shall set a schedule of reporting on elements of the Programme of Work for the remaining part of the year. On such occasions the President, Deputy Presidents, Vice Presidents, part-time Officers and any other elected person so requested, shall provide written reports and be accountable for the activities undertaken on foot of the Programme within their brief.

7.6.18 A member of the Council may resign by informing the Chairperson in writing. The Chairperson may resign by informing the President in writing.

7.6.19 Where the Chairperson and the President agree that it is not possible or practicable to convene a meeting of the Council, the Executive shall exercise limited powers and functions relating to specific matters agreed in writing with the Chairperson on an interim basis. Where such powers or functions are exercised, the Executive, through the President, shall be accountable to the Council.

7.6.20 The Executive shall have the right to defer the implementation of any decisions made by the Council, where they believe in their absolute discretion, that the decision is contrary to the Constitution or Union policy. The President will refer any such decision in writing within 24 hours of it being made, to the Chairperson of the Council, who shall place the matter for priority discussion at the next scheduled meeting of the Council and will have the discretion to seek the advice of the Electoral Commission on the matter.

## **7.7. Committees and Working Groups of the Union**

7.7.1 The Council shall establish Standing Committees and may also establish Working Groups to advance the interests of the Union in its representational role and provide support and services to its members.

The Council shall establish the following permanent Standing Committees:

- A) The Education Committee
- B) The Welfare and Equality Committee
- C) The Student Experience Committee
- D) The Lifelong Learning Committee
- E) The International Student Committee

## F) The Postgraduate Student Committee

7.7.2 Standing Committees meetings shall be on-line unless 66% of the members request in writing to its Chairperson that a meeting be held in person.

7.7.3 Schedule A sets out the Terms of Reference of the above Committees and those for Working Groups

## **7.8 The Union Executive**

7.8.1 The Student Council of the Union will delegate the day-to day operation of the Union to the Union Executive (the Executive) which will be made up of the Sabbatical and Part-time Officers of the Union. The Executive will be chaired by the President and will meet at least twice in every calendar month. The quorum of the Executive will be 50% plus one of the membership. It shall organise its business in line with the Standing Orders for the Executive as set out in Schedule C . Decisions at the Executive will be by simple majority of those present.

7.8.2 Executive meetings shall occur in a mixture of corporeal and incorporeal meetings with at least one meeting on each campus annually.

## **7.9 Campus Co-Ordinating Meetings**

7.9.1 Each Deputy President shall convene meetings of sabbatical and part-time Officers in their respective campuses, to be known as Campus Co-Ordinating Meetings at least once every calendar month between September and April and during other months as they believe necessary.

## **7.10 Student Forums**

7.10.1 The Executive, the Council or a written request by of not less than 20% of the registered students in any specific campus, faculty, department or course may from time to time call a Student Forum Meeting.

7.10.2 Student Forum Meetings shall open to all students in the specific campus, faculty, department or course for which the meetings been called. These meetings provide an opportunity for engagement between Officers of the Union and students to consider matters of specific relevance to the specific campus, faculty, department or course such that the students and Officers become better informed on key issues to guide future decision making within the Union. Such meetings are for exchange of views only and cannot mandate an Officer or the Union.

7.10.2 The Deputy President or in their absence their nominee shall chair Student Forum Meetings.

7.10.3 The Chair shall be responsible for the production of an agenda and minutes of Forum meetings. They shall be made available on the Union website and shall be considered by the Executive and/or the Council regarding the development of Union policy.

## **Article 8      Officers of the Union**

8.1.1 There shall be Sabbatical Officers including a President, Deputy Presidents, and Vice Presidents together with Part-Time Officers of the Union as set out hereunder. These Officers' positions shall carry out functions as set out in this Constitution and Schedules and as determined by the Council from time to time. This may include the strategic oversight of the operation of the Union on specific campuses, the development and implementation of policy, the operation of the structures and the provision of services in education, welfare, membership and commercial services, communications, postgraduate, events, representing the Union within and on University structures and externally to relevant stakeholders, the chairing of meetings and any other duties so assigned by the Council, the Executive and the President as relevant.

8.1.2 The nine Sabbatical Officers (full-time paid positions) of the Union shall be:

- A) President of the Union
- B) Deputy President of the Union (Midlands Campus)
- C) Deputy President of the Union (Mid-West Campuses)
- D) Deputy President for Postgraduate Affairs of the Union
- E) Vice President for Education (Midlands Campus)
- F) Vice president for Welfare (Midlands Campus)
- G) Vice President for Education and Welfare (Clare Street & Ennis Campuses)
- H) Vice President for Education and Welfare (Moylish Campus)
- I) Vice President for Education and Welfare (Thurles & Clonmel Campuses)

8.1.3 The eight part-time Officers of the Union shall be:

- A) Student Experience Officer (Midlands Campus)
- B) Student Experience Officer (Mid-West Campuses)
- C) Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Officer (Midlands Campus)
- D) Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Officer (Mid-West Campuses)
- E) International Students Officer (Midlands Campus)
- F) International Students Officer (Mid-West Campuses)
- G) Lifelong Education Officer (Midlands Campus)
- H) Lifelong Education Officer (Mid-West Campuses)

8.1.4 The reference to Midlands Campus is a reference to the campus at Athlone. The reference to Mid-West Campuses is a reference to the Clare Street and associated locations, Clonmel, Ennis, Moylish, and Thurles Campuses.

### **8.2 The President**

8.2.1 There shall be a President of the Union ("the President"), who shall exercise and perform the powers and functions conferred on the President by this Constitution and any additional functions, duties or responsibilities conferred by the Student Council. All registered students of the University shall be eligible to vote in the election of the President

- 8.2.2 The President shall be the chief spokesperson for the Union, representing all students of the University, and shall be, ex officio, a member of the University's Governing Body and Academic Council.
- 8.2.3 The President shall have the right of attendance and address at all meetings established within the terms of this Constitution.
- 8.2.4 The President shall be the principal delegate and spokesperson to the National Council and Annual Congress of the Union of Students in Ireland.
- 8.2.5 In the temporary absence of the President, the Deputy Presidents shall function as a joint presidency and agree amongst themselves who will be responsible for issues that require attention until the return of the President.
- 8.2.6 The President shall appoint one of the Deputy Presidents to sit on the Governing body and the other to sit on the Academic Council.
- 8.2.7 In the event of permanent incapacity, resignation or removal from office, the Deputy Presidents shall function as a joint presidency and agree amongst themselves who will be responsible for issues that require attention for the remainder of the term of office of the President concerned. If this occurs during the first half of the term of office, a bye-election shall be held for the vacated position. Should this position become vacant beyond the first half of the term of office, the Executive in consultation with Council shall delegate responsibilities for that office, as appropriate, amongst the remaining Officers. Sabbatical Deputy Presidents, Vice Presidents and Part-Time Officers

### **8.3 The Deputy President for Postgraduate Affairs**

- 8.3.1 The Deputy President for Postgraduate Affairs shall be elected by all the postgraduate students pursuing Level 9 or higher qualifications of the University.
- 8.3.2 The Deputy President for Postgraduate Affairs shall sit on the University Governing Body and Academic Council and will chair the Postgraduate Students Standing Committee.
- 8.3.3 The Deputy President for Postgraduate Affairs shall be responsible for dealing with Issues relating to the education, welfare and student experience of postgraduate members of the Union.
- 8.3.4 They shall endeavour to attend all meetings of committees of which they are a member, and to coordinate and maximise student representation on other appropriate academic structures.
- 8.8.6 They shall assist the Vice President Welfare and Vice President and all other officers where there are matters of relevant to Postgraduate students education with such duties of those officers as relate to postgraduate students.
- 8.3.6 They shall be responsible, along with the Vice President Education and relevant Faculty Convenor, for the recruitment of postgraduate Student Representatives.

- 8.3.7 They shall convene a meeting of postgraduate Student Representatives at least one per semester.
- 8.3.8 They shall, insofar as may be practical, endeavour to make themselves known to postgraduate members of the Union
- 8.3.9 They shall be responsible for informing and encouraging the career development of all members of the Union and shall:
- A) Liaise with the University careers office on an ongoing basis;
  - B) Provide information on graduate employment opportunities and postgraduate studies
  - C) Encourage student engagement with relevant careers and education fairs.
- 8.3.10 They shall be liaise with the Executive on matters relating to postgraduate members of the union.
- 8.3.11 They shall be responsible for ensuring effective communication between the Union and postgraduate members of the Union.
- 8.3.12 They shall aim to ensure that postgraduate members of the Union are aware of their responsibilities in relation to university procedures.
- 8.3.13 They shall run at least two events for postgraduate students each semester.
- 8.3.14 They shall take a leading role in all national campaigns with a particular relevance to postgraduate members of the Union
- 8.3.16 The Deputy President for Postgraduate Affairs shall be ex officio members of the Governing Authority and Academic Council.

## **8.4 The Roles and Responsibilities of the campus Deputy Presidents**

- 8.4.1 The Deputy Presidents shall be full-time paid positions and shall be responsible for those roles conferred on them in the Constitution. In addition;
- 8.4.2 Each Deputy President shall have responsibility for leading and overseeing the work of the Union in the campus(es) from which they were elected. They shall work with the Vice Presidents and Faculty Conveners elected from their Campus(es) to ensure the election of student representatives, effective calling of meetings and the charring of Course, Department, Faculty Representative Meetings for their Campus(es).
- 8.4.3 The Deputy Presidents will assist the President in developing the representative role of the Union and in advancing policy as decided by the Executive and by promoting and coordinating the work of Standing Committees assigned to them by the President across the University. One Deputy President shall chair the Education Standing Committee of the Union while the other shall chair the Welfare Standing Committee of the Union.



- 8.4.4 Deputy Presidents shall be members of the Sabbatical Team, the Executive, the Student Council and shall be delegates to the Annual Congress of the Union of Students in Ireland.
- 8.4.5 Subject to this Constitution Deputy Presidents shall deputise for the President where required. Additional duties may be conferred on a Deputy President by the President, the Executive and the Student Council.

## **8.5 The Roles and Responsibilities of Vice-Presidents**

- 8.5.1 The Vice Presidents shall be full-time paid positions.
- 8.5.2 The Vice Presidents shall carry out functions as defined within their titles including the strategic development of services in the field of education, welfare, equality, events and engagement, and any other duties assigned by the Student Council, Executive or the President.
- 8.5.3 Vice Presidents shall be members of the Executive and the Student Council and shall attend Course, Department, Faculty Representative Meetings for the campus from which they were elected as allocated by the Deputy President for their Campus.
- 8.5.4 Where delegate numbers allow for it Vice Presidents shall be delegates to the Annual Congress of the Union of Students in Ireland. Where numbers do not allow the President and Deputy Presidents shall decide on the allocation of those places available.
- 8.5.5 Vice Presidents shall chair or co-chair the Standing Committee of the Union which relates to their specific brief as agreed by the Executive and will work with officers of other campuses to develop University wide policy and services within the brief of their responsibilities.
- 8.5.6 Subject to this Constitution, additional responsibilities may be conferred on the Vice Presidents by the President, the Executive and the Student Council.

## **8.6 The Roles and Responsibilities of the Part-Time Officers**

- 8.6.1 Part-time Officers will part-time while they also attend to their studies and will be paid an hourly rate for hours agreed by in advance by the Executive for each Semester and as provided for in the Unions Annual Budget. They will work in conjunction with the relevant Deputy President for their campus(es), with the respective Vice President for their campus(es) and with their colleague officer in the other campus(es) where they will assist in developing Union and University policies and services for the members.
- 8.6.2 The Part-Time Officers will work to promote, support and represent the student perspective in the work of those University staff positions with which their positions are closely aligned. Their Roles and Responsibilities include but are not limited to;

### **8.6.2.1 The Student Experience Officers**

- a. To liaise with and facilitate the work of the University's Societies Officer

- b. To promote and support the organisation of events of a social nature across the campus(es)
- c. To promote and support the activities of societies
- d. Ensuring that students experienced of the University is positive and engaging in terms of non-academic experiences and activities.
- e. Promoting and providing Volunteering options for students be become involved in charitable and other community projects outside of the College in association with the Volunteer Centre and being the link person for outside organisations seeking to engage with students to support their work.
- f. To build connections between the student body and the wider communities in which they live.
- g. Assist in creating a system for all students who need additional support this includes but is not limited to:
  - i. a Buddy System – Students helping other students and creating a both a friendship and support system
  - ii. Peer Groups - Creating a group of students who provide support for students.
- h. Subject to this Constitution, additional powers and functions may be conferred on the Officer by the Student Council and the Executive where appropriate.

#### **8.6.2.2The Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Officers**

- a. To support individual students and groups to ensure that they are dealt with equally irrespective of their gender, marital status, family status, age, disability, sexual orientation, race, religion or membership of the traveller community.
- b. To be a member of the University EDI Committee.
- c. To chair or co-chair the Unions EDI Committee on their Campus(es)
- d. To distribute information on and events around informing students and the University to counter attitudes and practices relating to casual or deliberate discrimination in how people think and act.
- e. Subject to this Constitution, additional powers and functions may be conferred on the Officer by the Student Council and the Executive where appropriate.

#### **8.6.2.3The Lifelong Learning Officers**

- a. To support students who are pursuing mature, part-time, apprentice and other types of non full-time courses
- b. To be a member of the Unions Education Committee
- c. To chair or co-chair the Unions Lifelong Education Committee on their Campus(es)
- d. To work with Sabbatical officers to ensure Lifelong students are represented in the Students' Union campaigns and policies and to encourage lifelong students to engage in the Students' Union activities.
- e. To represent all lifelong learning students who are pursuing mature, part-time, apprentice and other types of non-full-time courses.

- f. To support all students who are pursuing mature, part-time, apprentice and other types of non-full-time courses.
- g. To be a member of the Unions Education Committee.
- h. To work in partnership and communicate effectively with the Universities Lifelong learning staff.
- i. To promote lifelong learning and any opportunities that may arise for Lifelong learning students.
- j. Subject to this Constitution, additional powers and functions may be conferred on the Officer by the Student Council and the Executive where appropriate.

#### **8.6.2.4 The International Students Officers (ISO)**

- a. To support international students to fully benefit from their education experience and personal lives.
- b. To chair or co-chair the International Students Committee on their campus(es)
- c. To work with the International Student office of the University to influence their engaged with and support for international students
- d. To work in partnership with the other ISO to develop Union policy on relevant matters.
- e. To support international students to fully benefit from their education experience and personal lives.
- f. To set out educational and welfare aims so that international student are valued and treated equitably by the university.
- g. To be informed of student welfare and experience developments in relation to international students nationally.
- h. Ensure activities and campaigns are arranged that will have a positive effect on retention on international students.
- i. Provide information and advice to international students to aid them in their stay in Ireland.
- j. To chair or co-chair the International Students Committee on their campus(es)
- k. Subject to this Constitution, additional powers and functions may be conferred on the Officer by the Student Council and the Executive where appropriate.

### **8.7 Other Provisions regarding Officers of the Union**

- 8.7.1 Sabbatical Deputy Presidents and Vice Presidents and the Part-Time Officers shall be elected by the registered students of the campus to which their office relates.
- 8.7.2 The Sabbatical Officers shall be delegates to the Annual Congress of the Union of Students in Ireland.
- 8.7.3 In the event of the absence of any Officer, or his or her temporary incapacity the President shall delegate the responsibilities of that office, as appropriate, amongst the other Sabbatical or Part-Time Officers.

- 8.7.4 In the event of permanent incapacity or in the event of death, resignation, removal from office of any sabbatical or part-time officer prior to December 31st of any year in office a bye-election shall be held within the processes set out by the Electoral and Constitutional Commission.
- 8.7.5 Should this position become vacant after January 1st of any term the President shall delegate the responsibilities of that office, as appropriate, amongst the remaining Sabbatical or Part-Time Officers, save for where the Council decides that a bye-election should be held.
- 8.7.6 Except as set out in 8.7.5 no person shall hold two officer positions at the same time.

## **8.8 Terms of Office**

All Officers will be elected to a term of one year from 1st July to 30th June. No individual shall serve for more than:

- A) Two terms in any one or any combination of part-time Officer positions
- B) Two terms in any one sabbatical post and no more than three terms in any combination of sabbatical posts.
- C) In any part-time Officer position having previously served as a sabbatical Officer.
- D) The terms served as Officers of the two former Institute Unions prior to the coming into being of this Constitution shall not be included in the calculation of the foregoing.

## **8.9 Removal from Office**

- 8.9.1 Any Officer may be impeached by vote of the members in a referendum convened in accordance with Article 12. Such impeachment may occur without any of the process subsequently detailed in Article 8.9 being activated.
- 8.9.2 In the event that an officer acts in a manner contrary to the Union's Constitution, or contrary to Union Policy, or contrary to mandates that have been adopted in respect of that officer's role, Student Council may consider the matter, hear from the officer, and vote to direct the officer to remedy the non-compliance.
- 8.9.3 In the event that an officer is engaged in general poor performance of their role (for example repeatedly failing to arrive to the office on time, or attend meetings) or fails/refuses to remedy non-compliance in accordance with Article 8.9.2, the President, or any one of the Deputy Presidents in respect of the President, may notify the Chairperson of the Union Company who on their own, or in conjunction with any of the other independent directors of the Union Company (for these purposes "the Review Panel"), may examine the matter and sanction the officer in any manner considered appropriate, including but not limited to, reducing the stipend of the officer for a set period, requiring the officer to work additional hours to make up for lost time, direct the officer to undertake a particular course of action (including training), suspending or otherwise limiting the officer's access to equipment and resources of the Union, etcetera.

- 8.9.4 Notwithstanding the democratically elected nature of officer ship, where the alleged conduct of any officer appears prior to full consideration to be manifestly egregious, the Review Panel may suspend that officer, with or without suspending their stipend as the circumstances may warrant, pending examination of the matter. In such circumstances the officer shall no longer carry out their duties nor style or hold themselves out to be an officer of the Union during the review period, which shall be conducted as expeditiously as possible whilst allowing for fair procedures and due process.
- 8.9.5 Whether arising from a review under Article 8.9.3 or Article 8.9.4, where the Review Panel forms the view that impeachment of the officer may be appropriate, it shall communicate such view to the President (or the Deputy Presidents in respect of the President) and the Chairperson of the Student Council. The expression of such a view does not oblige an impeachment referendum to be convened and is merely a communication to Student Council so that it may consider the matter further. To the extent, if any, that the communication of such a view is ever considered by the officer subject to be incorrect, by seeking election under the provisions of this Constitution, any such officer waives and disclaims any right to take action in defamation or for any analogous or allied relief against the Union Company or members of the Review Panel. Moreover the members of the Review Panel are indemnified by the Union Company/Union for their exercise of this function in good faith.

## **Article 9      The Electoral Commission**

- 9.1 The Union shall establish an Electoral Commission (the Commission) of five members which shall oversee the operation of all elections, referenda, plebiscites or other ballots and advise on the schedules relating to elections.
- 9.2 The Student Council shall appoint three independent members at least one of whom shall have legal qualifications and/or experience of running elections and none of whom are, or have been, a member of the Union for a period of at least five academic years prior to their appointment. These appointments will be made as set out in Schedule D . These members will serve for a three-year term and shall be eligible to be appointed for a second three-year term. The Chairperson of the Commission shall act as Chief Returning Officer and determine matters of procedure for the Commission in accordance with this Constitution.
- 9.3 The Student Council shall also appoint two members who are registered students of the University, to be members of the Commission for a one-year term and each one can be can be appointed for a maximum of two further one-year terms provided at all times they are registered students of the University and that they are not Officers of the Union.
- 9.4 Any student appointed to the Commission may not seek election to the Union Executive in a students' union year that they are a member of the Commission. Such disentitlement to seek election shall continue notwithstanding the resignation of the student from the Commission during their term of office.

- 9.5 The Quorum for meetings of the Commission will be three members provided that at least two independent members are in attendance. Meetings of the Commission shall be held in person or on-line as the Chairperson, in consultation with the members, shall decide.
- 9.6 Casual vacancies in the Commission may be filled by nomination from Council. Where any vacancies must be filled between the last meeting of the Council in one academic year and the first one of the following academic, members may be nominated to the Commission by the Executive, subject to the approval of the Council at its earliest meeting after the co-option.
- 9.7 The Commission shall produce an Electoral Regulations Manual which shall be presented to the Student Council for information on an annual basis usually at the last Council meeting in each Academic year. This Manual shall include all relevant matters as set out in this Constitution and additionally as they deem appropriate but not be limited to regulations providing a framework for among other matters: electoral processes, eligibility to vote and be nominated as a candidate for any position within the Union, the schedule for holding elections, the nomination and withdrawal process for candidates, the conduct of ballots, the counting of votes, the conduct of any candidate or their supporters or campaign group in any ballot and complaints or appeals processes.. The decision of the Commission on matters relating to elections shall be final, subject to any question regarding the interpretation of this Constitution which shall be a matter for the Chairperson of the Student Council. See also Schedule B
- 9.8 The Commission will be bound by the following specific terms;
- 9.8.1 Voting in Union Officer Elections shall be by secret ballot by means of the single transferable vote, as per the Electoral Acts, with the exception of elections for Class, Course, Departmental and Faculty Representatives, which elections shall operate in a manner as decided by the Electoral Commission and agreed by the Council.
- 9.8.2 The Elections for all Sabbatical and Part-time officers and Faculty Convenors must be held no later than March 8th every year. Voting may be by an approved on-line system which shall be open on a Tuesday and Wednesday from 8am on Tuesday to 6 pm on Wednesday and/or by physical polling booths to be provided from 10am to 6 pm on both days at locations proposed by the Commission.
- 9.9 In the normal course the Chairperson, of any meeting held within the terms of this Constitution, shall have authority to rule on any matter arising regarding the process of that meeting, while the meeting is in session. Any and all such decisions made by the Chairperson, may be appealed to by any member of any such meeting.

## **Article 10      Nominations to University Boards and Committees**

- 10.1 Nominations, except where the positions are ex officio, to all University board committees and other groups shall be made by the Executive. Student Council shall be notified of such nominations.
- 10.2 The President and the Deputy President for Postgraduate Affairs shall ex officio be members of the Governing Body and the Academic Council. The President will also appoint one of the Deputy Presidents to be a member of the Governing Body and the other will be a member of the Academic Council. If the President was immediately prior to election as a sabbatical officer of the Union a student at the Midlands campus, then the Deputy President of the Union (Mid-West Campuses) shall be appointed to Governing Body and the Deputy President of the Union (Midlands Campus) shall be appointed to Academic Council. If the President was immediately prior to election as a sabbatical officer of the Union a student at the Mid-West campuses, then the Deputy President of the Union (Midlands Campus) shall be appointed to Governing Body and the Deputy President of the Union (Mid-West Campuses) shall be appointed to Academic Council.
- 10.3 Nominees to campus, faculty, department, course or class specific bodies shall be elected in processes conducted as part of the Representatives Training days in the first five week of each academic year as set out in the Electoral Regulations Manual.
- 10.4 Such Representatives must recognise that they are the representatives of the Students' Union and within the terms of confidentiality required by any such University body they are subject to the Constitution and policy of the Union.

## **Article 11      External Relations**

- 11.1 The Union affirms its support to the ideal of co-operation among organisations whose aims and objectives are in broad agreement with the Union's, in matters relating to higher education, training and the advancement of knowledge and others matters as decided by the Council at least every five years.
- 11.2 The power of the Union in connection with its external relations shall, in accordance with this Constitution, be exercised by or on the authority of the Executive.
- 11.3 The Union shall be a member organisation of the Union of Students in Ireland. As a pre-condition to the assignment of benefits, burdens, and authority to the Union's Company at Article 6.4-6.6 inclusive of this Constitution, the Union's Company shall agree to discharge the annual affiliation fees of the Union of Students in Ireland, or such funds as are necessary for that purpose shall be retained by the Union. The President shall report to the Student Council and the Executive on the interaction between the Union of Students in Ireland and

the Union, at all Council meetings. The five-year renewal in 11.1 shall not automatically apply to this membership.

- 11.4 All persons seeking support for election to sabbatical offices with the Union of Students in Ireland may address a meeting of the Student Council who may choose, following a secret ballot, bind and mandate the Union's delegation to the Annual Congress or other electing convention to vote for candidates only of the Council's choosing. Where the Council does not so mandate the delegation, the Executive may decide which candidate(s) and which motions the delegation shall support, oppose or abstain on en bloc.
- 11.5 Union delegates to the Annual Congress of the Union of Students in Ireland shall be selected to attend by the Executive, and noted by the Council, save where otherwise prescribed by this Constitution. The Executive shall regulate the terms and conditions pertaining to all Union delegates attending.
- 11.6 No policy of an external organisation, even where the Union is a member, shall be part of the policy of the Union, save as may be determined by the Council in accordance with this Constitution.

## **Article 12      Amendments to the Constitution and Referenda**

- 12.1 Any provision of this Constitution may be amended, whether by way of variation, addition, or repeal in a manner provided for by this article.
- 12.2 Article 12.1 may be activated by way of a petition moved by any one of the following:
  - 12.2.1 Not less than two percent of the membership of the Union,
  - 12.2.2 25% of the membership of the Student Council,
  - 12.2.3 The Executive following a majority vote.
- 12.3 Such a petition must be presented to the Student Council where it must receive the support of fifty percent plus one of those present and voting.
- 12.4 Following approval of the petition by the Student Council the Chairperson shall forward the petition to the Electoral Commission to be submitted to referendum for the decision of the membership. A referendum shall take place no sooner than one week and no later than four weeks from the decision of the Council to submit a proposal to amend the Constitution.
- 12.5 Every proposal to amend the Constitution, which is submitted by referendum to a decision of the membership shall be held to have been approved by the members, if upon having been submitted, a majority of the votes cast at the referendum shall have been cast in favour of the proposal, providing that the voter turnout is not less than ten percent of the total membership of the Union.



- 12.6 A referendum may be called in relation to any other matter, including the impeachment of an officer, in the manner described at Articles 12.1-12.5 of this Constitution mutatis mutandis.

## **Article 13 Amendments to the Schedules of the Constitution**

- 13.1 Schedules shall be understood to be supporting detail to the articles of this Constitution and shall be as binding on the operations of the Union except where a Schedule is in contradiction with an Article, the Article will always take precedence over the Schedule.
- 13.2 Schedules may be added to, amended, deleted from the Constitution by way of a petition moved by any one of the following;
- A) Not less than two percent of the membership of the Union,
  - B) 25% of the membership of the Student Council,
  - C) The Executive following a majority vote.
- 13.3 Such petition must be brought before the Student Council, where it must receive the support of 50% plus one of the total membership of the Council, and if it receives such approval the schedule(s) concerned shall stand amended
- 13.4 The amended Schedule will then be brought to the attention of the members in a manner deemed appropriate by the Student Council. Where 10% of the membership object in writing to the amendment within 14 days it will then be put to the membership by referendum in the same manner as a provided for in Articles 12.4 and 12.5, otherwise the amendment, as adopted by the Council, shall stand.
- 13.5 Nothing in this article shall prevent a Schedule being amended by referendum in accordance with Article 12 hereof.

## **Article 14 Founding Confirmations**

- 14.1 The Union shall come into being at midnight on the morning of the 1st day of July, 2021. At 23:59:59 on 30th June, 2021 the Students' Unions of Athlone Institute of Technology and of Limerick Institute of Technology shall stand dissolved.
- 14.2 All powers, functions, rights, privileges, rights of nomination, contracts, assets, liabilities and other matter whatsoever exercisable in or in respect of AITSU and LITSU immediately before the date of the coming into force of this Constitution, whether by virtue of the Constitution then in force or otherwise, by the authority in which the executive powers of the AITSU and the LITSU was then vested are hereby declared to belong to the Union and shall be dealt with in accordance with Article 6.4 hereof.

- 14.3 It is hereby enacted that, save to the extent to which provision is made by this Constitution or may hereafter be made by way of policy for the exercise of any such powers, functions, rights, privileges, rights of nomination, contracts, liabilities and other matters by any of the organs established by this Constitution, the said powers, functions, rights, privileges, rights of nomination, contracts, liabilities and other matters shall not be exercised or be capable of being exercised in or in respect of the Union save only by or on the authority of the Student Council
- 14.4 Subject to this Constitution and to the extent to which they are not inconsistent therewith or contradictory with each other the policies and mandates of the AIT Students' Union and the LIT Students' Union immediately prior to the date of the coming into operation of this Constitution shall continue to be of full force and effect until the same or any of them shall have been repealed or amended by the Student Council or shall have been deemed to have lapsed in accordance with Articles 7.6.6 and 7.6.7. Where the Student Council determines that there are contradictory policies, both policies will fall.
- 14.5 Following the adoption of this Constitution by referenda in both AITSU and LITSU, the following transitional arrangements shall apply:
- 14.5.1 No further elections of Officers shall be held by AITSU and LITSU.
- 14.5.2 The terms of this constitution including but not limited to provisions relating to election of Officers for the Union shall have immediate effect. During the period from the adoption of this Constitution to the establishment of the Union, the ongoing operations of AITSU and LITSU shall be governed by their respective pre-existing constitutions, save as regards to the election of Officers for the 2021-2022 students' union year.
- 14.5.3 The Elections for Officers of the Union shall be held in March 2021 in accordance with the provisions of this Constitution and these Officers shall take up office on 1st July 2021.
- 14.6 Without the need for any further approval all references to the name of the University, the name of the Union, and the name of the Union's Company shall be updated within this Constitution as an administrative measure once those names have been formally confirmed.

## **Article 15      Review of this Constitution**

- 15.1 No later than March 2022 the Executive shall bring a proposal to the Student Council setting out a process for the review of this Constitution the Report for which shall be considered no later than at the second Council meeting of the '22/'23 year.
- 15.2 The Review shall seek the opinions of students, the Student Council, the Union Executive, the Electoral Commission, and the Board of Directors of the Union Company, in looking at the effectiveness of the Union in its operation with a view to proposing any amendments deemed necessary to the

Constitution to enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of the Union in the 23/24 Academic Year and beyond

- 15.3 Such proposed amendment shall then be referred to the Student Council to be considered within the terms of Articles 12 and/or 13 of this Constitution as appropriate.

## **Article 16     Article Self-deletion post-transition**

Without the need for any further approval the following provisions shall be automatically deleted from the Constitution on the date(s) respectively specified:

- 16.1 Article 5.5 shall be automatically deleted from the Constitution on the appointed day for the establishment of the University as prescribed by the Minister for Education and Skills by Statutory Instrument made pursuant to Section 36 of the Technological Universities Act 2018.
- 16.2 Article 14.5 shall be automatically deleted from the Constitution on 30th June, 2022.
- 16.3 Article 14.6 shall be automatically deleted from the Constitution once the administrative updating of names therein enabled has been completed.
- 16.4 Article 15 shall be automatically deleted from the Constitution on 30th June, 2023.
- 16.5 Article 16 shall be automatically deleted from the Constitution simultaneously with the final of the foregoing deletions to occur.