

SECTION A6

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Institiúid Teicneolaíochta, Trá Lí
INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY TRALEE

Procedure AC2 - School Boards

Procedure:	AC2
Version:	02

STATUS: APPROVED

AC2.1 School Board

A School Board shall exist for each School of Study of the Institute:

Business & Social Studies

Engineering & Construction Studies

Science & Computing.

AC2.2 Membership

The Board has a membership of all the whole-time (permanent and temporary) academic staff appointed to that School by the Governing Body. Staff who teach all of their hours in a School other than that to which they were appointed may elect to be members of one or other of the Schools. Staff from other Schools of Study and staff employed on a part-time basis may be invited by the Head of School to attend any/all meetings on a non-voting basis. The President and Registrar are ex-officio members of the Board. The student members of the Course Co-ordination Committee shall be members of the School Board. Where a lecturer teaching all of his/her hours in a School other than the that originally assigned (s)he may opt to be a member of that School Board instead of that originally assigned, for such period as the situation applies.

Voting rights of members shall be determined by those entitled to vote in Institute elections as defined by legislation.

AC2.3 Status

The School Board is a sub-committee of the Academic Council.

AC2.4 Meetings

The Boards shall meet once each term. Notice for the meeting shall be five working days. An agenda and minutes of the previous meeting are circulated with the notice of meeting. The Head of School is chairperson of the Board. The School Board shall elect a Secretary in May of each year.

AC2.5 Functions

The board functions include discussion, assistance in formulation of policy and agreement on general policy issues affecting the School, and co-ordination of Programmatic Reviews, contribution to Institutional Reviews, and other matters affecting the School as a whole. Individual day to day issues are most effectively dealt with by the Course Committee or Course Co-ordination Committee, as appropriate. The Board also acts as a forum for information gathering and dissemination on major issues of policy or Institute/School development generally.

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**Procedure AC3 -
Course Committee**

Procedure:	AC3
Version:	01

STATUS: APPROVED

AC3.1 Course Committee

A Course Committee shall exist for each whole-time or part-time course, or group of closely related courses, operating in the Institute.

AC3.2 Membership

The membership of each course committee shall consist of all the academic staff teaching on the relevant courses and two student representatives* of the relevant class groups. The President, Registrar, Head of School/Department are ex-officio member to the Course Committee. Voting rights of members shall be determined by those entitled to vote in Institute elections as defined by legislation.

The Course Committee may invite other persons (Institute staff or External business/industry/community representative etc) to attend meetings from time to time. Such persons shall not be entitled to vote.

*(*unless Course Committee operates a JAWS system)*

AC3.3 Status

The Course Committee is a sub-committee of the School Board.

AC3.4 Meetings

The President shall appoint, in September each year or at such times as deemed necessary the Chairperson and Secretary of each Course Committee, on the recommendation of the Course Committee. Where an election for Chairperson and / or Secretary is held, it shall be by a secret ballot.

The Course Committee shall agree in May each year, a schedule to hold Course Committee meetings for the following Academic Year. At least three Course Committee Meetings should be held in the academic year. Allowance for such meetings should be made in the course timetables(s) affected by the Course Committee.

Meetings shall be convened by the Head of School/Department. If required, additional meetings may be convened by the Head of School/Department or on request from the Chairperson or three members of the Course Committee.

The minutes of the previous meeting and the agenda shall be circulated not later than 3 working days before the meeting. A lecturer may cancel a class to attend a Course Committee and inform their Head of School/Department

AC3.5 General Functions

A Course Committee's role is one of primary importance as the Institute's Quality Assurance mechanism which ensures appropriate standards of course content and delivery are provided and maintained, and that student progress and performance are effectively monitored. The general functions with which the Course Committee will be concerned include:

The academic standards of the course(s) including Examinations / assessments.

Quality issues relating to the delivery and content of the course(s)

Monitoring, promoting and advising on the running and development of the course.

The monitoring of progress and performance of students on the course(s).

The resources required to run the course(s).

Continuing Academic and Professional Development of staff.

Advising the Head of School / Department on appropriate action to be taken on matters referred to it by the Academic Council, President, Registrar, Head of School, Head of Department, or on matters as the Committee members themselves deem to be important.

Facilitating the co-ordination of inputs from the teaching staff on the course(s).

Providing an Annual Report to the Academic Council via the School Board or other reports as may be required from time to time.

Any other matters relating to the course(s).

AC3.6 Particular Functions

The Course Committee may consider the following particular functions as detailed below. It is envisaged these functions would be considered over time, particularly between Programmatic Reviews. Some issues may require regular consideration, some annual, and some at Programmatic review. The list is not intended to be prescriptive, but rather to present a menu of issues which may assist the effective functioning at Course Committees. The Head of School/Department shall convene meetings to discuss individual student attendance/performance. The student members of the Course Committee (where appropriate) shall not be present during such discussions.

AC3.6.1 Annual Report:

A Course Committee shall provide a annual report to the Academic Council.

AC3.6.2 Academic Standards:

The Course Committee may:

- (i) Review the course timetables to ensure its academic quality in terms of a balanced student workload.
- (ii) Prepare in September of each year the Student Handbook for the Academic Year. (see Appendix A).
- (iii) Ensure the students are advised of the contents of the Course Handbook at the commencement of the Academic Year. Changes to the Handbook should be agreed by the Course Committee, and the students informed of such changes.
- (iv) Monitor student progress and performance throughout the Academic Year.
- (v) Monitor and record student numbers on the course throughout the year, and to notify the Registrar and Head of School/Department of student attendance.
- (vi) Recommend additional tuition/support as required for students in identified subject areas.
- (vii) Review Extern Examiners Course Reports.
- (viii) Review suitable textbooks for student use. If necessary, the committee should consider revisions to syllabi to align with the recommended text. A list of required textbooks should be sent to local booksellers in May of each year.
- (ix) Recommend the purchase of books, journals, CD-ROMs etc. for the Institute library.
- (x) Recommend the purchase of computer software.

AC3.6.3 Academic Development:

The Course Committee may:

- (xi) Consider the design and development needs for wholetime and part-time courses in the general academic area of the course(s). New course proposals should be in accordance with Academic Council Procedures.
- (xii) Review syllabi regularly, and ensure that minor changes to syllabi, following consultation with the Extern Examiner, are recorded on a revised syllabus and approved by the Course Committee and Academic Council. Major syllabus changes require validating body approval. Copies of latest approved syllabi must be lodged with the Head of School and Registrar.
- (xiii) Assist the Head of School/Department in the preparation of material for Programmatic / Institutional or other reviews.

- (xiv) Ensure that formal liaison with industry representatives is developed and maintained, and that such representatives have an input, where appropriate, in course development and review.
- (xv) Assist in arranging visits from guest lecturers, site & industrial visits.
- (xvi) Assist in the promotion of the course(s), through the Head of School/Registrar's office regionally and nationally.
- (xvii) Liaise with professional bodies, where appropriate, through the Head of School/Registrar's Office, to ensure adequate recognition and acceptance of the course(s), by obtaining exemption(s) from professional examination or these requirements.
- (xviii) Liaise with 2nd level teachers in relation to appropriate course subjects.
- (xix) Assist in the development of links with other Institutions, including staff and student transfers, mutual recognition of courses, and development of common modules.

AC3.6.4 Student Experience:

The Course Committee may:

- (xx) Monitor the quality of the course as experienced by the students in accordance with agreed Quality Assurance procedures. This is to ensure a two-way flow of communication to and from the students, in relation to actual or perceived difficulties.
- (xxi) Facilitate each class representative participation in Course Committee or JAWS activities.
- (xxii) Ensure that course information is delivered to students through provision of a Course Handbook in accordance with the agreed template (Appendix A6, Item 1).
- (xxiii) Develop appropriate systems such that students with difficulties can be encouraged to avail of the available support services (Appendix A6, Item 2).
- (xxiv) Ensure that students have the opportunity to provide feedback on their learning experience, including course content, methods of delivery, facilities; equipment, etc.

AC3.6.5 Resources:

The Course Committee may:

- (xxv) Review the quality, quantity and utilisation of resources and facilities required to run the course, including staff resources.

- (xxvi) Recommend to the Head of School on the provision of further resources required including classroom, laboratory, workshop, and computing facilities and equipment.

AC3.6.6 Research & Staff Development

The Course Committee shall:

- (xxvii) Encourage the development of relevant research and publications among the staff on the course, including obtaining resources funding where appropriate.
- (xxviii) Recommend staff development and training of areas of specialisation appropriate to the needs of the course(s).

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**Procedure AC4 -
Course Co-ordination
Committee (ad-hoc)**

Procedure:	AC4
Version:	01

Status: Approved

AC4.1 Course Co-ordination Committee

A Course Co-ordination Committee may be created on an ad-hoc basis by the Head of School to consider detailed issues affecting the School as a whole.

AC4.2 Membership

The Course Co-ordination Committee shall consist of the Chairperson and two members of each of the Course Committees provided for within the School. The Head of School, Head of Department, President and Registrar are ex-officio members of the Committee. One student member shall be nominated from among the class representatives on the course committees, or from among the student participating in the Joint Academic Workshop to represent each Department within the School.

The Course Co-ordination Committee may invite other persons (i.e. Institute staff - Buildings Officer, CSM, Technicians etc) or external business, industry, community representatives etc) to attend the meetings from time to time. Such persons shall not be entitled to vote.

AC4.3 Status

The Course Co-ordination Committee acts as an advisory body to the Head of School

AC4.4 Meetings

The Course Co-ordination Committee shall meet as required during the academic year. Meetings shall be called by the Head of School. An agenda and minutes of the previous meeting shall be circulated at least three working days before the meeting.

AC4.5 Functions

The Course Co-ordination Committee may advise the Head of School in relation to issues of a School-wide nature such as:

- (1) The Course Committee structure for the School.
- (2) Co-ordination and harmonisation of the work of the Course Committees in the School, including the preparation in May of an agreed schedule of meetings for the following Academic Year for all course committees.
- (3) Ensuring the Course Committees carry out their functions as laid down in the Course Committee Procedures document.
- (4) Co-ordination of the academic content and operation of the courses offered by the School.
- (5) Co-ordination of new course development.
- (6) Co-ordination of the preparation of documentation for NCEA Programmatic Review, Institutional Review or other School – wide reviews.
- (7) Promotion of courses particularly among business and industry.
- (8) Staff Continuing Professional and Academic development
- (9) Reviewing end of year examination results across courses, and advising on how the educational package offered to students can be improved in the following academic year.
- (10) Drawing up of financial estimates/budget lines for the resourcing of courses within the School, including materials and equipment, library and computer resources and staffing resources.
- (11) Distribution and utilisation of resources among courses in the School.
- (12) Development of research programmes.
- (13) Development of industrial and business linkages.
- (14) Preparation of such other reports as may be required from time to time by the Governing Body, Academic Council or other persons or bodies.

Appendix A6

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Course Handbook

The Course Committee should examine their course(s) in some detail, and prepare a course information document for students which contains in 'user-friendly' form:

An outline of the aims and objectives of the course; the way in which the course is structured; the reasons why the mix of theory and practicals is required, (where appropriate), etc.

Course Structure / Approved Course Schedule.

Subject/ Syllabi, including the learning outcomes to be attained.

A proposed schedule of appropriate assessment dates.

Schedule of project work to be submitted; scope / marks to be awarded; format required for project work

Recommend own study commitment

The Course Committee shall endeavour to ensure a balanced and reasonable student workload throughout the Academic Year. The Course Committee should give due consideration to the availability of resources (i.e. computer labs, Library etc) for production of projects/reports etc.

Student Liaison

Students, particularly in their first year, experience difficulties with the transition from 2nd level to 3rd level. Very often they are unsure whom to turn to. This in turn can lead to poor academic performance and/ or poor attendance, leading to drop-out or examination failure. The purpose of student liaison is to provide the student with a point of contact when difficulties arise.

One possible model which the Course Committee may consider is the use of a staff mentoring system:

The academic staff teaching on the course act as staff mentors. Participation by Academic Staff is voluntary. The staff member acts as first point of contact with the student, and meets the student at the start of the Academic Year, through the Orientation Programme.

Students are allocated among the participating staff in each course.

Generally, the staff member keeps in touch with their students and makes her/himself available for consultation on academic and related matters.

The staff member should, where necessary, refer students to the appropriate Head of School/Department, Registrar, Counsellor, College Nurse, Chaplain, and Administration Officer (Student Services). This is particularly important in cases where the student is considering terminating his or her studies for academic or personal reasons.

In addition, the Course Committee may wish to consider using students from National Diploma/Degree class groups as mentors for the first year cohort.

Student Participation Course Board Protocols

1. The course board protocols outlined below will ensure that students' involvement in course boards works to the benefit of all concerned, and impacts positively on the course as a whole. This involvement will be by way of representation on course committees and/or through Joint Academic Workshops (JAWS)/Student Liaison Groups (SLG).

The protocol tries to ensure that only appropriate matters are raised in these fora and that matters of a confidential nature or relating directly to individuals are dealt with through a different procedure, which the Academic Council is currently developing for discussion and agreement.

2. **Course Board Joint Academic Workshops(JAWS)/Student Liaison Groups(SLG)**

(a) Student Members

- Student members will notify HOS/HOD of issues which they wish to be included as agenda items one week in advance of meetings.
- HOS/HOD will advise representatives which issues are appropriate for Course Boards/JAWS/SLG.
- Topics for Course Board/JAWS/SLG discussion include: course workload; facilities (classroom, laboratories, workshops, library, computers etc) timetabling; continuous assessment/assignment/project scheduling and rules and guidelines for same; health & safety;
- Student members may not raise issues in relation to individual lecturer performance through the Course Board/JAWS/SLG mechanism. Such issues are appropriate to a student complaints procedure which is being developed.

(b) Staff Members

- Staff recognise that student members represent the class group as a whole and that views expressed may or may not be the personal view of the student member.
- Staff recognise that issues raised by students are of genuine concern to them, and should be addressed objectively.
- Staff recognise that student members may feel at a disadvantage to staff, and will not direct comment to them on a personal basis.

(c) Chairperson

- Chair will ensure that the above protocols are implemented, and will rule personal comments to/from student or staff members out-of-order.

- (d)** All concerned agree to discuss issues in an objective manner with a view to achieving a quality learning environment for both staff and students.

3. **Review**

The operation of student membership of Course Boards/JAWS/SLG will be reviewed with staff and students at the end of each Academic year