

**Report of the Deputy President/Vice President for Academic Affairs**

**Tuairisc an Uachtarán Tánaisteach/Leas Uachtarán um Ghnóthaí Acadúla**

*Bryan O’Mahony*

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1. **Update & Highlights**

* **Comhdháil** 
  + **Preparing motions and assisting MO’s with writing motions to be discussed at Comhdháil**
* **Trade Union Relationships**
  + **The President and I have met with multiple Trade Unions to discuss avenues of collaboration for the year ahead to strengthen the student movement**
  + **Through with meeting the Trade Unions we have pushed for the relaunch of “Education Futures” coalition which seeks to close the funding gap in Education. This would be made up with USI, ISSU, SIPTU, IFUT, TUI and FORSA**
* **StudentSurvey.ie**
  + **Redesign working group is still working on revamping the survey with the student representatives of the group pushing forward the needs for it to be student centric and holistic**
* **NStEP**
  + **We have received confirmation that USI will be keeping NStEP and the go ahead to looking into a new manager to being recruited**
* **Apprentices and FET**
  + **Continued meetings and work for the Apprenticeship Organisation. Working with NTO for FET’s to have more student representation**
* **Policy File**
  + **The president and I have updated the policy file following Comhdháil**

1. **Meetings/Events Attended**

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| **Date** | **Meeting/Event** | **Additional Comments** |
| 19/02/24 | MMM (Monday Morning Meeting) |  |
| 19/02/24 | Briefing Session on Draft Terms of Reference for the Independent Pandemic Evaluation | Met in the Department of the Taoiseach to discuss the terms of reference on setting up a committee for the Independent Pandemic evaluation of the work down during lockdown |
| 20/02/24 | QQI Board Meeting |  |
| 20/02/24 | Motion Collaboration with DCU | Worked with DCUSU on writing motions for Comhdháil |
| 20/02/24 | Motion Collaboration CMLOG | Worked with CMLOG on writing motions for Comhdháil |
| 21-22/02/24 | ETBI FET Conference | Attended the conference to see the moving landscape in the FET sector and to network |
| 22/02/24 | Comhairle Náisiúnta Carlow |  |
| 26/02/24 | Presentation to WonkHE | Discussing with UK based Student Union’s on the format of Irish SU’s and the format of USI |
| 27/02/24 | StudentSurvey.ie Review Working Group |  |
| 27/02/24 | ATUS SU | Discussing SUSI For ODL Students |
| 27/02/24 | Show Your Job project - ANAF / USI | Discussion to run an apprentice media campaign but we felt we didn’t have the direct contact for communicating with them in the tight turnaround ANAF was looking for |
| 29/02/24 | HEA Pathways Conference | Discussions around retentions with students in tertiary education where I discussed the need to remember the holistic reason of dropping out when there is a lack of support |
| 01/03/24 | QQI and representatives of student representative bodies | Discussions of how we could collaborate for the year ahead |
| 01/03/24 | TUI | Meeting to discuss the TU’s repeat exams results release date, to move it to an earlier date |
| 04-5/03/24 | UCCSU Referendum | On campus to push a yes USI vote |
| 05/03/24 | TMM (Tuesday Morning Meeting) |  |
| 07/03/24 | Higher Education 4.0 - Steering Group |  |
| 11/03/24 | MMM |  |
| 12/03/24 | THEA | Meeting to discuss the TU’s repeat exams results release date, to move it to an earlier date |
| 12/03/24 | NStEP Belonging Project Update and Planning | Meeting with the Manager for the Belonging Project to discuss its direction and how to engage students in the discussions |
| 12/03/24 | TUDSU | Meet to discuss how to push fair work for pay policy |
| 13/03/24 | Meeting with NAIN Chair | To discuss the future of NAIN given QQI’s reduced support |
| 20-22/03/24 | TUDSU Referendum | On campus to push a remain in USI |
| 22/03/24 | StudentSurvey.ie Review Working Group |  |
| 25-28/03/24 | Comhdháil |  |
| 03/04/24 | Comhdháil De Brief | To debrief from the week at Comhdháil |
| 04/04/24 | TUI Conference | Attended the conference to network and valuable contacts were gained |
| 05/04/24 | Graduate Outcome Survey | Discussion with Crowe Consultancy about a redesign for the survey |
| 08/04/24 | MMM |  |
| 08/04/24 | Meeting on ESU motions with Palestine collation | Discussions with a coalition I set up in Estonia of likeminded Unions to work together to push policy in ESU |
| 08/04/24 | StudentSurvey.ie Review Working Group |  |
| 09/04/24 | NStEP Meeting | Meeting with the training coordinator to discuss the training delivered and the future of NStEP |
| 10-11/04/24 | BICS Awards Judging | Attend the BICS awards as a judge |
| 16-18/04/24 | Sick Leave |  |
| 18/04/24 | IUA | Future collaborations discussions |
| 19/04/24 | IFUT | Future collaborations discussions |
| 19/04/24 | NTO | Meeting to discuss the student voice in the new tertiary degrees |
| 19/04/24 | TUI & THEA | Work with both TUI and THEA meeting with both together to have an open discussion the TU’s repeat exams results release date, to move it to an earlier date |
| 19/04/24 | TUI | Future collaborations discussions |
| 22/04/24 | QQI Board Meeting |  |
| 23/04/24 | Apprentice/ FET Meeting | Discussion with VP for Campaigns and the President on our direction we are moving towards in these sectors |
| 23/04/24 | ATUS SU SUSI | Discussion with the union and gave advice with SUSI casework |
| 23/04/24 | Constitutional Assembly | Discussions around setting up the newly mandated Constitutional Assembly |
| 25/04/24 | SIPTU | Meeting for organising training for Coiste and MO’s going ahead, and collaboration plans and be more collaborative with the SIPTU campaigns |
| 26/04/24 | ESU Prep Meeting | Meeting with delegates to discuss the week in Geneva |
| 29/04/24 | Meeting with ESU Palestine coalition | Meeting to discuss motions for the Board Meeting |
| 29/04/24 | Filming for Student Survey | Filming to make a video explaining to stakeholders why the survey took a break |
| 30/04/24 | CMLOG Voter Reg |  |
| 30/04/24 | Tuesday Morning Meeting |  |
| 01/05/24 | Policy File Update | Working on updating the policy file following Comhdháil and making a concise policy tracker |
| 01/05/24 | ESU prep meeting | Meeting with delegates to discuss the week in Geneva |
| 02/05/24 | SAAI Awards | Presented an award at the SAAI’s |

**3. Plan of Work Progress**

*\*Red = Not Started*

*Amber = In Progress*

*Green = Completed*

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| **Goal** | **Actions Taken** | **Progress** |
| NStEP | * Attend regular meetings of the NStEP Steering Committee, and Advisory Committee to ensure effective governance of the programme. * Got confirmation that USI will be keeping the program, and a new manager is to be hired |  |
| National Student Training Programme | * The program will be getting a refresh when a new manager comes on board to be fit for purpose for SU’s |  |
| Quality and Qualifications Ireland (QQI) | * Ongoing work with pushing student engagement in higher education on the boards I sit on * NAIN is in a transitionary stage at the moment but hopes are still to have a co-run academic integrity campaign |  |
| Student Survey.ie | * With the feedback from SU’s, I got the survey to be put off for a year for it to be worked on and redesigned for student purposes. Less jargon and in more accessible language |  |
| Further Partnerships | * Relationships with trade unions have been renewed within the sector. Collaboration projects are underway with closer ties with each other for the future |  |
| Student Placement Survey | * This hasn’t begun yet |  |
| Quality Assurance Engagement | * Pushing for QQI to engage with students more to get their voices heard. * Pushing for more student voices on panels |  |
| Creative Students | * Brought up the funding of material with the Minister for DFHERIS and will be working on this further |  |
| ESU Events and Projects | * ESU events were cheaper this year allowing for better engagement for smaller unions to join the events. * Working with ESU at conferences and with online meetings |  |
| MO Engagement and Collaboration | * Constantly liaised with MO’s on work underway and giving opportunities for MO’s to further engage when possible and constant campus visits |  |
| Policy Development | * When advise on motions or policy advice was required by MO’s during the year to better their local college environment, I was more than happy to give stats and help to push the changes over the line |  |
| Funding and Access | * Lobbied wherever possible for increase funding for education in Ireland |  |
| Mergers & Technological Universities (TUs) | * Helped TU’s with advice regarding to merging or being merged and imparted knowledge of how other colleges may have navigated similar problems |  |
| Student Involvement in Governance | * At every opportunity I have pushed for student involvement with anything that regards students. You can’t make decisions about us, without us |  |

1. **Mandate Progress**

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| **Mandate** | **Actions Taken** | **Progress** |
| Creative Student Representation | Subcommittee was set up. Working on material funding to be set up for students |  |
| Academic Integrity | I worked with QQI and NAIN to represent the student voice, sent graphics out for academic integrity in semester 1. Working with NAIN on how a step by step reporting misconduct could be done with QQI but QQI is resistant with direct student contact |  |
| Universal Design | Haven't worked on this, this academic year |  |
| Placement Campaign | Making plans for the survey to be compiled and survey to be ran |  |
| Leaving Certificate Results | Look at a more efficient way to achieve the spirit of this motion as the current format makes it hard to achieve anything from the actions. Retention rates is a new direction that HEA is looking in and something I have been feeding into |  |
| Artificial Intelligence | Trying to work with QQI and NAIN with incorporating AI into teaching, learning and assessment due to disagreements with its level it should be involved |  |
| Exceptional and Extenuating Circumstances | Intention to begin over the coming weeks |  |
| College Awareness Week | Week was promoted and supported |  |
| StudentSurvey.ie | Student survey currently under review |  |
| Connecting Creative Arts Students | Time to organise wasn’t there for this year |  |
| Examination Best Practice | Work constantly being pushed for rethinking assessment in Higher Education |  |
| Subsidies on Textbooks | Lobbing was done with the DFHERIS to secure subsidies on textbooks |  |
| Learning in a Digital World | Work is being done to push for SUSI to being extended to online students |  |
| Career Guidance Review | Qualifax has been looked at to being reformed/ given a relook |  |

1. **Expenses**

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| **Item** | **Description** | **Amount** |
| Public Transport |  |  |
| Meals |  |  |
| Overnights + Working Outside of Ireland |  |  |
| Other |  |  |
| Total | None claimed this cycle |  |