COLÁISTE CHEATHARLACH
NAOMH PÁDRAIG

CARLOW COLLEGE
ST. PATRICK'S

Terms of Reference

Academic Council

Section 1: Remit

The Academic Council is responsible for the governing and management of the academic affairs and is the primary decision-making body for all academic matters at Carlow College, St. Patrick's. It sets in place the academic governance framework and oversees the establishment, maintenance and development of quality assurance policies and procedures for all educational programmes within the College. It reports to the Governing Body via the Academic Committee of the Governing Body (Carlow College, St. Patrick's, *Instrument of Governance*, Ref. 11.1). The Academic Council conducts its work in accordance with legal, statutory, and fiduciary requirements.

Section 2: Membership

The Academic Council is appointed by the President under devolved authority from the Governing Body. Elected members serve for a term of three years, with the possibility of further terms. Depending on the agenda, others may be invited to be present for part, or all, of a meeting. The President chairs meetings of the Academic Council. If the President is not in attendance, a College Vice President or the Vice President for Academic Affairs and Registrar will act as Chair. Carlow College, St. Patrick's is committed to gender equality. As such, the College will uphold and reflect these values in the composition of the Academic Council where possible, by striving to have at least 40% of each gender represented on the Council.

Function	Mode of Selection
President	*Ex Officio*
Office of the Registrar, Administrator, Secretary	*Ex Officio*
Vice President for Academic Affairs and Registrar	*Ex Officio*
College Vice Presidents	*Ex Officio*

Director of Student Services and Learner Supports	*Ex Officio*
Head of Academic Delivery and Programmes, Chair of the Learning, Teaching and Assessment Committee	*Ex Officio*
Chair of Strategic Development Committee	*Ex Officio*
Chair of the Quality Assurance Committee	*Ex Officio*
Chair of the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Team	*Ex Officio*
Programme Director, Arts and Humanities	*Ex Officio*
Programme Director, English and History	*Ex Officio*
Programme Director, Applied Social Studies (Professional Social Care)	*Ex Officio*
Programme Director, Social, Political & Community Studies	*Ex Officio*
Programme Director, Psychology	*Ex Officio*
Programme Director, Leadership in Therapeutic Child and Social Care (MA)	*Ex Officio* (Vacant)
Programme Director, Irish Regional History (PGD / MA)	*Ex Officio*
Librarian / Library Representative	*Ex Officio*
2 Staff Representatives (Academic)	Elected by all Academic Staff for a term of 3 years (the terms of office are staggered)
1 Staff Representative (Academic Professional Support Staff)	Elected by Academic Professional Support Staff for a term of 3 years
1 Student Representatives from the Student Representative Team	Appointed by the Director of Student Services and Learner Supports

Section 3: Reporting Structure
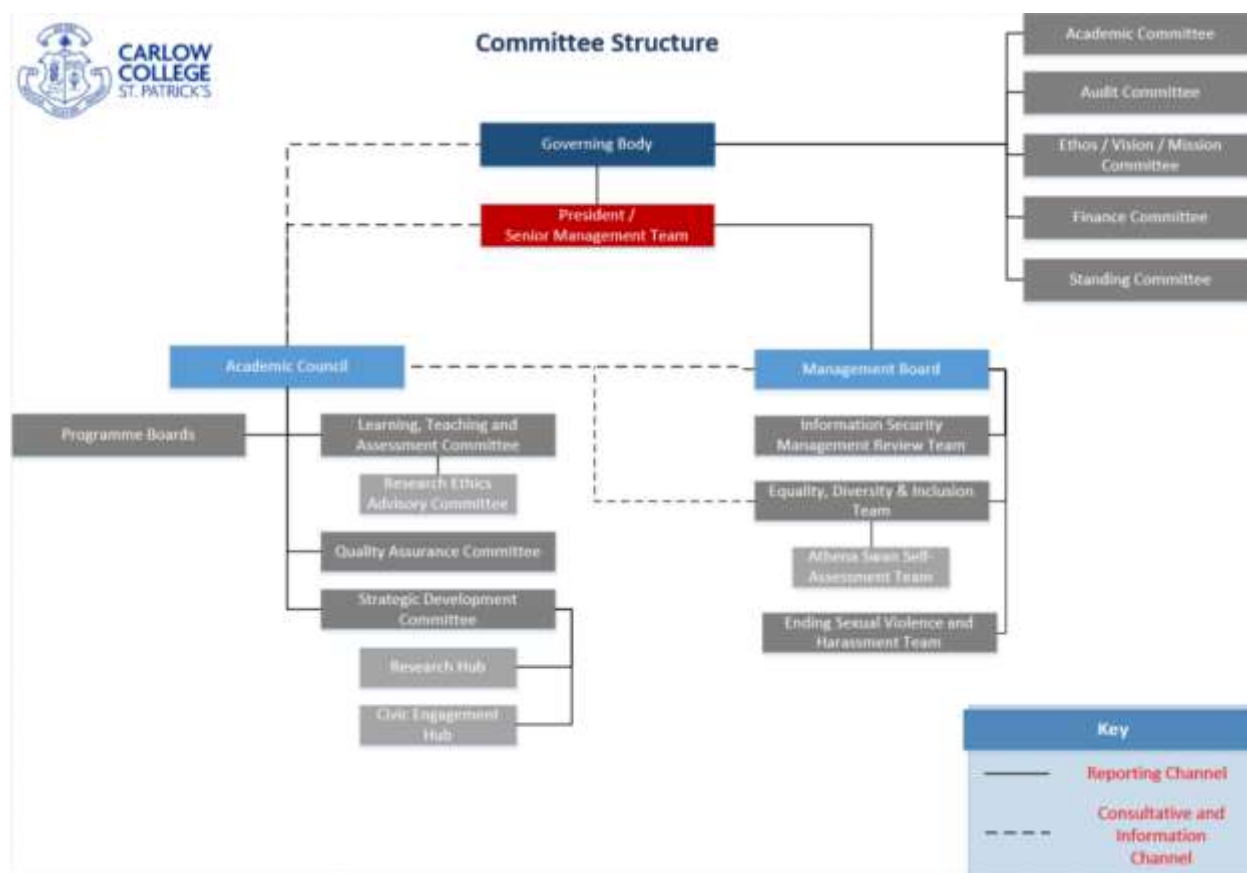
The Academic Council is the highest academic approving committee in the College and informs and consults the Senior Management Team, the Management Board and the Academic Committee of the Governing Body, in relation to the planning and co-ordination of the educational work of the College. A number of College committees have a reporting channel directly to Academic Council: Programme Boards; Learning, Teaching and Assessment Committee; Quality Assurance Committee and the Strategic Development Committee. Other committees report to the Academic Council through the before-mentioned Programme Boards and / or committees: Research Ethics Advisory Committee; Practice Placement Advisory Committee (Social Care Placements); Workplace Learning Experience Advisory Committee, Research Hub and Civic Engagement Hub. The Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Team has a consultation and information channel to the Academic Council; the chair of this Team is a member of the Academic Council.

Section 4: Terms of Reference

1. To oversee and assure the quality and standards of academic matters in the College, particularly where programmes and activities lead to the award of degrees.

2. To plan, co-ordinate, develop and supervise the educational work of the College, maintaining high academic standards and safeguarding the educational ethos of the College; the Academic Council informs the Management Board of the resource requirements for its activities.

3. To approve preliminary programme proposals and final programme proposals, including validation documents, for new academic programmes; these decisions are communicated to the Management Board and Governing Body.

4. To approve the programme review report and programme validation document as part of the cyclical programmatic review and re-validation process; these decisions are communicated to the Management Board and Governing Body.

5. To oversee the development, maintenance and approval of academic-related Quality Assurance policies and procedures.

6. To establish and oversee the academic governance framework: constitute, reconstitute and discontinue committees; this includes the approval of sub-committees' terms of reference and reports from constituted sub-committees of the Academic Council.

7. To approve organisational reports which come under the remit of Academic Council.

8. To oversee assessment and examination procedures and ratify the appointment of external examiners.

9. To maintain an academic risk register and communicate any changes to the Management Board.

10. To promote and recognise excellence in teaching and research.

11. To make recommendations for the awards of scholarships, prizes, bursaries and other awards which recognise academic excellence.

12. To approve all academic-related Memoranda of Understanding and / or Memoranda of Agreement established by the College.

13. To exercise related functions which will facilitate the administration of the academic affairs of the College.

The Secretary will prepare and circulate the agenda and keep records of meetings adhering to the 'Managing Meetings' Records' contained in the [Recordkeeping Manual](). Any resolutions of the Management Board will be communicated to the Academic Council and the Governing Body.

Section 5: Frequency of Meetings

The Academic Council will meet for a minimum of five meetings per academic year and at least twice a semester. The President may convene additional meetings as circumstances and need arise.

Section 6: Quorum

The quorum for a meeting shall be fifty percent plus one of the current membership of the Academic Council, one of whom shall be either the Chairperson or the Deputy Chairperson.

Section 7: Voting at meetings

All decisions of the Academic Council shall normally be carried by consensus. However, where this is not possible, a simple majority of votes of those members present shall decide. In the case of equality of votes, the Chairperson shall have a second or casting vote.