

**Educational Research Centre
MEETING OF THE BOARD
14 December 2016**

A meeting of the Board of the Educational Research Centre (“ERC”), was held on December 14th 2016 at the offices of the Organisation.

Board Members Present:

Professor Pauric Travers, Chairperson; Dry Denise Burns, Deputy Chairperson; Dr Jude Cosgrove; Mr. Edward Murtagh, Prof Michael Martin (Via Skype Link)

In Attendance:

Peter Archer, CEO; Anne Comey, Senior Administrator (Who took the minutes).

Absent: N/A

Counsel Present: N/A

Call to Order

Dr Travers called the meeting to order at 2 pm.

The Agenda was adopted (Appendix I).

1. Minutes BMin 1 – 0916

The minutes of the inaugural meeting were adopted (Appendix II)

It was agreed that the Office Administrator would keep the signed copy of the minutes.

It was also noted that the schedule for the 2017 meetings are indicative and subject to change.

2. Matters Arising from previous minutes

Re Pt 3: The formal meeting with DCU/SPD to finalise ongoing issues with transition agreement has not taken place.

The Board agreed to the appointment of O’Connell Brennan Solicitors for any legal issues arising from the transition agreement including the issue of the Test Department building at Richmond Road.

Re Pt 4 : IFUT proposal to be circulated to the members of the Board for consideration at the next meeting.

3. Workplan 2017 (B2-16-5)

The workplan was discussed. It was noted that it covered only projects and this should be the core of the program of work which is to be agreed with the DES beyond 2017. Suggestions were made on other aspects of the ERC work which might be included.

4. Report on developments since previous meeting (B2-16-1)

See document in appendix. It was noted by the Board that 2015/2016 was a very busy year for the Centre.

Volume 41 of the IJE is about to be printed. Volume 42 will mark the 50th anniversary of the journal. It was agreed that the journal should be included as an agenda item at a future meeting

5. Draft policy document 1 (Professional Development) (B2-16-2)

Following discussion, it was agreed that a policy template should be developed to include version number, date of adoption by the board and review date. Clarifications required from draft on who the policy applies to and more emphasis required on shorter trainings. CPD policy should examine specification for seconded teachers already pursuing a course. The CEO to vet all applications for CPD, and to protect the CEO, decisions on CPD actions over a certain amount per individual, should be approved by the Board.

AC to check yearly figures of average PhD.

Policy needs to integrate the notion of refund of fees after tax refund to the individual.

6. Draft Policy document 2 (Freedom of Information) (B2-16-3)

FOI document for the website was approved.

A FOI policy for staff should be drafted.

7. Appointment of accountants

HSM Ashbourne
Chartered Accountants
2A Ashbourne Court
Ashbourne
Co. Meath
Ireland

Appointment approved by the Board until 2018 at which point the ERC may need to tender depending on requirements from C&AG. The current accountants have acted as ERC accountants for a number of years and have already started the process for the last quarter of the 2015 accounts which are to be included in the 2016 accounts.

8. Discussion of TIMMS and PISA reports with staff involved

Presentations made by the TIMSS and PISA teams following the release of both reports. The Board complimented all staff involved on the quality of the work and the presentations.

It was noted that not all the media coverage acknowledged the role of the centre.

9. Update on computer-based testing

Board was informed of ongoing issues with the software development and the recommendation from DES to discuss the matter with Eversheds Solicitors. The board is to be kept informed of any developments.

10. Recruitment of CEO (B2-16-4)

Peter Archer withdrew from the meeting at this point.

The chair updated the Board in relation to discussions with the Public Appointments Service and the DES in relation to the process. The Board discussed the matter of the salary scale decided by DES for the new CEO. The decision was unanimously taken that the Chairman would send a letter to the DES addressing the concerns of the Board in the potential difficulty in recruiting the right person for the Centre. The draft job specification was circulated for review at the next meeting.

11. AOB

Peter Archer advised the Board that he was also involved in the following bodies:

- Director of the board of iScoil (www.iscoil.ie) which provides online learning opportunities for young people not in full-time schooling and which receives financial support from the DES.
- Director of Ashbourne and District Community Council Limited which is involved in the management of a community centre and sponsors a Community Employment scheme
- Member of the Governing Body of St Patricks College.

All three positions are unpaid. This information was noted. It was agreed that no conflict of interest arose.