

Officer Report  
of the Science & Engineering Faculty  
Convenor  
of Maynooth Students' Union (MSU)  
to Student Senate



Science & Engineering Faculty Convenor

Tionólaí Dhámh S & E

PERIOD OF WORK: 1<sup>ST</sup> NOVEMBER 2022 – 15<sup>TH</sup> NOVEMBER 2022

EMAIL: SCIENCE@MSU.IE

## **TABLE OF CONTENTS**

Executive Summary.....	3
Constitutional Responsibilities.....	7
Manifesto Initiatives.....	10
Motions & Mandates.....	13
Academic Representatives.....	16
Committees.....	17
General Activities.....	19
Meeting Schedule.....	21
Expenses Claimed.....	23

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**



Image Description: Taken outside the TSI Building, My dear friend Oisín Parsons is pictured in centre frame, standing side by side with my friends Hayley and Freddie on the left of the photo, with myself and my friend Marco on the right. We are attending Oisín's graduation, and as such he is wearing his robes and cap. The rest of us are dressed in various definitions of the idea of smart casual, with myself wearing a suit jacket, open waistcoat with a white shirt, tie and grey jeans. I have a big smile on my face as I am unbelievably proud of my friend for graduating. Due to the sun shining brightly in front of us when the photo was taken, the shadows of Oisín's parents are visible taking the photo, and a shadow cast by one of the pillars at the front of the TSI Building is falling across Hayley's face, obscuring her slightly in the photo.

Hope you didn't get too comfy because it's already time for Sitting Two!

Hello Senators, hope you've been keeping well. I'm going to start this off with a quick apology as this won't have as much content as my reports usually do due to the quick turnaround between Senate Sittings. I assure you that I have been working diligently to fulfil my role as Faculty Convenor, even though I'll have slightly less to show for it this time.

The main work during this period of work has been mainly working with the new S & E Faculty Senators, both getting them caught up on the how Senate works and making sure they're comfortable with their roles. I've also been

liaising with them on academic issues where they have been providing invaluable insight. So if you'd give me a moment I'd like to give a very warm welcome to Fionn Roche, Eva Hearne and Hannah Bagtasos. It's been great getting to know and work with you and I'm looking forward to all the work we will be doing in the future. I hope you enjoy your time on Senate!

Other than that I've been prepping for my Second Faculty Assembly. It has taken a good deal of work to get all of the systems in place to run the Assembly, but now that they are in place each following Faculty Assembly should run very smoothly, making the work put in now that much more worth it.

I have also continued liaising with different Academic Societies who are looking to run a large scale event. While I will not be actively leading this event I foresee having some role in its organisation, which is why I've felt it necessary to highlight it in my summary as I feel it will be a recurring piece of work from this point on.

I don't want to take up too much of your time Senators so I won't go over every little bit of work I've carried out here and let the rest of my report speak for itself. I'm looking forward to the next Senate meeting and answering any questions you may have about it.

(Also it's only 2 Senates to Christmas if that's enough of a spoiler for my next Officer Report!)

Go raibh míle maith agat,

Gavin Fanning,

Science & Engineering Faculty Convenor.



Image Description: Official Artwork of Hatsune Miku (Japanese: 初音ミク), a Japanese Virtual Idol developed by Crypton Future Media. She has turquoise eyes and her hair is also turquoise. Her hair is styled into a twintails style, held in place by two large red hairclips that are also part of her red headphones. She is wearing a sleeveless white shirt with a turquoise tie and black skirt, gloves and leggings. Her gloves and skirt are adorned with a series of red and turquoise lights. She has a visible red tattoo of the number "01" on her left arm.

## **CONSTITUTIONAL RESPONSIBILITIES**

***Article 10.1-5 of the MSU Constitution sets out the constitutional responsibilities of the MSU Science & Engineering Faculty Convenor. I have outlined my constitutional responsibilities below and have commented on my progress in fulfilling them;***

*1. The Faculty Convenors shall be the primary means of communications between the students and student academic representatives in their faculty and the Executive. In particular the Faculty Convenors shall be responsible for raising awareness of issues specific to their respective faculties in all appropriate fora including the Student Senate and Executive meetings.*

With the election of the S & E Academic Reps to Senate, I have focused on liaising with these students on issues they have seen on the ground, so that we may have streamlined communication of these issues between the Senate and the Executive. Through this work I hope to encourage the Senators to bring forward issues while also saving time by avoiding the repeat discussion of topics.

*(a) They shall be responsible for the distribution of information and for the implementation of the campaigns of the Union within their faculties.*

I have communicated, through my Faculty Assemblies, the Faculty Senators, as well as by word of mouth the campaigns being run by the Union, in particular the VP Education's Baby DeStress campaign, which I felt was of particular note to the students of my Faculty.

2. They shall be responsible for the recruitment of Student Academic Representatives within their own faculty.

I have been in communications with the VP Education, Academic Representation Administrator Seán Masterson, and members of staff on how best to increase Representative numbers in my Faculty during this period of work.

(a) They shall be responsible for organising the election of the Student Academic Representatives for the constituencies within their faculties.

I currently have no plans to run any further elections of Academic Reps.

3. Each Faculty Convenor shall arrange for a Faculty Assembly meeting to occur in their respective faculties normally six times per academic year, normally with three meetings per semester.

So far one meeting of the Faculty Assembly has occurred. The second meeting of the Science & Engineering Faculty Assembly for this academic year will take place on November 21<sup>st</sup>.



4. The Faculty Convenor shall be the Chairperson of their respective Faculty Assemblies.

I have chaired every meeting of the Faculty Assembly held so far. I plan to chair the upcoming meeting of the Science & Engineering Faculty Assembly, due to take place on November 21<sup>st</sup>.

## **MANIFESTO INITIATIVES**

*While running for the position of Science & Engineering Faculty Convenor, I outlined several manifesto pledges. Throughout my term I will make progress on each of these promises to the best of my ability.*

*List of Manifesto Initiatives:*

### **1. Accessibility**

*I want to make sure that my Faculty, as well as our Union as a whole, is a Union for everyone. In my time in this Union, I have worked to represent many marginalised groups, specifically students with disabilities. While the role I am in currently is focused on the Science & Engineering Faculty, I also plan to continue my work with regards to disability accessibility, as well as fighting for equality across campus in all fields.*

I had a brief informal meeting with the VP Student Life following the First Sitting of the Seventh Session of the MSU Student Senate to discuss Alt Text, and the practical application of it in the education of the Maynooth student body on Japanese idols.

### **2. Communication**

*I want to create a Union where everyone's voice is heard. I plan to work with my Reps to make sure they feel comfortable and supported in raising the concerns of the students they represent. I will do this by engaging in*

dialogue with them on both a formal and informal basis. I will extend this work to the larger Science & Engineering student body, making sure that they not only know who I am, but what work both I and the Union do and how we can help them when they need us.

I have been approached by a number of bodies on campus to aid in the organisation of group events. While it is not a constitutional responsibility of mine to lead the organisation of any of these events, I do believe that lending some assistance to those who would organise these events will be invaluable in the communication goals I set out for myself in my Manifesto as outlined above.

### **3. Experience**

I want to use my previous experience from working in MSU to really make a change as Faculty Convenor, be that via aiding and encouraging the Academic Representatives of my Faculty to get more involved in the Union and showcasing to them how to do so, helping Senators to become more familiar with the inner workings of the Union so that they better represent their students, or using my accumulated knowledge to help guide decisions within the Executive.

Since the elections of the new S & E Faculty Senators, I have been meeting with said Senators whenever possible to help them learn about their roles,

my role, the relationship between our roles, and have also endeavoured to answer any questions they may have about the Senate.

## **MOTIONS & MANDATES**

*There are many motions & mandates that require participation from my role. Throughout my term I will make progress on each of these motion & mandates to the best of my ability. Below is a list of all active motion & mandates that require my participation, with updates on my progress with each one;*

*List of Motions & Mandates:*

Before beginning the list I would like to note that from this Officer Report and going forward I will only be mentioning Motions & Mandates which have seen progress. For the full list of motions & mandates that I am mandated to work on, please see my first Officer Report, and also refer to the Policy Book to check which of those motions are still in effect, as some will be running out over the course of this year.

### ***1. Irish Language Campaign Visibility***

While I am not actively involved in any Irish Language campaigns being run by the Union, I have worked towards Irish Visibility when taking my Officer Report for questions at the First Senate. At this time I used a number of Irish phrases that had been provided to me by the Oifigach, Craig Mac Gabhann. I also took this time to use the same phrases in French for our French speakers such as the VP Student Life,

and shall endeavour to continue this language representation when the opportunity is afforded to me.

## **2. Accessible Documentation**

When writing any documentation in my capacity as Faculty Convenor, I ensure that it is accessible using the following metrics;

- Using the sans serif font Verdana
- Using font size 12
- Using Double line spacing
- Providing a description of any images included
- Using bold for important points

I have also worked to enforce this policy, by speaking with other members of the Executive on the importance of Accessible Documentation, giving them tips to improve the Accessibility of their Documentation, and ensuring that they know that even Japanese idols require Alt Text.

## **3. Active Engagement with National Climate Justice Protests**

Due to other timetable clashes I have been unable to attend any recent Climate Justice Protests.

## **4. MSU Officer Neutrality in other Student Union Elections**

I have made such significant progress with this mandate that I have no knowledge of any elections occurred in other Unions during this period of work.

## **5. Continuation of Online Arrangements**

I will be hosting my upcoming Faculty Assembly entirely online due to health concerns, and hope to host future Faculty Assemblies in a blended environment.

## **6. *Action on Decriminalisation of Drugs Referendum***

As the proposer of this motion, I have continued to discuss the issue with students. In particular, I have discussed this topic with students with disabilities, who may benefit from the decriminalization of drugs. I have also kept up to date on world affairs that may affect the stance that MSU takes on future legislation.

## **ACADEMIC REPRESENTATIVES**

As Science & Engineering Faculty Convenor it is my duty to ensure that academic representatives are elected. Below you can find an update on my progress with this duty;

As of the 29<sup>th</sup> of March, 55 of the 90 Science & Engineering Academic Rep positions have been filled. This represents 61.1% representation, which is a 2.2% increase on my last Officer Report. This figure is correct as of 12:00 on the 14<sup>th</sup> of November 2022.



## **COMMITTEES**

*I have listed the committees that I am a member of and have tried to give a description of their remit and some of the activities they undertake. I have also listed my contribution to these committees below;*

*List of Committees that the Science & Engineering Faculty Convenor is a member of:*

- 1. MSU Executive*
- 2. MSU Student Senate*
- 3. MSU Science & Engineering Faculty Assembly*
- 4. MSU Student Academic Assembly*
- 5. MSU Academic Representation Review Committee*
- 6. MSU Student Engagement & Feedback Committee*
- 7. MSU Student Charter Committee*
- 8. MU Faculty of Science and Engineering*
- 9. MU Social Sciences Teaching & Learning Sub-Committee*

I would like to note that following feedback, I will be endeavouring to make this section of my report easier to read by removing the committee descriptions from this point forward. I will also be limiting the information

shared to things only relevant to the position of S & E Faculty Convenor where possible. Finally, as with the Motions & Mandates, I will be removing the sections for committees that have not met between periods of work For the full committee descriptions please read my first Officer Report, or reach out to me at my email.

### MSU Executive

Executive Committee meetings take place every two weeks. I have been in attendance for every MSU Executive meeting during this period of work.

### MSU Student Senate

The First Sitting of the Seventh Session of the Student Senate took place on November 9<sup>th</sup>. My Officer Report was unanimously passed.

### MSU Science & Engineering Faculty Assembly

The second Science and Engineering Faculty Assembly is due to take place on the 21<sup>st</sup> of November.

### MU Science and Engineering Teaching & Learning Sub-Committee

The MU Science and Engineering Teaching & Learning Sub-Committee met on the 14<sup>th</sup> of November. Unfortunately due to a timetable clash I was unable to attend. I do not have details of this meeting at the time of writing my report.

## **GENERAL ACTIVITIES**

*The work of the Science & Engineering Faculty Convenor is not just confined to constitutional roles and manifesto initiatives. There is a wide variety of activities undertaken by me in the execution of my role. I have given a comprehensive list of these activities below;*

*List of some of the main other general activities undertaken:*

### *1. Work with the Maynooth Access Programme*

I had a meeting with Declan Markey during this period of work where we discussed student engagement on campus. I mentioned the success of the Levy walkouts and march, and suggested methods the Access Office may employ in order to also see the increased engagement the Union has benefitted from. I also pulled on my years of experience as a MAP Ambassador to suggest how different strategies for engagement within MAP have worked over the years.

### *2. Continued attendance at Society events*

Following giving speeches at a number of Academic Society events, I have been subsequently invited back to attend events in order to breed familiarity with the membership of the Societies. These Societies, as well as Reps, have approached me with interest in organising a large group event between

different Science & Engineering groups. I have expressed to them that I would not be available to solely organise this event, but will use my position of being in communication with many of the interested parties in order to put them in communication with each other.

### *3. Open Closet*

I have been in discussions with Ben Holmes and Jessica Lennon to offer my support for the upcoming Open Closet event. I was involved with the event last year where I helped both in the sorting of clothes and also on the shop floor or the course of the event. As a member of the Drama Society Committee at the time I also secured storage space for the leftover clothes from last year to be stored over the summer in preparation for the event this year. So far this year I have helped to recollect the clothes from the Drama Society, and plan to help out again this year with sorting and on the shop floor. The Open Closet will be taking place on the 23<sup>rd</sup> and 24<sup>th</sup> of November, and I hope to see you all there.

## **MEETING SCHEDULE**

*Below is an indicative schedule of meetings that I have attended. This is shown to portray how often I have meetings and the level of consistency with which these committees meet at. There are also many meetings needed outside of those committees.*

*Meeting Schedule:*

### **November 1<sup>st</sup> – November 7<sup>th</sup>**

November 2<sup>nd</sup>; Meeting with Declan Markey

November 3<sup>rd</sup>; Attendance at Computer Science Society

November 7<sup>th</sup>; MSU Executive

### **November 8<sup>th</sup> – November 15<sup>th</sup>**

November 9<sup>th</sup>; The First Sitting of the Seventh Session of the MSU Student Senate.

November 14<sup>th</sup>; Meeting with VP Education, ACSP Faculty Convenor and Social Science Faculty Convenor.



Image Description: A picture of me attending the Baby DeStress Animal Petting Event. The photo is a wide shot of myself and a pig. I am holding the pig. I am wearing a red long sleeve shirt while holding the pig. The pig is relaxing in my arms. The arms that are holding the pig. I have a massive smile on my face as I hold the pig.

## **EXPENSES CLAIMED:**

To ensure that I am transparent and accountable expenditure below is an account of all expenses I have claimed;

No expenses claimed to date.

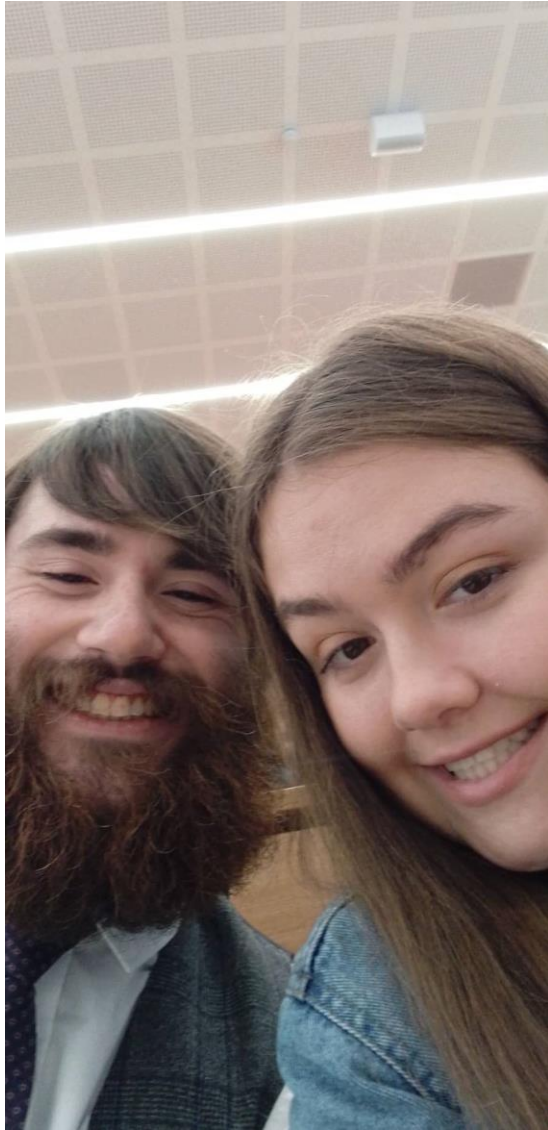


Image Description: A portrait selfie of myself and the Accommodation Senator Luka Pranciliauskas inside the TSI Building. We are attending a graduation and as such are smiling very happily as we watch the happy graduates.





Image Description: A landscape selfie of myself and the Accommodation Senator Luka Pranciliauskas inside Pugin Hall. We are attending a different graduation and as such are smiling very happily as we watch the different group of happy graduates.



Image Description; Myself and the VP Education Alex Balfe posing outside of the Alua Maxima after attending her graduation. As such Alex is holding her degree scroll which is backed on red card, while wearing her cap and robes, a red dress and heels. I am wearing a blue shirt with a purple tie, a closed dark grey waistcoat with a matching dark grey suit jacket. I am wearing blue jeans, black shoes, and have my walking stick in my left hand, which my right hand over Alex's shoulder.