

Minutes of the Regulatory and Professional Policy Committee Meeting held online on 12 May 2025

Agenda Item A - Apologies

Name	Role	Present (Yes/No)
Mr Rory O'Donnell	Chair	Yes
Ms Gráinne Power		Yes
Ms Marie Louisa Power		Yes
Mr Peter Dennehy		No - apologies
Ms Dorothy Donovan		Yes
Mr Mark Jordan		Yes
Ms Geraldine Crowley		No - apologies
Dr Laura Sahm		Yes
Mr Richard Hammond S.C		Yes
Members of PSI staff in attendance for part or all of the meeting included:		
<i>Ms Joanne Kissane</i>	<i>Registrar and Chief Officer</i>	
<i>Ms Cora O'Connell</i>	<i>Acting Head of Practitioner Assurance</i>	
<i>Ms Ciara Dooley</i>	<i>Professional Standards Coordinator</i>	
<i>Ms Louise Hamra</i>	<i>Pharmacy Practice Officer</i>	
<i>Ms Elizabeth O'Halloran</i>	<i>Strategic Policy and Research Coordinator</i>	
<i>The meeting commenced at 10 am.</i>		

Colour code: Red—for decision; Green—for discussion; Blue—for information

Agenda Item B – Declaration of Interests

Issue

Declaration of interests by Committee members.

Information

The Chair invited Committee members to declare any conflicts of interest regarding the items scheduled for discussion. Dr. Laura Sahm declared a perceived conflict of interest for item E.1.

Dr Sahm outlined that while she wished to facilitate the Committee with her educational expertise and experience on the item, that she would abstain from voting on item E.1 to avoid any perception of conflict of interest.

Decision Approved and/or Action Requested

The Chair accepted Dr Sahm's decision to abstain from voting on item E.1, noting her valuable input to the Committee on matters of the education and training of pharmacists.

Agenda Item C – Agreement on the meeting agenda

Issue

The meeting agenda had been circulated in advance of the meeting.

Information

No changes were proposed to the meeting agenda as circulated.

Decision Approved and/or Action Requested

None.

Agenda Item D – Approval of Minutes – 10 April 2025 meeting

Issue

Approval of the minutes of the Regulatory and Professional Policy Committee meeting held on 10 April 2025.

Information

The Chair noted that the draft minutes of the previous Regulatory and Professional Policy Committee meeting had been circulated to Committee members in advance. The Chair noted that Microsoft CoPilot was being used on a trial basis to record a transcript of Committee meetings, in addition to handwritten notes by the Executive.

The Committee agreed to discuss the role of Microsoft Copilot in supporting the drafting of meeting minutes at its next meeting in June, following a related discussion at the last Council meeting in April.

Decision Approved and/or Action Requested

Decision Approved: The Committee approved the minutes of the previous meeting on the proposal of Ms. Marie Louisa Power and seconded by Ms. Dorothy Donovan.

Agenda Item E.1 – Consideration of evaluation report: Atlantic Technological University proposed MPharm programme

Issue

The Committee was provided with the following documentation in advance of the meeting:

- A memo to the Committee outlining the matter.
- Draft Interim Evaluation Report of the accreditation team considered by RPP at its April meeting.
- Response from Atlantic Technological University, dated 28 March.
- Letter from the Chair of the Accreditation Team, dated 3 April.
- Factual accuracy response from the Accreditation Team to ATU, dated 7 May.
- Draft updated Interim Evaluation Report, dated 7 May (updated by the accreditation team following consideration of ATU's response to the interim evaluation report).
- Letter from ATU to the RPP Committee, dated 9 May
- Letter from Professor Munday to ATU President, dated 12 April.

Information

At its previous meeting on 10 April, the Committee had considered the draft Interim Evaluation Report of the accreditation team, response to the report from the Atlantic Technological University (ATU), and a letter from the Chair of the accreditation team. Following this, the Committee had voted to postpone consideration of the recommendation to Council that it defer the recognition and approval for the proposed Master's degree in pharmacy to be provided by ATU, pending receipt of the full response from the accreditation team, to ATU's response to the evaluation report.

The committee heard a short update from Ms. Cora O'Connell. The Committee heard that the accreditation team, having considered the response by ATU, had issued a response to ATU's submission and an updated draft interim evaluation report. The Committee heard that following receipt of these documents, the matter had now returned to the Committee for consideration.

The Committee discussed the updated interim evaluation report and the recommendation of the accreditation team, noting that significant concerns remained in the updated report, and that the observations of the accreditation team had not substantially changed, particularly in relation to leadership and appropriate staffing, plans for interprofessional learning and structured engagement with patients, approach to assessment strategy and preparedness for the delivery of pharmacy practice experiential learning.

Furthermore, the Committee noted that the accreditation team remained unchanged in its recommendation that Council defer its recognition and approval of the proposed Master's degree programme in pharmacy.

The Committee once again highlighted the responsibility of the PSI to maintain current standards for pharmacy education and training in Ireland, both for the welfare of students and for patient safety. The Committee emphasised that it was crucial to not rush or expedite the process to the detriment of meeting the standards.

The Registrar thanked the Committee for facilitating the additional, out-of-course Committee meeting in order to consider the matter at the earliest possible opportunity.

Having considered and discussed all provided documentation, including the updated interim evaluation report, initial response from ATU, the accreditation team's response and further correspondence from ATU, the Committee decided to recommend the approval of the updated interim evaluation report to Council, and the recommendation to defer recognition and approval for the proposed Master's degree programme in pharmacy as recommended by the accreditation team.

Decision Approved and/or Action Requested

The Committee recommended that Council approve the updated interim evaluation report and the recommendation to defer recognition and approval for the proposed Master's degree in pharmacy as recommended by the accreditation team on the proposal of Mr. Mark Jordan and seconded by Mr. Richard Hammond.

Agenda Item F – Any other business

Issue

No other business was discussed.

Information

None.

Decision Approved and/or Action Requested

None.

The meeting concluded at 10:22 am.

Signed by:

Chair

Date