

MINUTES
CG MEETING
IN_PERSON
05/01/2024 - 10:30-16:30

Attendance

Present:

- **Uachtarán: Shari Irfan**
- **Leas Uachtarán: Mohammad Naeem**
- **Education Officer: Heather Doyle**
- **Sustainability Officer: Róisín Myers**
- **Welfare Officer: Máirín Harding**
- **Equality Officer: Bel Nabulele**
- **Communications Officer: Leo Galvin**
- **International Officer: Iffah Rahmat**
- **Regional Liaison & Support Officer: Louisa Tyrrell**
- **Oifigeach Na Gaeilge: Eimear Nic Dhonnchadha**

With Apologies:

- **Uachtarán Oinigh: Caitlin Faye Maniti**

Absent:

- **Disability Officer: Sarah Kirwan**

Agenda

1.1 - Welcome and Introduction - Uachtarán	10:30 - 10:40
1.2 - Minutes of last meeting for adoption - Leas - Uachtarán  Coiste Gnó Minutes 17/12/2023	10:40 - 10:45
2 - Officer Check-In - Uachtarán	10:45 - 10:55
3 - Inclusive education development group - Uachtarán	10:55 - 11:05
4 - Communications Reminder - Communications Officer	11:05 - 11:15
BREAK	11:15 - 11:30
5 - ISSU Submission to An Comisiún Toghcháin - Communications Officer	11:30 - 11:50
6 - Citizens Assembly on the Future of Education - Uachtarán	11:50 - 12:30
BREAK	12:30 - 12:40
7 - NCCA - Uachtarán	12:40 - 13:00
8 - 'If I had a vote' campaign plan - Communications Officer	13:00 - 13:15
LUNCH	13:15 - 14:30
9 - Semester 2 Planning - All	14:30 - 16:00
10 - AOB	16:00 - 16:30

1.1 Welcome and Introduction

Uachtarán welcomes the Coiste Gnó to the first CG meeting of 2024.

1.2 Minutes of last meeting for adoption

Minutes adopted, Leas-Uachtarán proposed and Education Officer seconded.

2. Officer Check In

Officers present provide a brief update on their work since their last meeting; for more details please read our most up to date MEOW at <https://www.issu.ie/coiste-gno-updates>

3. Inclusive Education Development group

Uachtarán explains the Inclusive Education Development Group, the group is being commissioned by the European Commission within the Department of Education.

Uachtarán has been invited to sit on this group, explaining that it is a large commitment and it will be passed on to the next Uachtarán.

Uachtarán asks if there are any objections or comments.

Communications Officer asks if the seat will be given to the next Disability Officer.

Uachtarán states that the seat will be passed onto the next Uachtarán and they will decide who will sit on the group.

4 - Communications Reminder

Communications Officer reminds the Coiste Gnó about 'How to be an officer online' policy, the required notice period if officers need graphics created and lastly they remind the Coiste Gnó to update their email signatures if not already done so.

5 - ISSU Submission to An Comisiún Toghcháin

Communications Officer follows up on the ISSU Submission to the Electoral Commission. This is a follow up from the consultation session held at the previous meeting.

With everyone's inputs from the last meeting, the Communications Officer has drafted

up a submission which will be put forward for approval.

The Coiste Gnó commends the Communications Officer for the comprehensive submission.

Uachtarán puts forward the submission for approval by the Coiste Gnó.

Result:

Yes 8 No 0 1 abstain

The submission has been formally approved by the Coiste Gnó.

6 - Citizens Assembly on the Future of Education

The National Student Voice Organiser (NSVO) Maeve Richardson joins the Coiste Gnó for this agenda point.

Uachtarán had a meeting with Catherine Byrne, Burren College of Art regarding the Citizens Assembly on the Future of Education.

The ISSU to come up with a proposal of how they want to see the Citizens Assembly on the Future of Education conducted.

Uachtarán asks the Coiste Gnó what we want to see as an organisation come from the Citizens Assembly on the Future of Education and what is the vision.

Uachtarán states there could be two assemblies, one with students and one with everyone.

Oifigeach Na Gaeilge states better to have one, as if there was two the one with second level students could become tokenistic.

Regional Liaison and Support Officer suggests maintaining the integrity of student councils and updating the student parent charter.

Welfare Officer suggests, evaluating continuous assessments in the education system and how they can be improved.

Oifigeach Na Gaeilge suggests looking at how Irish is being taught in schools and emphasises how the way Irish is taught in schools needs to be reformed.

Uachtarán asks the Education Officer what the ISSU's position on continuous assessment in 5th year is.

Education Officer states that the Senior cycle is a 2 year course so a lot of education

stakeholders are against having continuous assessment in 5th year. We would be in favour of having some continuous assessment towards the end of 5th year.

Welfare Officer states that education in Ireland needs to be consistent, the transition from 3rd year to 5th year is a huge jump and can be difficult. Having a consistent education is important.

Uachtarán suggests looking at societal issues within education.

Communications Officer suggests looking at how to be a citizen, how to pay taxes, etc.

Regional Liaison and Support Officer suggests looking at schemes such as SUSI, DARE and HEAR. Further looking at the impact of wealth inequality in the education system and how grinds schools have an impact.

Education Officer suggest looking at the different types of schools and the underfunding of education

Communications Officer states the Department of Education pays teachers in private schools and they receive further pay by the private school itself,

Welfare Officer suggests looking at how when students are in boarding school they have more time to complete projects compared to normal schools.

Education Officer emphasises the need for critical analysis and skills to be taught in the education system. Suggests that we create 3-4 main headings and we can input all the suggestions under those chosen headings.

Agreement within the Coiste Gnó.

Uachtarán asks the International Officer, what's it like on an international level and if they are aware of any good examples.

International Officer states a lot of the EU Member states have just as many problems with their education systems, Ireland often sticks out as one of the best. But a lot education systems on an international level have continuity, something Ireland lacks.

Welfare Officer agrees and states the different systems in Europe aren't great compared to Ireland. Suggests we look at best practices internationally

Equality Officer suggests looking at homeschooling and how different learning methods cater to different people.

Uachtarán asks what our position on homeschooling is.

Education Officer states we can't support or endorse homeschooling, but we are looking at introducing structures so ISSU can represent homeschooled students.

Welfare Officer states homeschooling sets you up for independent learning. Homeschooled students would be in schools if the education system would cater for all students needs

International Officer suggests the implementation of some skills learned through homeschool like independent thinking in the regular schooling.

Welfare Officer states the education system in Ireland is so standardised

Oifigeach Na Gaeilge states the Leaving Certificate is quite unique on an international level, as it is kept quite general with 7 subjects whereas in other countries you specialise quite early by either picking fewer subjects or attending a specialised secondary school.

Welfare Officer suggests university courses are dumbed down in Ireland compared to other countries, due to the lack of specialisation in Ireland.

Education Officer suggests looking at ways to improve different courses like LCA, that cater to so many students' different learning methods. But not going the traditional route is looked down upon.

Welfare officer states there needs to be a huge shift in society to dampen down the biases.

Communications Officer states not specialising at a very early age is an advantage.

Welfare Officer states a happy medium between a broad education system and a specialised system is required. 7 subjects causes a lot of stress on students. Reducing the number of subjects will help reduce pressure on students.

Regional Liaison and Support Officer suggests looking at what Wales is doing and how they successfully revived their language.

NSVO suggests looking at outcomes of the education system.

Leas - Uachtarán suggests looking at the rise of the far right and racism, and how education has a role to play in that.

Communications Officer states there is a rise in the far right due to people feeling like they are not being heard.

Equality Officer states that not being heard does not justify discrimination.

Communications Officer states more Civic education needs to be seen in the

education system.

Education Officer states we need more information on what exactly they want from us.

Uachtarán agrees and states a formal submission will be made by the ISSU to the Department of Taoiseach.

7 - NCCA

Uachtarán suggests advocating for a second seat on the NCCA,

Education Officer states no one else on the Coiste Gnó is suitable to sit on the NCCA, as it's a very large commitment. They would have to attend two day meetings which require days of preparation.

Uachtarán suggest the Uachtarán Oinigh would sit on it to create some continuity as they would have already sat on the NCCA for a year.

Oifigeach Na Gaeilge states some information discussed at NCCA Meetings at times can be outside the expertise of the ISSU for example Primary Education.

Education Officer suggests looking at ways we can secure seats on NCCA development groups.

Communications Officer states the role of Uachtarán Oinigh is development within the union and handling external relationships.

Education Officer states Uachtarán Oinigh has a lot of different responsibilities, the NCCA seat would take away from those other responsibilities due to the nature of the commitment.

Leas - Uachtarán suggests that we should be trying to get more student representation on the NCCA. If we can secure another seat, it gives students a larger voice at the table.

Uachtarán agrees and adds its trying to have more of an impact on a NCCA level.

Communications Officer states if the power lies in development groups, we should be searching for seats on these groups where we have more power.

Uachtarán states people who sit on the NCCA sit on the development groups.

Uachtarán concludes by suggesting we revisit the conversation in one or two years.

8 - 'If I had a vote' campaign plan

Communications Officer goes through a campaign plan for 'if i had a vote'.

They state there would be a requirement that at every ISSU event, we would have to incorporate the campaign in some way.

Uachtarán asks how the Sustainability Officer feels about including it in their upcoming events SDGs & me and DYDM.

Sustainability Officer states they are happy for it to be discussed for a brief moment as the agenda for both events is already quite packed.

Uachtarán proposes the campaign plan 'If I had a vote' for approval by the Coiste Gnó.

Results

9 Yes 0 No 1 Abstain

The campaign has been formally approved.

9 - Semester 2 Planning

The National Student Voice Organiser Maeve Richardson joins the Coiste Gnó for this agenda point.

NSVO goes through the ISSU plan for semester 2. The Coiste Gnó creates a Priority Matrix of different upcoming projects. This will allow the Coiste Gnó to focus and prioritise certain projects before our terms end.

Upcoming Surveys being conducted by the ISSU:

Racism in Schools survey being launched on January 12th

Alcohol and drugs survey being launched during February mid term.

Civic Education survey being launched at the end of March and will remain open until the start of May.

10 - AOB

ISSU Mascot

Regional Liaison and Support Officer states the ISSU Mascot is strictly for ISSU events.

Regional Officer Body

Regional Liaison and Support Officer updates the Coiste Gnó on the new ROB. The new ROB training will be held on the 27th or 28th of January. They would like to have as many Coiste Gnó officers as possible.

MAC Discussion

Communications Officer states the need of starting a discussion on the restructuring of the MAC. Suggests it is not the CG, ROB, MAC or working groups place to see how the MAC should be reformed. MAC needs to be reviewed independently.

Education Officer states that the Coiste Gnó needs to be involved.

Regional Liaison and Support Officer and Sustainability Officer seconds the Education Officers point.

Leas - Uachtarán states the need of current and outgoing officers to be involved as independent reviewers will not have the first hand experience of working within the union.

Education Officer states it should be an outgoing Coiste Gnó officer who takes the lead.

Communications Officer suggests that the external students would be educated on the structures and it would provide a new perspective. They state In the organisation currently everyone has biases towards the MAC.

Welfare Officer states it is very hard to educate external students on first hand experiences of being involved as an officer and working with ISSU and being on the MAC.

Education Officer asks what is the plan for this year?

Uachtarán states the Uachtarán Oinigh has some plans so they need to talk to them.

Welfare Officer suggests MAC & CG come together and work things out.

Action Point:

Leas - Uachtarán is going to take lead on setting up an Internal Group which will look at the restructuring.

Future out of office notices:

Leas - Uachtarán will be out of office 8th January to 19th of January

