

# University Governance

## Meeting the Challenges of the New Decade



Croke Park Conference Centre  
Tuesday 30th March 2010

*Successive government policies emphasise the key contribution which Universities and other third-level institutions are expected to make to the knowledge-based society and the wider economy. The various policies underline the central role occupied by Governing Authorities, Presidents and Senior Management in ensuring that those strategic needs are met, as well as the onerous accountability obligations on those tasked with the governance of our Universities.*

While the investment of public funds in higher education has grown in recent decades, the demands and deliverables from this investment have also grown exponentially. The new decade will, without doubt, see an even greater burden of expectation on the higher education sector to play a key role in revitalising the economy, advancing economic and social development and helping Ireland to reposition itself through high added-value scientific, technology and knowledge businesses.



In the current difficult financial environment, these expectations carry significant implications for the whole sector at a macro level. The legitimate concern for optimising society's return from that investment is reflected in the review of third-level institutions which is ongoing and in the drive for greater collaboration within and across institutions. At a micro level, there are significant implications for organisational structures and processes, financing and resourcing and the portfolios of programmes and services offered.



Government policy and the relevant governance codes increasingly applicable to public bodies are based on the reasonable expectation that such bodies must serve the interests of the public, pursue value for money in their endeavours (including managing risk appropriately) and act transparently as public entities. They are to be guided by the highest standards and principles of governance including integrity and





accountability, efficiency and effectiveness. The Code of Governance adopted by the Universities (2008) in agreement with the Higher Education Authority and the relevant Government Departments is based on those principles, balancing the accepted need for full accountability in their use of that public investment with the intellectual and operational autonomy proper to the Universities.

Good governance has implications for leadership and management within Universities, the control environment and control culture, risk management arrangements, stewardship of public money and ultimately the achievement of expected performance outcomes. The legal and regulatory compliance requirements provide a necessary context within which the institutions operate, but effective performance and delivery require much more than that.

Increasingly, Universities and individual staff need to be innovative and to seek creative opportunities and possibilities and, in the process, face risks. Good governance is also about managing that risk and exploiting the opportunities.

The conference programme is directly relevant to all those who occupy key governance and leadership positions with the University sector or who are responsible for education policy and strategy.

The initial addresses cover three key governance themes, with presentations from an international panel of recognised experts in these areas. Those addresses are followed by a research paper prepared by the Institute of Public Administration on international developments in relation to University governance. The three workshops will focus on the practical challenges of implementing the evolving governance agenda as outlined in the earlier presentations. This format will allow for full participation in a rich debate and challenging discussion, as well as charting possible ways forward in the coming years. The conference format also affords an opportunity to meet peers carrying out similar governance and leadership roles and to share knowledge, insight and good practice.

8.30 am – 9.00 am

**Registration and Morning Coffee**

9.00 am – 9.15 am

**Welcome and Introductions**

Conference Chairperson: **Michael Kelly**, Higher Education Authority

**Opening Address:**

**Brigid McManus**, Secretary General, Department of Education and Science

9.15 am – 10.45 am

**THEME 1:**

**Moving from compliance to performance**

**Michael Shattock**

**THEME 2:**

**Innovation and risk management within the governance agenda**

**Chris Horn**

**THEME 3:**

**Aligning governance and strategy with outcomes and deliverables**

**Thomas Estermann**

10.45 am – 11.00 am

**Institute of Public Administration research paper on University Governance**

11.00 am – 12.00 noon

**WORKSHOP 1:**

**How to reconcile university autonomy with national priorities**

Chairperson/Rapporteur: **Noel Dorr**

**WORKSHOP 2:**

**Implications of balancing the government innovation agenda with good governance**

Chairperson/Rapporteur: **Dan Flinter**

**WORKSHOP 3:**

**Good governance models & how they can be adopted in a university context**

Chairperson/Rapporteur: **Rosemary Hamilton**

12.00 noon – 12.45 pm

**Plenary Session**

Chairperson: President IUA **John Hughes**

12.45 pm – 1.00 pm

**Closing Address**

President IUA **John Hughes**

1.00 pm – 2.00 pm Lunch

## Michael Shattock

Michael Shattock is visiting Professor, Centre for Higher Education Studies, Institute of Education, University of London, and founding Director of the MBA in Higher Education Management. He is a renowned and respected figure in the area of University Governance, an area in which he has been nominated by the OECD to lead a variety of national and international studies of higher education. He chaired the OECD review of Irish Higher Education in 2003-2004.

A prolific author on the subject, his books include *The Structure and Governance of Higher Education*, *Managing Successful Universities*, *Resource Allocation in British Universities*, and *Managing Good Governance in Higher Education*.

His extensive advisory work includes assignments relating to the establishment of universities, reviews of management and planning systems both in the UK and internationally.



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## Chris Horn

Chris graduated from Trinity College in 1978, and subsequently completed his PhD IN 1983. In 1991, he co-founded and became CEO of IONA Technologies, which in 1997 became the 5th largest IPO in the history of the Nasdaq. At one point during this period, the company was one of the largest top ten software companies by revenue in the world. The company was subsequently sold in September 2008.

He has served as chair of various technology companies and Irish national policy groups and he is a former Chair of UNICEF Ireland, the Irish Brain Research Foundation and Ireland China Association. He was founding chair of the Government's Expert Group on Future Skills, and has served on board of ICT Ireland, IBEC, Science Foundation Ireland and Trinity College. He is currently a Board member of a range of companies and initiatives both in Ireland and internationally.

He is a current member of the Innovation Taskforce, an advisory group established by the Taoiseach.



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## Thomas Estermann

Thomas Estermann is Head of the Unit Governance, Autonomy and Funding at the European University Association. His primary field of expertise is financial sustainability for Europe's universities and the conditions necessary to achieve this. He is conducting work aimed at strengthening autonomy, governance and management. In both areas he is consulting European and national expert groups.

Before joining EUA, Thomas Estermann was Deputy Head of the Department of Strategic Development and Deputy Head of Administration at the University of Music and Performing Arts, Vienna. During that time he was involved in implementing new cost accounting systems in the Austrian universities and adapting the university to conform to the last two reforms in higher education in Austria. Before joining the University, he pursued a career as a lawyer.

Thomas Estermann was previously member of the Executive Committee of HUMANE (Heads of University Management & Administration Network in Europe) and founding chairman of WSAN, a network of senior university managers in Europe. He is also a member of the editorial board of the UK-based journal "Perspectives" which focuses on policy and practice in Higher Education). He holds a master's degree in law from the University of Vienna.





## The Irish Universities Association

The Irish Universities Association (IUA) is the representative body of the Heads of the seven Irish universities. It is a non-profit making body with charitable status. The IUA seeks to advance university education and research through the formulation and pursuit of collective policies and actions on behalf of the Irish Universities thereby contributing to Ireland's social, cultural and economic well being.

The IUA office is responsible for organising and convening a number of IUA groups and pursuit of collective policies and actions on behalf of the Irish university sector. The five Standing Groups are The Vice Presidents/Deans of Research Group, the Registrars' Group, the Chief Financial Officers' Group (UCFOG), the Secretaries' Group and the HR Directors Group.

The IUA are focused on a range on key activities as outlined at [ww.iua.ie](http://ww.iua.ie) and incorporates the priority areas of widening participation including access issues, strategic development and the upgrading of the enterprise base as well as fourth level Ireland which will transform graduate education.

This conference has been arranged by the IUA as part of its mandate of leading and promoting change so as to maximise the universities' contribution to Ireland's social, cultural and economic well being.