



PAC-R-181

Correspondence 3.12
Meeting – 01/12/2011

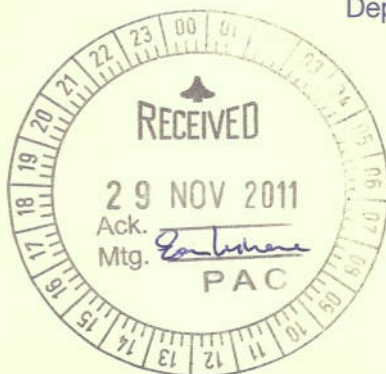


Oifig an Ard-Rúnaí

An Roinn Oideachais agus Scileanna

Office of the Secretary General
Department of Education and Skills

Mr. Ted McEnery
Clerk to the Committee
Committee of Public Accounts
Leinster House
Dublin 2.



28 November 2011

Our Ref: S1008277

Dear Ted,

I refer to the hearing of the Public Accounts Committee held on the 23rd September 2010 in relation to Special Report No. 75 of the Comptroller and Auditor General – Irish Universities Resource Management and Performance and in particular to Chapter 4 of the Report concerning remuneration matters, to a subsequent written update and to the discussion at the meeting of the Committee on 20th January 2011.

The Committee asked to be kept informed about progress in relation to issues concerning unauthorised remuneration for senior staff which remained unresolved at the time of the hearing and in this context I am setting out below the current position.

1. Recoupment of Unauthorised Allowances

The Higher Education Authority (HEA) has conducted an exercise to determine definitively the quantum of monies at issue in respect of unauthorised payments to senior staff in each of the universities. The exercise encompassed payments made in respect of all post-holders in the university sector comprehended by the Review Body on Higher Remuneration in the Public Sector between June 2005 and February 2011 inclusive.

The following table sets out the extent of unauthorised allowances based on information provided to the HEA by each university. The amounts identified in each case should be treated as provisional. They are currently being verified by the Office of Comptroller and Auditor General (C&AG) to test the completeness and accuracy of the calculations produced.

UCD	€3,583,000
UCC	€1,526,000
NUIG	€578,000
NUIM	€272,000
TCD	€1,383,000
UL	€448,000
DCU	€53,000

Subject to verification of the sums involved the HEA proposes, in line with its statutory functions and with the agreement of the Minister for Education and Skills and the Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform, to take steps to re-allocate or attach conditions on the use of an appropriate level of funding in each university.

2. Update on issues in C&AG Special Report No. 75

2.1 University of Limerick

Issues were identified in C&AG Special Report No. 75 in relation to the salary paid to the former Vice President Administration and Secretary in the University of between May 2007 and April 2009 and subsequent related pension payments. The University has confirmed that his pension has been fully regularised in accordance with his entitlements and arrangements are also currently in train to recoup the overpayment of pension and lump sum which occurred.

2.2 University College Dublin

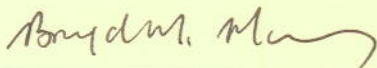
Since the PAC hearing in September 2010 the Department has been in regular correspondence with the President of UCD and the Chairman of its Governing Authority. The Department directed the University to regularise all outstanding remuneration matters and to cease benefit-in-kind payments made on behalf of the President. Issues identified in relation to the President's own remuneration arrangements (including pension) remain outstanding, and the Department is addressing this matter with the Chairman of the Governing Authority. The President has recently confirmed that all other outstanding matters have been addressed.

2.3 Dublin City University

In the course of the exercise conducted by the HEA to determine the amount of excess payments in respect of unauthorised remuneration, details emerged, not previously declared by the University, of an unsanctioned allowance (€3,800 per annum) being paid to Professors in DCU who occupied the role of Associate Deans. The University has since confirmed that the University ceased payment of the allowance with effect from the 1st September 2011. The HEA is including the full extent of the overpayment which arose in calculating definitively the quantum of monies at issue in DCU in respect of unauthorised payments to senior staff.

I will keep the Committee informed about progress in relation to the outstanding issues.

Yours sincerely,



Brigid McManus
Secretary General