

## Academic Freedom at DCU

Consistent with the provisions of Section 14.1 of the Universities Act 1997 (*see below*), a member of the academic staff of a university shall have the freedom, within the law, in his or her teaching, research and any other activities either in or outside the university, to question and test received wisdom, to put forward new ideas and to state controversial or unpopular opinions and shall not be disadvantaged, or subject to less favourable treatment by the university, for the exercise of that freedom.

Nothing in the contract of employment of the staff member shall be held to restrict the right of the staff member to express in a free manner responsibly held opinions on matters of legitimate concern within or outside the University.

### Section 14.1 of The Universities Act 1997

<http://www.irishstatutebook.ie/eli/1997/act/24/enacted/en/print#sec14>

Academic freedom. 14.—(1) A university, in performing its functions shall—

- (a) have the right and responsibility to preserve and promote the traditional principles of academic freedom in the conduct of its internal and external affairs, and
- (b) be entitled to regulate its affairs in accordance with its independent ethos and traditions and the traditional principles of academic freedom, and in doing so it shall have regard to—
  - (i) the promotion and preservation of equality of opportunity and access,
  - (ii) the effective and efficient use of resources, and
  - (iii) its obligations as to public accountability,

and if, in the interpretation of this Act, there is a doubt regarding the meaning of any provision, a construction that would promote that ethos and those traditions and principles shall be preferred to a construction that would not so promote.

(2) A member of the academic staff of a university shall have the freedom, within the law, in his or her teaching, research and any other activities either in or outside the university, to question and test received wisdom, to put forward new ideas and to state controversial or unpopular opinions and shall not be disadvantaged, or subject to less favourable treatment by the university, for the exercise of that freedom.