

## **ANNUAL PROTECTED DISCLOSURES REPORT FOR 2021**

1. Section 22 of the Protected Disclosures Act, 2014 requires each public body subject to the Act to publish an annual report setting out the number of protected disclosures received in the preceding year and the action taken (if any). It is important that the report does not identify the individuals making the protected disclosures.
2. This Annual Protected Disclosures Report of the University of Limerick covers the period of January to December 2021.
  - 2.1 In 2018 the University received a submission under Section 6 of the Protected Disclosures Act, 2014 from two employees of the University. A Protected Disclosures Group (PDG) was established in accordance with the University's Protected Disclosures Policy & Procedures. The PDG appointed an external investigator. However the individuals who made the submission did not engage in the investigation process and consequently the investigation could not proceed. The PDG engaged legal advice and also liaised further with the two individuals concerned. Thereafter, agreement was reached with the individuals that they engage in a mediation process. The external investigator was appointed to the role of mediator. Through mediation, agreement was reached with one individual in 2019. Matters have not been concluded with the second individual. From a University perspective, the Protected Disclosures submission is closed.
  - 2.2 A protected disclosures submission was received in 2020 from an employee of the University. A significant number of allegations in the protected disclosure were referred to the PDG established to consider allegations in previous protected disclosures submitted to the University due to the similarity of the allegations made. The investigator's findings were published in November 2020 resulting in the closure of this part of the individual's protected disclosure at that time.
    - 2.2.1 A second PDG (PDG2) was established to consider the remainder of the allegations in this Protected Disclosure. The PDG2 decided to appoint an investigator to consider the allegations made and informed the individual accordingly. The individual reverted to PDG2 in writing indicating that as a result of the outcome of the consideration of their protected disclosure submission by the first PDG, as referred to in 2.2 above, they were satisfied that their disclosures as submitted to the PDG2 had been addressed in full. The outstanding part of the protected disclosure submission was therefore deemed closed in the period under review.

2.3 The University received a protected disclosure submission in December 2021 and two anonymous communications, one in December 2021 and the second in January 2022. All three submissions related to complaints against an employee of the University. Based on legal advice that the three communications be treated as protected disclosure submissions, the University appointed a PDG to consider the allegations therein.

30 June 2022