ACADEMIC COUNCIL

MINUTES

Wednesday 25 June 2007

3.00-4.20 p.m. in AG01

PRESENT:

F Blin	T Lawrence	N O'Reilly
S Blott	B Leavy	E O'Riordan
D Brabazon	C Mac an Bhaird	B Pierce
O Bree	L McDermott (Secretary)	V Poti
P Brereton	C McDonagh	H Ruskin
E Buffet	A McGrady	T Ryan
M Byrne	K MacKeogh	R Scaife
E Byrne	P McMorrow	A Scott
H Duncan	P Meleady	M Shine Thompson
M Farren	M Molony	A Simon
N Gathergood	K Moran	A Sinnott
D Ging	R Morgan	M Slowey (VPLI/Registrar)
E Guilfoyle	N Moyna	B Tolan
M Henry	N Murphy	F von Prondzynski (Chair)
T Hogan	G Murphy	A Wickham
M Irwin-Bannon	M Nic Giolla Mhichíl	J Williams
B Kelly	P Ó Flatharta	C Woods
E Kennedy		

APOLOGIES:

E Conway	P McDonagh	M Philbin
J Costello	S McGovern	R Saunders
M Drumm	C Mac Murchaidh	P Sheehan
O Finlayson	A Morrissey	P Smith
B Flood	R Munck	M Smyth
J Hughes	E O'Connell	R Tobin
H Lechleiter	O O'Reilly	B Trench

IN ATTENDANCE:
E Breen
H Hayes

1.   Adoption of agenda

The agenda was adopted subject to the inclusion of an additional paper relating to Item 5, the deletion of Item 6, the renumbering of Items 7 and 8 as Items 6 and 7 respectively and the introduction of a new Item 9 (Proposal regarding the Chair of the Examination Appeals Board) in Section B.

A: Minutes and related issues

2.   Minutes of the meeting of Academic Council of 13 June 2007

The minutes were confirmed and signed by the Chair.

3.   Matters arising

3.1   Noted that the nomination process was in train for membership of the new working group to be set up to discuss the desirability or otherwise of anonymous marking (the recommendations of which are to be submitted to the 10 October 2007 meeting of Council.   (Item 3.1)

3.2   Noted that a policy statement in relation to the decision-making processes used by the Disciplinary Committee would be submitted to the Academic Strategy Committee and subsequently to Council. (Item 3.3)

3.3   Noted that the Chair had communicated with University staff about an ongoing human resources case. (Item 7.2)

3.4   Noted that Mr Gordon McConnell would present a detailed report on the implementation of *Leadership through Foresight* at the 10 October 2007 meeting of Council. (Item 8)

4.   Minutes of the meeting of the Academic Strategy Committee of 6 June 2007

Noted.

5. **Minutes of the meeting of the University Standards Committee of 7 June 2007**

Approved (including the revised proposal on e-theses which had been approved electronically by the USC following the 7 June meeting).

B: **Policy and strategy issues**

6. **Strategic Innovation Fund**

6.1 The Chair noted that the call for funding was awaited.

6.2. The Chair noted that the site visit to the University in respect of the recent submission for funding under PRTLI had recently taken place and that it was expected that the outcome of the call for funding would be made available shortly.

7. **Proposal on Academic Framework for Innovation**

7.1 On behalf of the Associate Deans for Teaching and Learning, Dr Françoise Blin gave a presentation on this proposal. The Chair thanked her, the other Associate Deans for Teaching and Learning and all others who had been involved in the preparation of the proposal for their very significant contribution to a most important issue.

7.2 It was noted that the provision of adequate resources would be crucial to the feasibility of developing the Framework. The availability of Strategic Innovation Funding would be most important in this regard, and the Framework would form a core part of the University's submission under the forthcoming call for funding. The Chair undertook to identify other sources of funding for the Framework in the event that SIF funding did not prove sufficient and to ensure regular communication on the issue between Council, Executive and Budget Committee.

7.3 Among the points raised in discussion were the following:
- a new HEA funding model will be necessary for the implementation of the framework
- the importance of maintaining the integrity of each module, including the learning outcomes, would be crucial in the development of the Framework
- student registration for a module will last for one academic year only; however, there will no longer be an unavoidable link between modules and progression so that having to re-register for a module or modules will not preclude a student from progressing through a programme as a whole

- the proposal involves greater ownership of progression on the part of the student; it will be very important to ensure that adequate support and advice mechanisms, and sufficiently flexible and robust electronic systems, are in place to take account of this
- Programme Boards will need to determine the number of credits, at various stages of learning, appropriate for the award of a qualification
- the aim is to create a broadly generic new set of Marks and Standards, though incorporating local differences in regulations as required
- consideration may be given, in the development of the Framework, to introducing a Grade Point Average marking system
- Awards Boards might be chaired by a nominee of an Executive Dean rather than the Dean him/herself.

7.4.   The proposal was <u>approved</u>. It was <u>noted</u> that it had the potential to provide increased flexibility of choice for students while maintaining the integrity of the University's existing programmes. It was <u>agreed</u> that the Framework would henceforth be a standing item on the agenda of every meeting of Academic Council so that Council members would have regular opportunities to discuss the issues involved in preparing for and implementing it.

8.   Proposal regarding the Chair of the Examinations Appeals Board

<u>Approved.</u>

C: Items for formal approval/noting

9.   Validation recommendation: BSc in Financial /Applicable Mathematics

<u>Approved.</u>

10.   Accreditation recommendations

10.1   BSc in Environmental Science and Health (International)

<u>Approved.</u>

10.2   MEngSc in Biopharmaceutical Engineering

<u>Approved.</u>

11.   Examination and Progression and Awards Boards reports, Summer 2007

All <u>noted</u> and <u>approved</u>.

12.   New and outgoing Deputy Presidents of the Students' Union

On behalf of Council, the Chair thanked Mr Eoin Byrne, outgoing Deputy President of the Students' Union, for his significant contribution to the work of Council during his year in office, and welcomed his successor, Ms Hazel Hayes.

Date of next meeting:

> **Wednesday 10 October 2007**
> **2.00 p.m. in AG01**

Signed: _____   Date: _____
               President