

# MINUTES

Wednesday, 10 February 1999

at 2:00pm in AG 01

Minutes of the seventh meeting of the sixth statutory Academic Council held on 10 February 1999.

## PRESENT:

D O'Hare (Chairman)	J Carroll (Deputy Chairman)	T Brady
K Brennan	F Buckley	E Buffet
M Byrne	J Canavan	M Clemenger
M Clynes	L Davis	K Devenney
J Dowling	J Dunne	M Egan
S Fox	A N Glynn	G Hamilton
S Hashmi	J Horgan	J Hurley
P James	B Kehoe	B Leavy
T McCluskey	M MacConmara	L MacMathúna
M Marsh	D Ó'Dúshláine	R O'Kennedy
O O'Reilly	C O'Riordan	B Pierce
A Pratt	A-M Ryan	T Ryan
R Saunders	M Townson	P Travers
A Wickham	A D Wood	

## APOLOGIES:

P Barker	A Burke	P Burke
F Corcoran	E Cunningham (SU)	B Flood
M Henry	C Long	A MacDougall
P McNamara	K Monks	H O'Brien-Gately
C Ó'hÓgartaigh	J Ryan	A Sinnott
A Smeaton	M Smyth	B Trench
D Turley	J Van Genabith	D Walls
R Watson		

The Chairperson opened proceedings by warmly welcome new members (not all of whom could be present at the meeting):

- Mr Ken Brennan, Ms Orla O'Reilly and Ms Ann-Marie Ryan, as the three elected members from the constituency of external members of the newly-established Sub-Committee of Academic Council on Nursing:

- Elected student representatives: Aidan Brady (ME2), Karen Devenney (BT2), Mike Egan (GEM2), Conor Lynch (BTP2) Dave Madden (CA2), Adrienne Meade (BBS2) Diarmuid Ó Dúshláine (AR2) and Catherine O'Riordan (CS1).
- The Dean of Teaching & Learning, Dr Barry McMullin.
- New Chairpersons of Programme Boards: Thomas Brady, BSc in Mathematical Sciences, and Josef Van Genabith, BSc in Applied Computational Linguistics.

The Chairperson expressed the wish that all members would respect the necessary confidentiality of the proceedings of Academic Council. In espousing the well-established tradition within the University of wide-ranging debate and even criticism on all matters of policy, he advised members that such activities remained strictly the internal affairs of the University and should not be conducted in the public arena.

## 1. **ADOPTION OF AGENDA**

(Ref: AC99/M1/1)

The Agenda was adopted subject to an agreement to consider item 13 (The University's Semester Calendar) earlier in the agenda after item 5 (Matters Arising from Standing Committee).

## 2. **MINUTES OF THE 9 DECEMBER 1998 MEETING OF ACADEMIC COUNCIL**

(Ref: AC99/M1/2)

The minutes of the meeting of 9 December 1998 were approved and signed by the Chairman subject to the inclusion of a recommendation on INTRA in item 12 (Academic Calendar) and a change of wording in 13.2 (Announcements on 19 November 1998).

## 3. **MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES OF ACADEMIC COUNCIL**

(Ref: AC99/M1/3)

### a. **REPORTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS FROM ACCREDITATION BOARDS**

(Ref: AC98/M6/6)

Academic Council approved the 1998 recommendations of the 1994 Accreditation Board for the **BSc in Physics with a Language** programme, in respect of its 1994 recommendations, the new structures following modularisation and the new arrangements with the year abroad.

### b. **REPORT FROM APPEALS BOARD (AUTUMN 1998)**

(Ref: AC98/M6/7)

In approving the report on the 8 October 1998 Appeals Board meeting, Academic Council agreed that the membership of the Appeals Board should be retained for a fixed term of office. The membership would be comprised of one member from each Faculty, the term of office would be 3 years and staggered so that one-third of the membership would change on a periodic basis (e.g. annually). Following consultations with Deans of Faculty, Academic Council is requested to note the following nominations:

No. Faculty of the University	Nominated Member
1. Faculty of Distance Education	Dr Ronnie Saunders

2. Dublin City University Business School	Dr Marann Byrne
3. Joint Faculty of Education	No Nominations Received
4. Faculty of Engineering & Design	Dr Liam Murphy
5. Joint Faculty of Humanities	Dr Brigitte Le Juez
6. Faculty of Science & Paramedical Studies	Dr Colette McDonagh
7. Faculty of Computing & Mathematical Sciences	Dr Lynn Killen

and the meeting was assured that the nomination process remained open to those Faculties for which no nominations had yet been received.

Additionally, Academic Council requested that legal advice be sought on the various issues raised by the Registrar in respect of extenuating circumstances, screening mechanisms, attendance by appellants where requested, etc., and that the matter be then referred to Standing Committee which can make recommendations for consideration by Academic Council.

c. **IMPACT ASSESSMENT OF MODULARISATION & SEMESTERISATION**

**(Ref: AC98/M6/9)**

Amendments to a number of existing regulations were approved together with some new regulations but it was agreed that Academic Council should receive a definitive set of *Marks & Standards* at its next meeting which reflected the necessary consequential changes to other regulations caused by the new and amended regulations.

d. **ATTENDANCE BY EXTERNAL EXAMINERS**

**(ref. AC-SC98/M5/4.6)**

In response to a question regarding attendance by external examiners at Progression & Award Boards (item 4.6 from 4 June 1998 Standing Committee meeting), it was agreed that the timetable for communicating with and notifying external examiners would be reviewed.

e. **APPOINTMENT OF RESEARCH EXTERNAL EXAMINERS**

**(ref. AC-SC98/M7/5.1.1)**

Academic Council agreed to the suggestion that the Research Committee examine the system of appointment of research external examiners in the particular context of where a proposed examiner has had some prior relationship with the University.

f. **STEERING COMMITTEE ON NURSING**

**(Ref: AC98/M6/10)**

Academic Council noted that the three elected members of Academic Council from the constituency of external members of the newly-established Sub-Committee of Academic Council on Nursing were:

- i. Ms Ann-Marie Ryan, Beaumont Hospital (General Nursing)
- ii. Mr Ken Brennan, St Ita's Hospital/Eastern Health Board (Psychiatric Nursing)

- iii. Ms Orla O'Reilly, Daughters of Charity Services, St Joseph's, Clonsilla (Mental Handicap Nursing)

Membership will be concurrent with that of Academic Council so that periodic elections will be required and therefore rotation of elected members will be facilitated.

g. **ACADEMIC CALENDAR 1999/2000**

**(Ref: AC98/M6/12)**

Professor Corcoran agreed to return to the February meeting with a proposal to amend the dates of the Autumn Graduation Ceremonies. The Impact Assessment Working Group was requested to return to its earlier proposal for amendments to the academic calendar including, for example, the provision of a one-week inter-semester break and also to consider the length of time given in each semester for the change of module choice. Given that University programmes would be wholly modular in 1999/2000, concern was raised over the elapsed time between end of Spring Semester examinations (May 27) and publication of examination results (June 28) and the Registrar agreed to seek clarification on this matter.

**4. REPORTS FROM STANDING COMMITTEE OF ACADEMIC COUNCIL**

a. Minutes of the meeting of Standing Committee on 3 December 1998

**(Ref: AC99/M1/4.1)**

Noted. The Registrar advised the meeting that changes to the recommendations following item 4.17 had been agreed at the 4 February 1999 meeting, through the deletion of the second and fifth bullet points, and that the record and matters arising would be duly amended for signature. Following a query on the status of minute 4.1 relating to the minutes of an NDEC Course Team meeting, Academic Council was advised that the minutes had been checked and agreed by Standing Committee and would not therefore be amended but that the minutes of the 4 February 1999 meeting would reflect Standing Committee's acceptance of the reassurances provided by NDEC on the status of the programme, following the subsequent receipt of documentation from the Academic Coordinator.

b. Minutes of the special meeting of Standing Committee on 7 January 1999

**(Ref: AC99/M1/4.2)**

Noted.

**5. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES OF STANDING COMMITTEE**

**(Ref: AC99/M1/5)**

Members of Academic Council are reminded that the endorsement of Academic Council is required in respect of recommendations and decisions made by Standing Committee. While this is normally achieved by adoption of the relevant minutes, it is important for Academic Council to note items of special significance contained within these minutes.

a. **FACULTY/COMMITTEE/PROGRAMME BOARD MINUTES**

**(ref. AC-SC98/M10/4)**

- The Chairpersons of the relevant Programme Boards have been advised of the decisions of Standing Committee of Academic Council in respect of the specific issues raised in the minutes for consideration. With reference to the minutes of the 07/04/1998 meeting of the Course Team for the MSc in the Management of Operations (ref: AC-SC98/A10/4.1), Standing Committee noted and accepted the explanations communicated by the Academic Coordinator in response to the concerns expressed in the 3 December 1998 minutes (ref: AC-SC98/M10/4.1).
- Following the general discussion at the 3 December 1998 meeting on the presentation of Programme Board minutes and their consideration by Standing Committee of Academic Council, it was agreed at the 4 February 1999 meeting to amend the record (ref: AC-SC98/M10/4) by removing the recommendations relating to nomenclature and also to the provision of advice and guidance to NDEC Academic Coordinators. As a consequence, the following recommendations were agreed:
  - A summary of the reporting history of Programme Boards to Standing Committee would be presented to the 4 February 1999 meeting by the Chairperson.
  - All Programme Board Chairpersons should be advised of the importance of having as complete an attendance as possible at Programme Board Examination Review Committee meetings and, where a Lecturer is unavoidably absent, detailed notes on the status of the corresponding results should be discussed and left with the Programme Board Chairperson. The onus is firmly on the Lecturer concerned to ensure that this arrangement is in place and Heads of School should be informed of their own responsibilities in this regard.
  - The Chairperson of Standing Committee should meet with all new Programme Board Chairpersons to provide advice, guidance and support regarding their roles and responsibilities.

*In accepting that titles such as Course Team and Academic Coordinator would remain in use for existing NDEC programmes, Academic Council agreed that, for any new NDEC programmes, the nomenclature common to existing programmes of the University will apply, namely Programme Board rather than Course Team or other title, and Chairperson rather than Academic Coordinator or Programme Director or other title.*

**b. APPOINTMENT OF EXTERNAL EXAMINERS**

**(ref. AC-SC98/M10/5)**

The Registrar reported that invitations had been issued to the various External Examiners recommended for appointment for Research Degrees and for Taught Programmes. In a discussion on the presentation of PGR4 forms (appointment of the external examiner and notification of intention to submit a thesis for examination), Standing Committee of Academic Council recommended that:

- Where the practice is likely to occur, Heads of School should provide advance notification of their approval for a named member of staff from the School to sign Section C (and, where relevant, Section D) of the PGR4 form.
- Each PGR4 form must be accompanied by a Summary CV (as requested in Section C of the *pro forma*). The presentation of 5.2.6 could be used as an illustrative guideline for Schools.

Additionally, Standing Committee of Academic Council noted:

- The growing trend to separate the respective roles of Internal Examiner and Supervisor.
- A proposal from one of the members to investigate the establishment of a Graduate Studies Office:
- A subsequent suggestion from another member that the independent Chairperson for the *viva voce* examination could be selected/provided by that Office (were it established).

In response to a query, the Registrar advised that there was currently no readily available quantitative data to elaborate on the observed trend of the separation of the respective roles of Internal Examiner and Supervisor.

**c. SPECIAL CASE ADMISSIONS**

**(ref. AC-SC98/M5/10.4)**

In order to enhance the effectiveness of its decision-making processes in respect of applications for admission to University programmes on a special case basis, Standing Committee recommends the development by the Modular Officer of an appropriate *pro forma* which would facilitate a more complete and consistent presentation of applicant information (in terms of both certificated and experiential learning), and would require a more consistent approach by Programme Boards in presenting structured reasons for special case admission.

## 6. THE UNIVERSITY'S SEMESTER CALENDAR:

### PROPOSAL FOR CHANGE

(Ref: AC99/M1/6)

In view of the far-reaching implications which changes to the semester calendar would have for the University, and given that a significant number of Programme Board Chairpersons were unavoidably absent from the meeting in order to Chair Programme Board Examination Review Committees that afternoon, members of Academic Council expressed the need to defer consideration of this important item pending further and more complete consultations with all sections of the University community. It was agreed that the views of the staff and students would first be sought on the proposed calendar changes, that Academic Council would then consider the proposal in the light of these consultations at the 7 April 1999 meeting when the matter would be treated as a priority agenda item immediately following items of routine business, including minutes, matters arising from minutes, and reports from Validation Committee and Accreditation Boards.

*It was agreed that the Chairperson, Mr Chris O'Malley, and his fellow members of the Impact Assessment Working Group would be invited to attend the 7 April 1999 meeting for consideration of this important item.*

## 7. REPORTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS FROM VALIDATION COMMITTEE

(Ref: AC99/M1/7)

Academic Council approved the following report from Validation Committee:

- a. Proposed BSc in Sport Science & Health from the Faculty of Science & Paramedical Studies.

## 8. REPORT ON ELECTION OF STUDENT MEMBERS TO ACADEMIC COUNCIL

(Ref: AC99/M1/8)

Academic Council noted the following outcome for the relevant constituencies:

No. Constituency	Elected Student Member
1. Faculty of Distance Education	No Nominations Received
2. Dublin City University Business School	Adrienne Meade (BBS2)
3. Joint Faculty of Education	Mike Egan (GEM2)
4. Faculty of Engineering & Design	Aidan Brady (ME2)
5. Joint Faculty of Humanities	Catherine O'Riordan (CS1)
6. Faculty of Science & Paramedical Studies	Karen Devenney (BT2)
7. Faculty of Computing & Mathematical Sciences	Dave Madden (CA2)
8. Fiontar	Diarmuid Ó Dúshláine (AR2)
9. Postgraduate Research Students	Conor Lynch (BTP2)

The term of office for elected student members will expire following the meeting of Academic Council on 13 December 2000.

## 9. CURRENT REGISTER OF ACADEMIC COUNCIL MEMBERS:

FOR NOTING BY ACADEMIC COUNCIL

(Ref: AC99/M1/9)

The meeting noted the current membership of Academic Council (this document has also been placed on the temporary web page for the Registrar's Office at <http://www.dcu.ie/internal/ac>).

#### 10. CHANCELLOR'S MEDALS: CALL FOR NOMINATIONS

(Ref: AC99/M1/10)

Academic Council was advised that this item was placed on the agenda (and relevant documentation circulated with the papers of the meeting) to remind Heads of School, Programme Board Chairpersons and others, of the nomination procedures for the award of two Chancellor's Medals, one for the constituency of undergraduate students and the other for the constituency of postgraduate students. The deadline for receipt of nominations will be the end of June each year and the completed proposal form should be submitted to the Assistant Registrar (Planning & Quality). In his encouragement of Progression & Award Boards and other mechanisms to submit nominations, the Chairperson expressed his disappointment at the pattern of low levels of nominations received in previous years which he considered to be a major disservice to the student body.

#### 11. MODULARISATION & SEMESTERISATION:

HEA FUNDING FOR TRANSFER ARRANGEMENTS

(Ref: AC99/M1/11)

Academic Council noted the 3 December 1998 letter from the HEA which advised the University that it had approved a proposal from the School of Mechanical & Manufacturing Engineering under the Targeted Initiatives Scheme relating to student transfer between sub-degree and degree programmes and that it will provide £60,000 in respect of this scheme before the end of 1998.

#### 12. MARKS & STANDARDS 1999:

CONSOLIDATED DOCUMENT REFLECTING RECENT CHANGES

(Ref: AC99/M1/12)

- The Registrar advised the meeting that, on 9 December 1998, Academic Council had approved a number of changes to the 1990 *Marks & Standards* and the 1995 Modular Regulations. However, members of Academic Council expressed the need to see the effects of such changes on the overall set of regulations. He advised that the 1990 and 1995 documents had since been merged and the 9 December 1998 changes had been incorporated into a new document, "Marks & Standards for University Awards 1999".
- The first draft of this document was placed on Academic Council's temporary web page [www.dcu.ie/internal/ac](http://www.dcu.ie/internal/ac) on 8 January 1999 when Chairpersons of Programme Boards and Heads of School were requested for their views, comments, reports of any inaccuracies or redundancies in the composite document, or proposals for further amendments.
- Academic Council was presented with an accompanying note to the consolidated *Marks & Standards 1999* document, entitled "Introduction to the Revised Document", which raised a number of issues requiring resolution.
- Following a discussion, Academic Council agreed to a proposal to seek the views of all Programme Boards and student representatives on the issues raised in the accompanying note and to return to the 7 April 1999 meeting for final consideration.

- Pending these consultations and in advance of any resolution of the issues raised in relation to Regulation 56d, Academic Council approved an amendment to that regulation by inserting the condition "in exceptional circumstances" to read:

However, a Progression and Award Board has discretion in exceptional circumstances to record a pass and award credit for a single failed Semester 1 module when success in a subsequent and directly-related Semester 2 module clearly indicates, in the judgement of the Board, that the student has mastered the module content involved.

- An additional concern was raised by members of Academic Council that the regulations, as presently constructed, appear to permit the simultaneous application of 51a, 56d and 56e to a student's set of results in the same diet of examinations.

### 13. CERTIFICATE/DIPLOMA/PASS DEGREE AWARDS:

#### PROPOSAL TO ACADEMIC COUNCIL

(Ref: AC99/M1/13)

Academic Council was presented with a proposal which requested approval for the awards of:

- Certificate, Diploma and "Pass Degree" for students who successfully complete 60 credits, 120 credits and 180 credits respectively of a four-year (240 credit) undergraduate degree programme; and
- Certificate and Diploma for students who successfully complete 60 credits and 120 credits respectively of a three-year (180 credit) undergraduate degree programme (the availability of a "Pass Degree" in this case will be a matter for Programme Boards to consider).

Academic Council approved the recommendations of Standing Committee, namely (a) to facilitate the provision of "pass degree" awards where deemed appropriate by Programme Boards; and (b) on the basis that University transcripts would adequately capture the type and amount of credits earned in earlier years of a programme and for reasons relating to the perceived standards of the University and practices in Institutes of Technology, not to make provision for the intermediate Certificate and Diploma awards.

It was agreed that Programme Boards who wish to avail of the "pass degree" mechanism would be facilitated by Standing Committee in bringing forward proposals at the appropriate time (details of module combinations, re-structuring where required, coherence, nomenclature, etc) to enable such awards.

- **Date of Next Meeting:**

Wednesday, 7 April 1999
2:00 pm in AG 01