

ACADEMIC COUNCIL

MINUTES

Monday 27 June 2011

2.00-3.00 p.m. in AG01

PRESENT:

M Ali	M Humphrys	G Murphy
F Blin	S Ingle	M Nic Giolla Mhichíl
S Blott	B Kelly	M O'Connell
P Brereton	P Kinsella	R O'Connor
J Bruton	M Kirwan	G O'Donoghue
C Byrne	A Leahy	P Ó Flatharta
P J Byrne	C Loscher	J O'Hara
J Carroll	C Mac an Bhaird	E O'Riordan
J Costello	B McConologue	A Pearson-Evans
P Donnelly	B MacCraith (Chair)	H Ruskin
J Doyle	L McDermott (Secretary)	R Sadleir
I Farragher	C McDonagh	A Scott (Deputy President/Registrar)
B Flood	C McGonagle	D Sinclair
S Fox	J McManis	M Smyth
Y Gao	I McMenamin	A Stover
E Guilfoyle	M Molony	R Tobin
S Hashmi	A Morrissey	X Wang
C Holland	M Munro	P Willis
G Hughes		

APOLOGIES:

L Barry	A Foley	C Mac Murchaidh
C Bohan	D Ging	N Murphy
O Bree	D Gray	D Reynolds
E Clancy	J Hughes	P Sheehan
E Cuggy	S Knowlton	A Sinnott
E Cunningham	L Looney	S Wickham
J Dowling	A McGrady	J Williams
T Draper	P McMorrow	

IN ATTENDANCE:

G Barry

1. Adoption of agenda

The agenda was adopted subject to the transfer of Item 7 from Section C to Section B and the inclusion of two submissions under Item 12.

A: Minutes and related issues

2. Minutes of the meeting of Academic Council of 8 June 2011

The minutes were confirmed and signed by the Chair.

3. Matters arising

- 3.1** With regard to the possibility of circulating documentation for Academic Council electronically rather than, as at present, in paper form, it was noted that opinions are evenly divided and that, in the event that electronic circulation is adopted, it would not be desirable to include all documentation in one pdf document; instead, each document would be made available separately. It was agreed that, prior to the meeting of 12 October 2011, half of the Council members (randomly selected) would get paper documentation and the other half electronic documentation, with the arrangement being reversed for the meeting of 14 December 2011 so that all members would experience both systems and would be in a position to recommend one of them for use from early 2012 onwards. (Item 3.6)
- 3.2** The Chair noted that the composition of the new Governing Authority was now known apart from the three ministerial nominees, whose identities would be made known shortly. The first meeting of the new Governing Authority will take place on 29 July 2011 and will include consideration of a nomination for the position of Chancellor. (Item 6.5)
- 3.3** Reports from the Enterprise Strategy Group, the Age-Friendly University Group and the Virtual and Online Learning Group will be available shortly. The Chair thanked the Chairs and members of all three groups for the time and commitment they had devoted to developing their recommendations. With regard to the Virtual and Online Learning Group, the following were noted: consideration had been given to the current situation in the University in terms of virtual and online learning and to the equipment and other resources that would be required to implement the recommendations; cognisance had been taken of the experiences of Boston University

and the University of Queensland; an intensive work schedule was envisaged for the Group over the coming months. (Item 6.6)

- 3.4** The Chair summarised the arrangements for the Government internship scheme, noting that it was likely to be very attractive both to prospective interns (who would be in receipt of the Jobseeker's allowance plus a stipend of €50 per week) and employers (who would not incur any cost) and that it would be essential to ensure that any adverse effect on INTRA was kept to a minimum. It was agreed that the INTRA office would be requested to keep Academic Council informed of trends in this respect. (Item 7.1.3)

4. Minutes of the meeting of the University Standards Committee of 26 May 2011

Approved subject to the substitution, in Item 5.2.12, of the reference to University College Dublin by a reference to Trinity College. With regard to Item 3.18, it was noted that, for technical reasons, the continuous assessment and examination results to be published on students' portal pages on 30 June 2011 would not include decimalised values and that an explanatory note would be added to the portal pages to indicate that these values, while not displayed, might have an effect on the overall marks in some cases. The technical issues are in the process of being addressed. With regard to Item 3.24, it was noted that work is in progress to facilitate the display on broadsheets of marks for contributions in previous years.

4.1 Proposals on the categorisation of non-major awards

- 4.1.1** Approved subject to the addition of two extra changes to Marks and Standards, i.e. the inclusion in Table 3 of two lines to indicate Graduate Certificate and Graduate Diploma (NFQ Level 9 and Module Levels 8 and 9 in both cases), and the inclusion in Table 4 of two lines to indicate Graduate Certificate and Graduate Diploma (Module Levels 8 and 9 and Module Strengths LC, MC and FC in both cases). Members of Council are invited to address any queries they may have on the issues to Mr Billy Kelly, who chairs the Working Group on Non-Major Awards, or to any other member of it.

- 4.2.1** Noted that the next step for the Working Group would be the development of recommendations for ensuring the approval of such awards, taking cognisance both of the importance of having user-friendly procedures and of the need to maintain academic rigour.

4.2 Minutes of the meeting of the Graduate Studies Board of 3 March 2011

Approved.

B: Policy and strategy issues

5. President's report

- 5.1** The evaluation criteria for the establishment of a technical university have now been published (they are available on the HEA website). The Chair and the Presidents of the other universities will comment on them to the HEA by the deadline of 29 July 2011.
- 5.2** The revised Employment Control Framework, while still challenging, none the less provides for considerably greater flexibility for higher education than its predecessor, especially in terms of research posts.
- 5.3** An IUA working group chaired by Professor Tom Collins, President of the National University of Ireland, Maynooth, has been established to make recommendations on the revision of the current CAO points system. The University representative on this group is Professor Anne Scott, Deputy President/Registrar. The group aims to make recommendations that will facilitate necessary reform while maintaining the strengths of the current system.
- 5.4** The Graduate Attributes will be launched formally in late August or early September 2011. It is intended that the Minister for Education and Skills will attend the launch, along with senior personnel from companies that are significant employers of graduates.
- 5.5** Discussions are in progress between the University and Dundalk Institute of Technology with a view to identifying opportunities for collaboration, with particular reference to the geographical area between the two institutions. (The partnership between the National University of Ireland, Galway and Galway-Mayo Institute of Technology provides a model in this respect.) Members of Council are requested to let the President's Office know of any current initiatives they may be involved in that include DKIT.
- 5.6** The Chair expressed his appreciation to the members of Council for the commitment and dedication to the work of Council, and of the University generally, that they had shown over the academic year 2010/12, noting that these are particularly valuable in the context of the challenging external environment and the critical importance of maintaining and enhancing the University's profile.

6. Proposals in respect of plagiarism/disciplinary issues

- 6.1** Mr Patrick Kinsella presented these proposals, noting that the advent of the Internet presented unprecedented challenges to higher education in the area of plagiarism and also tended to encourage students to browse material rather than read it closely.
- 6.2** In the ensuing discussion, the following were noted:

- the introduction of the word ‘deliberate’ in the draft policy on plagiarism in 2008 resulted from consultations in Faculties
- it is important that instances of plagiarism are dealt with in a similar manner across different Schools, albeit with due account taken of discipline-specific issues
- while it is recommended that Schools keep records of precedents in terms of sanctions, it is recognised that the Disciplinary Committee does not in fact operate on the basis of precedent but rather considers all the particulars of each case when making its decisions
- it may be desirable to consider setting a range of tariffs for the various types of offence and their levels of seriousness (this is linked to the concept that sanctions should, in the first instance, act as deterrents).

6.3 It was agreed that, prior to the next meeting of Academic Council (on 12 October 2011), a formal response to the proposals would be requested from the Disciplinary Committee, and cognisance would also be taken of recent legal advice in respect of the policy on plagiarism.

7. Recommendations in respect of the title of consecutive teacher education programmes across the higher education sector

The Deputy President/Registrar noted that agreement had been reached in the IUA that the interim sectoral title for such programmes, pending the establishment of two-year full-time Master’s programmes in consecutive teacher education, would be ‘Professional Diploma in Education’. This title will take effect with respect to the cohorts of students entering such programmes in September 2011. The title of the University’s programme, i.e. Graduate Diploma in Education, will now be obsolete; applicants who have already been offered places on it for September 2011 entry will be contacted to inform them of the change. The NQAI has undertaken to assist in publicising the new title across the sector.

C: Items for formal approval/noting

8. Provisions and regulations: higher doctorates

Approved.

9. Validation recommendation: Graduate Certificate in Climate Change, Green Finance and Sustainability

Approved.

10. Proposal on Student Union representation on the Examination Appeals Board

Approved.

11. Examinations and Progression and Awards Boards reports, Summer 2011

Approved. Noted, however, that an outstanding matter in respect of one Board in the University would be dealt with on 28 June 2011 and that formal approval of the associated decisions would be sought of Academic Council, on an electronic basis, prior to the publication of the examination results on 30 June.

12. Any other business

12.1 Symposium on 13 and 14 September 2011

The Deputy President/Registrar gave details of the symposium, which is being organised around the theme of student engagement, will include consideration of issues such as feedback to students, and is intended to act as a means of recognising and celebrating good practice in teaching. One high-profile expert in the field, Dr Marc Prensky, has confirmed that he will make a keynote address, and discussions are in progress with another high-profile expert. There will also be involvement by the 2011 winners of the President's Awards for Teaching and Learning. The draft programme for the symposium is being prepared. Members of Academic Council are encouraged to participate fully in the symposium and associated events. The relevance of the symposium to the ongoing work of the Virtual and Online Learning Group (see Item 3.3 above) was noted.

12.2 Tributes to outgoing Deans of Faculty

The Chair noted that this present meeting was the last one that Professor Malcolm Smyth would attend in his capacity as Executive Dean of the Faculty of Science and Health, and that Professor Bernard Pierce had also recently reached the end of his term of office as Executive Dean of Dublin City University Business School. On behalf of Council, he expressed sincere appreciation to both outgoing Deans for their very significant contribution to its work over many years.

Date of next meeting:

**Wednesday 12 October 2011
2.00 p.m. in AG01**

Signed: _____
President

Date: _____