

## ACADEMIC COUNCIL

### MINUTES

Wednesday 9 April 2003

2.00-4.00 p.m. in AG01

#### PRESENT:

J Appleby  
D Beirne  
F Blin  
P Brereton  
J Bruton  
P Burke  
J Burzlaff  
J Carroll  
I Coyne  
M Cronin  
E Cunningham  
E Doyle  
J Doyle  
B Flood

S Hashmi  
M Henry  
C Kenny  
M Mac Conmara  
L Mac Mathúna  
M Marsh  
T McCarthy  
L McDermott  
P McGee  
E McGlynn  
M Molony  
M Moriarty  
A Morrissey  
C Nic Pháidín

C Ó hÓgartaigh  
O O'Reilly  
D O'Riordan  
A Pratt (Chairman)  
B Quilty  
M Roantree  
T Ryan  
R Saunders  
R Scaife  
M Shine Thompson  
B Trench  
R Verbruggen  
P Walsh  
J Williams

#### APOLOGIES:

M Clynes  
J Dowling  
J Horgan  
B Kehoe  
E Kennedy  
L Looney

C Mac Murchaidh  
C McDonagh  
E O'Connell  
N O'Connor  
B Pierce  
H Ruskin

P Sheehan  
A Sinnott  
A Smeaton  
M Smyth  
F von Prondzynski

#### OBSERVERS:

G Barry  
Anja Friedrich  
B Hallissey

**1. Adoption of agenda**

The agenda was adopted.

**2. Minutes of the meeting of Academic Council of 19 February 2003**

The minutes were confirmed and signed by the Chairman.

**3. Matters arising from the minutes of Academic Council**

**3.1 Discussion by Executive about financial resources needed for University-wide APL (Item 8)**

To be discussed by the Budget Sub-committee of Executive.

**3.2 Academic Calendar 2003/2004 (Item 11)**

On the agenda of the present meeting.

**3.3 Proposed statute on Academic Council (Item 15)**

On the agenda of the present meeting.

**4. Minutes of meetings of Academic Council Standing Committee**

**4.1 Minutes 6 February 2003**

Noted and approved.

**4.2 Minutes 6 March 2003**

Noted and approved.

## 5. Matters arising from the minutes of Standing Committee

### **Regulations with regard to module exemptions (Item 3.2 of meeting of 6 March 2003)**

Some concern was expressed about the implications of the final sentence of these regulations for transfer students who might normally expect to be granted exemption from an entire level which counted towards the calculation of the final award. It was agreed that the concern should be conveyed to Standing Committee of Academic Council.

## 6. Validation recommendations:

- 6.1 MSc in Security and Forensics (School of Computer Applications, September 2003)
- 6.2 Access Programme for Educationally Disadvantaged Adults (School of Education Studies, September 2003)
- 6.3 MSc in Science Education (Schools of Physical Sciences, Chemical Sciences, Biotechnology, Education Studies and Communications, September 2003)
- 6.4 BSc in Genetics and Cell Biology (School of Biotechnology, September 2004)
- 6.5 MSc in Bioinformatics (Schools of Computer Applications and Biotechnology, September 2003)
- 6.6 Graduate Diploma in Applied Language and Intercultural Studies (SALIS, September 2003)
- 6.7 MA in Comparative Literature (SALIS, September 2003)
- 6.8 BA in Economics, Politics and Law (School of Law and Government, September 2004)
- 6.9 BA in International Relations (School of Law and Government, September 2004)
- 6.10 Graduate Diploma in Special Education (St Patrick's College, September 2003)
- 6.11 Graduate Certificate/Graduate Diploma in Actuarial Science (School of Mathematical Sciences, September 2003)
- 6.12 MSc in Finance and Capital Markets (DCU Business School, September 2004)

All approved

It was noted that the need to accredit a large number of new programmes while taking account of the deadline for inclusion of material in the CAO Handbook and the

importance of timely advertising tended to lead to very pressurised workloads in May and June. In 2003, the work would be shared by the Interim Registrar and the Deans, and it was hoped that in the future it would be possible to ensure a more even distribution of the work across the year. Academic Council agreed with the emphasis placed by Professor Carroll on the need for a continued rigorous approach to the accreditation of new programmes.

**7. Accreditation recommendation: BSc in Physics with Astronomy  
(School of Physical Sciences)**

Approved. Noted that discussions intended to result in a memorandum of understanding between the University and Dunsink Observatory were under way.

**8. Academic Calendar 2003/2004**

**8.1** Agreed that, henceforth, Semester 1 would start on the last Monday in September and Semester 2 would start in Week 20.

**8.2** Agreed that the issue of whether Saturday tutorials should start the weekend before, or the weekend after, the first Monday of semester could be decided locally.

**8.3** Agreed that the dates for the next convocation ceremonies (4 and 5 November 2003) would be notified to all staff.

**8.4** Agreed that a slightly revised version of the calendar, incorporating some additional material, would be brought to the 11 June 2003 meeting of Academic Council for final approval.

**9. Report from February 2003 Appeals Board and updated list of precedents**

Noted. It was noted with approval that the introduction of the screening process and the provision of comprehensive information to appellants had resulted in a fall in the numbers of appeals overall and an increase in the proportion of successful appeals, though the trend was somewhat less marked among Oscail students than among other students.

## **10. Orientation day for new postgraduate students**

It was suggested that 27, rather than 20, September 2003 would be a suitable day to run the orientation programme, and that a tailored version of it might be made available at the beginning of Semester 2 for students who began their studies at that point. Some reconfigurations to the proposed order of events were also suggested. Agreed that the working group would prepare a revised timetable.

## **11. Preliminary proposal for amendments to Marks and Standards**

**11.1** A number of issues arising from this proposal were discussed, including the implications it might have for the decision-making procedures of Progression and Awards Boards, the need to ensure that academic standards were maintained and the importance of transparency and consistency in relation to progression regulations.

**11.2** It was agreed that information would be sought from the Registry on the extent to which decisions of Progression and Awards Boards had, in the past, given rise to legal action.

**11.3** It was agreed that Schools and Programme Boards would be requested to respond to the proposal in detail and that the responses would be discussed at the meeting of Academic Council of 11 June 2003.

## **12. Report on academic structures - reconfiguration of Registrar's post**

The Deputy President summarised the developments which had taken place and would lead to the creation of two posts: Vice-President for Learning Innovation (Registrar) and Director of Registry. It is intended that these posts be filled as soon as possible; in the meantime, there is an interim Registrar (the Deputy President) and an interim Director of Registry (the Assistant Registrar).

## **13. Tribute to Professor Patricia Barker**

The Interim Registrar endorsed the proposal by Professor Carroll that the appreciation of Academic Council be recorded of the very significant contribution made by the former Registrar, Professor Patricia Barker, to the work of Council during her period of office, 2000-2003. Academic Council enthusiastically supported this, and wished Professor Barker every success for the future.

**Date of next meeting:**

<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Wednesday 11 June 2003 2.00 p.m. in AG01</b></p>
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Signed: \_\_\_\_\_  
Chairman

Date: \_\_\_\_\_