

## ACADEMIC COUNCIL

### MINUTES

Wednesday 12 April 2006

2.00-3.45 p.m. in AG01

#### PRESENT:

D Beirne  
C Blacklaw  
S Blott  
D Brabazon  
M Brady  
O Bree  
J Bruton  
P Burke  
J Carroll  
J Costello  
J Dowling  
H Duncan  
O Finlayson  
A Flanagan  
S Fox  
J Geraghty  
D Grimes  
E Guilfoyle

S Hashmi  
M Henry  
S Ingle  
M Irwin-Bannon  
P James  
E Kennedy  
C Mac an Bhaird  
A McAuley  
L McDermott (Secretary)  
C McDonagh  
A McGillicuddy  
S McGovern  
A McGrady  
G McGuinness  
J McKenna  
P Meleady  
M Molony  
K Moran

R Morgan  
M Nic Giolla Mhichíl  
P Ó Flatharta  
E O’Riordan  
M Parkinson  
T Ryan  
R Scaife  
A Scott  
H Sheehan  
A Simon  
M Slowey (VPLI/Registrar)  
J Stokes  
Y Tuohy  
F von Prondzynski (Chair)  
J Williams  
P Willis  
P Young

#### APOLOGIES:

J Appleby  
P Brereton  
M Byrne  
J Clarke  
M Collier  
B Flood  
N Gathergood  
K Griffin  
S Harrington  
T Hogan

J Horgan  
D Kenny  
J Kerrane  
B Leavy  
H Lechleiter  
M Mac Conmara  
K MacKeogh  
N Murphy  
C Nic Pháidín

B Pierce  
M Ryan  
R Saunders  
P Sheehan  
M Shine Thompson  
A Sinnott  
C Stevenson  
B Tolan  
B Trench

**IN ATTENDANCE:**

M Long  
G McConnell  
P McMorrow

The President welcomed Professor Anne Scott, noting that this was the first meeting of Academic Council which she had attended in her capacity as Deputy President of the University.

**1. Adoption of agenda**

The agenda was adopted.

**A: Minutes and related issues****2. Minutes of the meeting of Academic Council of 15 February 2006, and matters arising**

- a. The minutes were confirmed and signed by the Chair.
- b. Noted that the University Standards Committee had held its first meeting and that it was dealing, on a transitional basis, with some items which it is intended to handle at Faculty level once the appropriate discussions have been concluded. (Item 2.1)
- c. Noted that the first meeting of the Academic Strategy Committee would be organised before the end of the academic year 2005/06, that a member of Academic Council would be elected to this committee and that arrangements for the election would be notified to Council members. (Item 2.1)
- d. Noted that the issue of study weeks would now be dealt with by means of a paper to be submitted by the President for discussion at the 14 June 2006 meeting of Council but that, notwithstanding any other proposals, any study weeks would need to be standardised across the University. The President requested members of Council to ascertain the views of their colleagues on the matter and forward these to him. It was noted that this issue, while of relevance to all students, might usefully be discussed in tandem with wider discussions about the first-year experience. It was suggested that a standardised reading week, if instituted, might incorporate tailored tutorials and clinics. (Item 13)

- e. Noted that the dates on the academic calendar 2006/07 which it had not been possible to confirm at the 15 February 2006 meeting of Council had subsequently been confirmed and were now included on the calendar. (Item 13)
- f. Noted that arrangements were in train for the nomination/election of two further members of Council to the Academic Promotions Committee. (Item 14)

### 3. **President's report**

- a. The President summarised the most recent developments in relation to the National Research Plan, the forthcoming invitation for submissions under the PRTLTI and the Strategic Innovation Fund, noting that the Irish Universities Association had identified the following areas as priorities in terms of funding: Fourth Level Ireland, including graduate schools and research collaboration; infrastructural planning, including management information systems; reform and innovation in undergraduate teaching and learning; quality assurance in the light of strategic priorities. It is expected that the call for submissions for SIF funding will be issued in May 2006.
- b. Noted that discussions were taking place about the recruitment of a Dean of Graduate Studies (or similar title).

### **B: Policy and strategy issues**

#### 4. **Strategic implementation**

- a. Mr Gordon McConnell made a presentation on this issue.
- b. Noted that a new version of the strategic planning web page would shortly be available.
- c. Noted that it would be important that all Faculty, School and Unit strategic plans be in alignment with *Leadership through Foresight* and that the President, the Deputy President and Mr Gordon McConnell would visit all areas of the University to advise on this.
- d. The following were also noted: advice would be made available to staff as to how they might integrate the strategic priorities into their working lives; every effort would be made to integrate the recommendations coming from quality reviews with ongoing strategic implementation; a review of all the quality reviews to date would take place shortly.

## **5. Student recruitment and retention**

Following a presentation on these issues from the Vice-President for Learning Innovation/Registrar, a discussion took place during which several issues were raised, including the importance of ascertaining the reasons students chose to leave the University without graduating, the fact that these reasons may vary according to discipline, the difficulties caused by having students of widely varying levels of aptitude in the one class group, the need to ensure effective use of the personal tutor system and the role played in student choice of institution by the availability or otherwise of good public transport.

## **6. Phase II Modularisation**

### **6.1 Proposal to bring DCU academic structures and programme descriptions into alignment with the current state of the Bologna process and the National Framework of Qualifications**

- a. Noted that it might be desirable to discontinue use of the University terminology with regard to levels within programmes, as it tended to cause confusion in relation to the levels identified in the NFQ. If NFQ terminology were adopted, it would be important to find a means of distinguishing different levels within a programme which occupied any given level on the NFQ.
- b. Agreed that it would be desirable to incorporate the relevant NFQ Learning Outcome Descriptors into module descriptors.
- c. The proposal that no programme associated with a particular NFQ award level should have fewer than 60 credits at this level was noted. It was suggested that the implementation of this proposal might be problematic in relation to interdisciplinary programmes.
- d. Agreed that it would be helpful to include the word 'normally' in the proposal relating to minimum and maximum credits for an undergraduate degree, and that the issue of control in relation to programmes offered outside the University or its linked colleges, raised in this proposal, needed further discussion.
- e. Noted that a detailed proposal on notional learning hours per five-credit module would be submitted to the next meeting of the University Standards Committee.

## **6.2 Proposal for credit adjustment for taught postgraduate programmes**

- a. Noted. It was noted that the IUA and the HEA had agreed that a taught Master's programme should be conceived of as lasting one full calendar year (or two calendar years if taken on a part-time basis).

Agreed that all the issues raised under 6.1 and 6.2 would be discussed again at the 14 June 2006 meeting of Academic Council.

## **C: Items for formal approval/noting**

### **7. Report and minutes from Validation Committee – 22 March 2006**

#### **7.1 Minutes of Validation Committee meeting**

Approved.

#### **7.2 Validation recommendations:**

- **BA in Applied Language and Intercultural Studies**
- **BA in Acting (Gaiety School of Acting)**
- **Graduate Certificate/Graduate Diploma in Special Educational Needs**
- **Graduate Diploma/MSc in Nursing Practice/Health Care Practice**
- **Executive Master's in Entrepreneurship**
- **MSc in Biomedical Diagnostics**
- **EngD (Engineering Doctorate)**
- **Doctorate of Music in Performance**

Approved. Agreed that an issue which arose in relation to the title of the EngD programme should be discussed at Faculty level.

### **8. Accreditation recommendations**

- **Professional Doctoral Programme**
- **MSc/Diplóma do Chéimithe i nGnó agus i dTeicneolaíocht an Eolais / MSc/Graduate Diploma in Business and Information Technology (reaccreditation)**
- **BA in International Relations and BA in Economics, Politics and Law (reaccreditation)**

Approved. Noted that, for reasons of timing, it had not been possible to include in the papers for Council the Irish-language version of the report relating to the MSc/Diplóma do Chéimithe i nGnó agus i dTeicneolaíocht an Eolais / MSc/Graduate Diploma in Business and Information Technology, but that this version could be made available to members of Council on request.

**9. Reports from Appeals Boards**

**9.1 Dublin City University (March 2006)**

Noted.

**9.2 St Patrick's College (July and October 2005)**

Noted.

**10. INTRA report**

Noted and approved.

**Date of next meeting:**

**Wednesday 14 June 2006  
2.00 p.m. in AG01**

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_  
President

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