ACADEMIC COUNCIL – STANDING COMMITTEE

MINUTES

Thursday 3 February 2005

9.00-10.40 a.m. in A204

Present: Professor Maria Slowey (Chairperson), Dr Paraic James,
Professor Eugene Kennedy, Dr Breandán Leahy, Mr Mícheál Mac Conmara,
Dr Liam Mac Mathúna, Ms Louise McDermott (Recording Secretary),
Mr Damien McLoughlin, Dr Ronnie Saunders

Apologies: Ms Brenda Gaughan, Professor Martin Henry, Mr Paul Sheehan

1.   Adoption of agenda

The agenda was adopted subject to the inclusion of one additional submission under
Item 5.1, two additional submissions under Item 5.2, one additional submission
under Item 6, one additional submission under Item 6.2 and one submission under
Item 9.

2.   Minutes of the meeting of 13 January 2005

Confirmed and signed by the Chairperson.

3.   Matters arising from the minutes

3.1   Follow-up actions from the last meeting were reported.

3.2   <u>Noted</u> that contact had been made with the working group set up by Executive to
look at conflict of interest issues across the University, and that the work of this
group was progressing. (Item 3.4)

3.3   <u>Noted</u> that the Irish Universities Quality Board publication entitled *Good Practice
in the Organisation of PhD Programmes in Irish Universities* was now available
and that it indicated support for the use of practices such as videoconferencing at
viva voce examinations provided appropriate procedures governed such use.

Agreed that draft guidelines on the use of videoconferencing in this way, which would be informed by recent experience in three Schools as well as the advice of Mr Mac Conmara on technical and security issues, would be submitted to the 3 March 2005 meeting of Standing Committee. (Item 3.5)

3.4   Noted that the Registry would, as soon as possible, devise a form to cater for applications for direct entry to Master's degrees by research. (Item 3.6)

3.5   Noted that the issue of notional learning time within modules would be discussed by the Working Group on Modularisation. (Item 3.7)

3.6   Noted that it had been agreed between the Registry and the Faculties that responsibility for paying external examiners should remain with the Registry. (Item 3.8)

3.7   Agreed that the issue of frequency of appointment of external examiners within a given time period would be discussed at a meeting to organised shortly for interested parties to discuss a range of matters pertaining to postgraduate research. (Item 3.9)

3.8   Noted that difficulties still remained for some staff with regard to the electronic completion of forms for submission to the Registry and, from there, Standing Committee and that this matter would be investigated further by the Registry. (Item 3.10)

3.9   Agreed that the desirability or otherwise of permitting direct entry to the PhD register for candidates holding a taught Master's degree would be discussed at the meeting referred to at 3.7 above. (Item 3.11)

3.10   Noted that clarification was awaited as to whether or not a proposed additional supervisor had been advised that the proposal had been made. (Item 3.12)

3.11   Noted that the Registry was considering the option of removing the heading 'For Office Use Only' from the PGR9 (request for direct entry to the PhD register) form to make it easier to complete. (Item 3.14)

3.12   Noted that, once the regulations on frequency of appointment of external examiners (see 3.7 above) had been agreed and if it were necessary on the basis of these regulations to distinguish between Master's and PhD supervision, the Registry would be requested to specify, on nomination forms, whether previous work carried out by external examiners related to Master's or PhD students or both. (Item 3.16)

3.13　　Noted that the proposed amendments to sections 5.2, 12.1 and 12.3 of *Academic Regulations for Postgraduate Degrees by Research and Thesis*, approved by Standing Committee at its meeting of 13 January 2005, would be submitted for approval to the 16 February 2005 meeting of Academic Council. (Item 3.17)

3.14　　Noted that the Registry would shortly send a request to those responsible for submitting forms to do so in a timely fashion. (Item 3.19)

3.15　　Noted that a policy on APL would be drafted once a member of staff with appropriate expertise could be sourced to carry out this work. (Items 4.12 and 9)

3.16　　Noted that a nomination for an additional external examiner in respect of a research student was awaited from a School. (Item 5.2.2)

3.17　　Agreed that the issue of appropriate workloads for supervisors of research students would be discussed at the meeting referred to at 3.7 above. (Item 5)

4.　　Faculty/Committee/Programme Board minutes

4.1　　Programme Board: MSc i nGnó agus i dTeicneolaíocht an Eolais, 24/11/04. Noted and approved.

4.2　　Programme Board: Teastas/Dioplóma Iarchéime/MA sa Chleachtas Dátheangach, 24/11/04. Noted and approved. Noted that Professor Slowey and Mr McLoughlin were to discuss further the issue of postgraduate students' eligibility for ALCID cards. Noted that there was considerable variation across the University in terms of the pattern of advancement through taught postgraduate programmes: some programmes are offered as Master's programmes only, some others require initial registration for a Graduate Certificate, and there are other configurations in between.

4.3　　Teaching Meeting: Sport Science and Health, 17/11/04. Noted and approved.

4.4　　Teaching Meeting: Chemistry, 17/11/04. Noted and approved.

4.5　　Teaching Meeting: Physics, 24/11/04. Noted and approved.

4.6　　Joint Programme Board: MSc in Science Communication/MA in Film and Television Studies, 01/12/04. Noted and approved.

4.7　　Teaching Meeting: Mathematical Sciences, 14/12/04. Noted and approved.

4.8　　Teaching Meeting: Biotechnology, 24/11/04. Noted and approved.

Several references in minutes to problems relating to the provision of computing facilities were noted. It was noted that, at the request of Executive, a working group chaired by Professor Slowey had been set up with a twofold remit: firstly, to

develop proposals for the procurement and placement of desktop equipment over the next twelve to eighteen months; secondly, to develop a strategy for student and staff IT requirements within DCU in the medium and longer term.

5.   Appointment of external examiners

5.1   Taught programmes

5.1.1   Ms I Perez, Heriot-Watt University
          School of Applied Language and Intercultural Studies
          Approved.

5.2   Postgraduate research students

5.2.1   Professor M McLoone, University of Ulster
          Student ref. SC/2005/A2/5.2.1, MA, School of Communications
          Approved subject to confirmation that the nominee has not acted as external
          examiner more frequently than is recommended in the *Guidelines for the
          Appointment of External Examiners*.
5.2.2   Professor M McLoone, University of Ulster
          Student ref. SC/2005/A2/5.2.2, PhD, School of Communications
          Approved subject to confirmation that the nominee has not acted as external
          examiner more frequently than is recommended in the *Guidelines for the
          Appointment of External Examiners*.
5.2.3   Professor C Sarzanini, University of Turin
          Student ref. SC/2005/A2/5.2.3, PhD, School of Chemical Sciences
          Approved.
5.2.4   Dr I Siraj-Blatchford, Institute of Education, University of London,
          Dr P Hogan, NUI Maynooth
          Student ref. SC/2005/A2/5.2.4, PhD, Education Department,
          St Patrick's College
          Approved.
5.2.5   Professor J-C Simon, University of Rennes 1
          Student ref. SC/2005/A2/5.2.5, MEng, School of Electronic Engineering
          Approved.

6.   Postgraduate research matters

6.1   Application for direct entry to the PhD register

          None.

6.2   Applications to transfer to the PhD register

6.2.1   Student ref. SC/2005/A2/6.2.1, School of Physical Sciences
        Approved.
6.2.2   Student ref. SC/2005/A2/6.2.2, School of Physical Sciences
        Approved.
6.2.3   Student ref. SC/2005/A2/6.2.3, School of Chemical Sciences
        Approved.

6.3   Request for change of supervisor

Approved.

6.4   Application for special-case admission to Master's by research

Noted that a School had indicated that it wished to consider submitting such an application to the 3 March 2005 meeting of Standing Committee. Agreed that any such application would be considered in the normal way; noted, however, that the preliminary information already supplied appeared to indicate that it would be helpful if the candidate obtained additional qualifications before an application was submitted.

7.   Requests for special-case admission

None.

8.   Requests for exemption from modules

None.

9.   Any other business

Noted that recommendations on the size and composition of Academic Council would be submitted to the next meeting of Council, on 16 February 2005.

Date of next meeting: Thursday 3 March 2005

Signed: _____   Date: _____
                        Chairperson