

ACADEMIC COUNCIL – STANDING COMMITTEE

MINUTES

Thursday 7 October 2004

9.00-10.30 a.m. in AG01

Present: Professor Maria Slowey (Chair for the first half of the meeting),
Dr Seán Marlow (Chair for the second half of the meeting),
Ms Brenda Gaughan, Professor David Jacobson, Dr Paraic James,
Professor Eugene Kennedy, Dr Breandán Leahy,
Mr Mícheál Mac Conmara, Ms Louise McDermott (Recording Secretary),
Mr Damien McLoughlin, Mr Paul Sheehan

Apologies: Professor Martin Henry, Dr Liam Mac Mathúna, Dr Ronnie Saunders

The Chairperson welcomed Professor Eugene Kennedy, the incoming Vice-President for Research, to membership of Standing Committee.

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, two additional submissions under Item 6.1, an addition to Item 6.7 and agreement to discuss Items 6 and 9 in advance of the other items in view of their detailed nature.

2. Minutes of the meeting of 2 September 2004

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 Noted that the proposal on procedures to be adopted when teaching family members or other people in relation to whom a conflict of interest might arise would be

- discussed by the working group set up by Executive to look at conflict of interest issues across the University generally. (Item 3.2)
- 3.3** Noted that feedback on the experience of using videoconferencing at *viva voce* examinations had now been received from the School of Physical Sciences and Dublin City University Business School. Agreed that, once feedback had been received from the School of Biotechnology and any other School that proposed to use videoconferencing in the near future, criteria and procedures for its use should be drawn up and submitted to Standing Committee. (Item 3.3)
- 3.4** Noted that the Registry would, as soon as possible, analyse recent cases in which members of staff had presented for examination for research degrees, thereby necessitating the appointment of two external examiners rather than one, with a view to establishing whether or not it would be possible to consider introducing some flexibility with regard to the number of external examiners required in such situations. (Item 3.4)
- 3.5** 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 3.5)
- 3.6** Noted that the revised proposal on notional learning time within modules would be discussed by Standing Committee at a future date, and that the recent EUA review of the ECTS system had identified this issue as being of interest. (Item 3.6)
- 3.7** Noted that the guidelines on minute-writing would be recirculated to Programme Chairs and Faculty Administrators. (Item 3.7)
- 3.8** Noted that the issue of external examiners' expenses had been discussed with the Director of Registry with a view to establishing whether or not any changes to the current procedures should be recommended, and that further discussions would shortly take place between the Director and the Senior Faculty Administrators. (Item 3.8)
- 3.9** Noted that the practice of blanking out students' names in the papers of Standing Committee had been discussed with the Freedom of Information Officer. Agreed that the practice should continue. (Item 3.10)
- 3.10** Noted that information about a candidate's results in a taught Master's programme had been submitted. The application for direct entry to the PhD register was therefore approved. (Item 6.1.1)
- 3.11** Noted that information about a candidate's results in a taught Master's programme had been submitted. The application for direct entry to the PhD register was therefore approved. (Item 6.1.2)

- 3.12** Noted that information about a candidate's results in a taught Master's programme had been submitted. The application for direct entry to the PhD register was therefore approved. (Item 6.1.5)
- 3.13** Noted that information about the institutions at which a candidate had obtained undergraduate and postgraduate qualifications had been submitted. The application for direct entry to the PhD register was therefore approved. (Item 6.1.7)
- 3.14** Noted that amendments had been made to the forms used for requesting special-case admission to programmes and exemption from modules.

4. Faculty/Committee/Programme Board minutes

- 4.1 Programme Board: Graduate Diploma/MSc in Nursing, 23/06/04. Noted and approved subject to the substitution of the reference to Academic Council, in Item 9, by a reference to Executive. Agreed that some further clarification would be sought about the references to 'ethics proposals' in Item 5.9 and the 'dual-diagnosis programme' in Item 10.1. The reference, in Item 7, to the importance of not running pathways which were not viable in terms of student numbers was noted with approval.
- 4.2 Programme Board: Diploma in Nursing: General (Beaumont), 28/06/04. Noted and approved. It was noted that no further meetings of the Programme Board would take place, as the programme was to be discontinued. Thanks and congratulations were extended to all involved in the launch and delivery of the programme. It was noted that a report on student attendance would be submitted to the 2 December 2004 meeting of Standing Committee.
- 4.3 Programme Board: Diploma in Nursing: Mental Handicap (St Joseph's and St Louise's), 28/06/04. Noted and approved. It was noted that no further meetings of the Programme Board would take place, as the programme was to be discontinued. Thanks and congratulations were extended to all involved in the launch and delivery of the programme. It was noted that a report on student attendance would be submitted to the 2 December 2004 meeting of Standing Committee.
- 4.4 Programme Board: Diploma in Nursing: General (James Connolly Memorial Hospital), 28/06/04. Noted and approved. It was noted that no further meetings of the Programme Board would take place, as the programme was to be discontinued. Thanks and congratulations were extended to all involved in the launch and delivery of the programme. It was noted that a report on student attendance would be submitted to the 2 December 2004 meeting of Standing Committee.

- 4.5 Programme Board: Diploma in Nursing: Psychiatric (St Ita's and St Vincent's), 28/06/04. Noted and approved. It was noted that no further meetings of the Programme Board would take place, as the programme was to be discontinued. Thanks and congratulations were extended to all involved in the launch and delivery of the programme. It was noted that a report on student attendance would be submitted to the 2 December 2004 meeting of Standing Committee.
- 4.6 Standing Committee of Programme Board: BA in Journalism, 03/09/04. Noted and approved subject to the approval of the proposal contained in Item 1.3 by the first meeting of the Programme Board of the 2004/05 academic year (at which student representatives will normally be present).
- 4.7 Programme Board: Bachelor of Nursing Studies (Oscail), 03/09/04. Noted. Agreed that clarification would be sought about the details of the restructuring of the programme and that the Programme Board would be requested to submit details of the revised structure to the 4 November 2004 meeting of Standing Committee as well as a brief memorandum confirming that the programme was now fully aligned with the recently-reaccredited Bachelor of Nursing Studies offered by the School of Nursing.
- 4.8 Programme Board: MSc in Electronic Commerce (Business and Technical), 06/09/04. Noted and approved.
- 4.9 Programme Board: BEng in Mechatronic Engineering, 13/09/04. Noted and approved.

5. Appointment of external examiners

5.1 Taught programmes

5.1.1 *Reappointment*

Dr J Sullivan, Liverpool Hope University College
MA in Religious Education (Primary), Mater Dei Institute of Education
Approved.

5.1.2 Professor T Gallagher, University of Bradford
MA in International Relations and MA in Globalisation, School of Law and Government
Approved.

5.1.3 Dr N Glover-Thomas, University of Liverpool
School of Law and Government
Approved.

5.1.4 Professor I Lynch Fannon, Cleveland Marshall College of Law
BA in Economics, Politics and Law and BA in International Relations,
School of Law and Government
Approved.

- 5.1.5 *Reappointment*
Professor A M Hol, Utrecht University
All taught programmes in the School of Law and Government
Approved.
- 5.1.6 Professor I Bacik, Trinity College Dublin
BA in Economics, Politics and Law and BA in International Relations,
School of Law and Government
Approved.
- 5.1.7 Mr J E Digan, University of Nottingham
Postgraduate programmes in the School of Nursing
Approved.
- 5.2 Postgraduate research students**
- 5.2.1 Dr J L Kallen, Trinity College Dublin and
Dr B Fanning, University College Dublin
Student ref. SC/2004/A9/5.2.1, PhD, School of Applied Language and
Intercultural Studies
Approved.
- 5.2.2 Professor W Li, University of Newcastle upon Tyne and
Dr A Chambers, University of Limerick
Student ref. SC/2004/A9/5.2.2, PhD, School of Applied Language and
Intercultural Studies
Approved.
- 5.2.3 Dr V Bugeja, University of Hertfordshire
Student ref. SC/2004/A9/5.2.3, PhD, School of Biotechnology
Approved.
- 5.2.4 Professor A Vleck, Queen Mary, University of London
Student ref. SC/2004/A9/5.2.4, PhD, School of Chemical Sciences
Approved.
- 5.2.5 Dr P Robins, University of Oxford
Student ref. SC/2004/A9/5.2.5, PhD, School of Communications
Approved subject to clarification as to why the student is in the School of
Communications (rather than the School of Law and Government, which
would appear to be the School to which the area of research closely relates).
- 5.2.6 Dr J Carthy, University College Dublin
Student ref. SC/2004/A9/5.2.6, PhD, School of Computing
Approved.
- 5.2.7 Dr H Lewis, University of Limerick
Student ref. SC/2004/A9/5.2.7, MEng, School of Mechanical and
Manufacturing Engineering

Approved. Agreed that the attention of the School should be drawn to the recommendation, in the regulations concerning the appointment of external examiners, that not more than two appointments should normally be held by an examiner.

- 5.2.8 Professor J Monaghan, Trinity College Dublin
Student ref. SC/2004/A9/5.2.8, PhD, School of Mechanical and Manufacturing Engineering
Decision deferred pending the submission of further information about the relationship between the external examiner's area of expertise and the candidate's area of research.
- 5.2.9 Dr A Samali, National University of Ireland, Galway
Student ref. SC/2004/A9/5.2.9, PhD, School of Biotechnology
Approved.
- 5.2.10 Professor P Cammack, Manchester Metropolitan University
Student ref. SC/2004/A9/5.2.10, PhD, School of Law and Government
Approved.
- 5.2.11 Professor S Solomon, Hebrew University of Jerusalem
Student ref. SC/2004/A9/5.2.11, PhD, School of Computing
Approved.
- 5.2.12 Professor I Andonovic, University of Strathclyde
Student ref. SC/2004/A9/5.2.12, PhD, School of Electronic Engineering
Approved.

It was noted that there is an increasing tendency for those submitting forms to complete them manually although the facility exists to complete them electronically and this is what has been required in the recent past. It was agreed that all concerned be requested to submit electronically-completed forms only with effect from November 2004. It was also agreed that all concerned be requested to ensure that all necessary sections of all forms are completed fully.

6. Postgraduate research matters

6.1 Application for direct entry to the PhD register

- 6.1.1 Student ref. SC/2004/A9/6.1.1, School of Mechanical and Manufacturing Engineering
Approved subject to the candidate's obtaining a first- or second-class honours result in the taught Master's programme. Agreed that the School would be asked for information as to why the application had been submitted prior to the promulgation of the result.
- 6.1.2 Student ref. SC/2004/A9/6.1.2, School of Computing
Approved.
- 6.1.3 Student ref. SC/2004/A9/6.1.3, School of Electronic Engineering
Approved.

- 6.1.4 Student ref. SC/2004/A9/6.1.4, School of Electronic Engineering
Approved.
- 6.1.5 Student ref. SC/2004/A9/6.1.5, School of Biotechnology
Decision deferred pending the submission of a specific recommendation about the candidate by the School.
- 6.1.6 Student ref. SC/2004/A9/6.1.6, School of Education Studies
Decision deferred pending information on whether or not the candidate's taught Master's degree is offered on a classified basis and what weighting applies to the dissertation, and clarification in relation to the countersignature.
- 6.1.7 Student ref. SC/2004/A9/6.1.7, School of Communications
Approved.
- 6.1.8 Student ref. SC/2004/A9/6.1.8, School of Law and Government
Approved.
- 6.1.9 Student ref. SC/2004/A9/6.1.9, School of Law and Government
Approved.

6.2 Applications to transfer to the PhD register

- 6.2.1 Student ref. SC/2004/A9/6.2.1, School of Biotechnology
Approved.
- 6.2.2 Student ref. SC/2004/A9/6.2.2, School of Biotechnology
Approved.
- 6.2.3 Student ref. SC/2004/A9/6.2.3, School of Chemical Sciences
Approved.
- 6.2.4 Student ref. SC/2004/A9/6.2.4, School of Electronic Engineering
Approved.
- 6.2.5 Student ref. SC/2004/A9/6.2.5, School of Communications
Approved.

6.3 Review of pilot programme – concurrent research/qualifying modules (School of Mechanical and Manufacturing Engineering)

Standing Committee expressed its approval of the commitment to supporting students which is implicit in the programme and its appreciation of the detailed information which had been provided for the review.

Agreed that it would in fact be possible to conduct this review only after the students who had embarked on the pilot programme had completed their Master's research, and that accordingly the review should be deferred to that time. Agreed that, pending the review, further candidates for admission to the pilot programme would be considered by Standing Committee on a

case-by-case basis, as has been the practice up to now. Agreed that, to facilitate the assessment of such students, the School would be requested to apply more clearly defined criteria in selecting qualifying modules than exist at present. Specifically:

- All proposed modules should normally be at Level 5, unless a detailed argument for selecting a module or modules at a lower level was made; such an argument would be examined by Standing Committee as part of its examination of the case generally
- Where a module at a level lower than Level 5 was proposed, a threshold mark (which the student would have to obtain in order to be deemed to fulfil the requirements relating to the module for Master's qualifying purposes) higher than 55% would have to be specified
- The same requirements in terms of credit weightings should apply to all applicants, i.e. the proposed modules should lead to the same number of credits for all applicants, unless a detailed argument for proceeding otherwise was made; such an argument would be examined by Standing Committee as part of its examination of the case generally
- A brief rationale for the choice of each proposed module should be provided to Standing Committee in addition to the module code and title.

Agreed that, since the role of the Faculty Awards Board in relation to the pilot programme did not appear to be clear, students on the programme should be referred to the FAB only where an exceptional decision needed to be made and the results of the modules should be dealt with by a Progression and Awards Board.

6.4 Requests for special-case admission to postgraduate degree by research

None.

6.5 Applications for direct entry to the PhD register (memorandum from School of Law and Government)

The issues raised in the memorandum were noted. It was agreed that the views of the Associate Deans for Research in the Faculties would be sought in relation to the following matters: the desirability of separating financial from academic issues when making decisions about direct entry to the PhD register; the fact that requiring students to register for a Master's degree before transferring to the PhD register has the effect of making the numbers of students doing PhD work appear lower than they in fact are; the fact that applications for direct entry have significantly increased; the fact that those who are permitted direct entry do not have to undergo any transfer

mechanism at a later stage, unlike students who are obliged to enter the Master's register first; the possibility that the approaches to this issue may vary according to discipline.

Agreed that the relevant form would, in the meantime, be revised to allow for the insertion of a line on which the candidate would be asked to indicate the title of the taught Master's degree and the awarding institution.

**6.6 Request for a change of supervisor
(School of Applied Language and Intercultural Studies)**

Approved.

6.7 Requests for re-registration under 'write-up' status for 2004/05

Approved.

It was noted that there is an increasing tendency for those submitting forms to complete them manually although the facility exists to complete them electronically and this is what has been required in the recent past. It was agreed that all concerned be requested to submit electronically-completed forms only with effect from November 2004. It was also agreed that all concerned be requested to ensure that all necessary sections of all forms are completed fully.

7. Request for special-case admission

7.1 Graduate Diploma in Translation Studies (one candidate)
Approved.

8. Requests for exemption from modules

None.

9. Admissions issues: (a) Leaving Certificate Biology/Agricultural Science and Home Economics; (b) points awarded for A- and AS-level examination grades

The proposal in relation to Home Economics was approved. The proposal in relation to Biology/Agricultural Science was approved subject to confirmation by a subject specialist that the syllabus for Biology and the syllabus for Agricultural Science are now so different from each other as to justify treating the two subjects separately for entry purposes. The decision in relation to A- and AS-level points

scores was deferred pending clarification about how the proposal, if approved, would affect an applicant who had obtained three A-levels only, under the now discontinued A- and AS-level system, and wished to apply under a revised points system. The proposal on obtaining information on forthcoming changes to Leaving Certificate syllabi was approved. It was agreed that, because of the urgency of making decisions about these issues and informing prospective guidance counsellors and other interested parties as soon as possible, the permission of the President would be sought to table the item at the 13 October 2004 meeting of Academic Council (provided clarification on the issues noted above had been obtained by then).

10. Any other business

None.

Date of next meeting: Thursday 4 November 2004

Signed: _____
Chairperson

Date: _____