

EDUCATION COMMITTEE

MINUTES

Wednesday 1 October 2008

2.00-3.30 p.m. in A204

Present: Professor Maria Slowey (Chair), Dr Claire Bohan,
Mr Jim Dowling, Dr Mike Hopkins,
Ms Louise McDermott (Secretary), Dr Kay MacKeogh,
Dr Mary Shine Thompson

Apologies: Professor Eithne Guilfoyle, Professor Eugene Kennedy,
Mr Gordon McConnell, Professor Bernard Pierce,
Professor Anne Scott, Professor Malcolm Smyth

Professor Slowey welcomed the membership to the first meeting of the Education Committee.

1. Terms of reference of the Education Committee

- 1.1** Noted that all proposals of strategic significance would need to be submitted for approval to Executive by the EC and that proposals of strategic significance about academic matters would need to be submitted for approval to Academic Council. The minutes of EC meetings are to be noted by Executive and Academic Council; a report on relevant items for strategic discussion or for decision will be made as necessary to Executive.
- 1.2** A number of changes to the draft terms of reference were proposed, and it was agreed that revised terms would be drawn up on the basis of these and circulated for comment.
- 1.3** With regard to the number of EC meetings per year, it was agreed that the maximum would normally be eight.
- 1.4** A detailed discussion took place about the most effective procedures that might be used to ensure ongoing review both of individual programmes and of programme provision generally. It was agreed that a balance needed to be found between

ensuring thoroughness and timeliness in terms of review and avoiding any unnecessary increase in staff workloads.

2. Decision on priority items for strategic discussion in 2008/09

Agreed that these should include:

- SIF/AFI
- Learning Innovation strategy
- E-learning strategy
- Internationalisation strategy
- Articulation between activities of the linked colleges and wider university activities
- Other major strategic initiatives.

Agreed that, rather than each of the above appearing on the agenda of each meeting, a specific topic per meeting would be selected and a paper/recommendations on it included in the papers for the meeting.

3. Presentation on the Learning Innovation strategy

Ms Morag Munro, Acting Director of the Learning Innovation Unit, made a presentation on the Learning Innovation strategy, which is currently undergoing development as part of the university's overall strategic planning from 2008 onwards. A number of issues were noted: the need to determine the optimum size of the university and the optimum balance between numbers of undergraduate and postgraduate students and EU and non-EU students; the importance of strategic positioning of the university in the national arena; the need to ensure alignment between university-level and Faculty-level strategic planning; the importance of the LIU as a resource for enhancing the student academic experience. The Chair thanked Ms Munro for her presentation and for her ongoing work on the development of the Learning Innovation strategy.

4. Presentation on the Academic Framework for Innovation

Professor Martin Henry, Academic Director of the Academic Framework for Innovation, made a presentation on the ongoing developments with regard to the AFI. Among these were noted: the Learning Outcomes clinics which had taken place over the Summer; the verification process for programme Learning Outcomes which are scheduled for 21 and 23 October; the ongoing work to revise *Marks and Standards* in the light of AFI; the recent appointment of AFI Fellows and the fact that they would shortly commence their work to support the development of AFI across Faculties; a general welcome for the idea of expanding student choice and

options; the fact that a submission had been made to the HEA for funding for a new Management Information System. In connection with this last issue, the deteriorating financial climate was noted with concern by the Committee, and Professor Henry explained that he was working on a range of scenarios to map out different approaches to the MIS issue on the basis of a range of levels of funding. The Chair thanked Professor Henry for his presentation and for his ongoing work on the development of the AFI.

5. RGAM weightings 2009

The proposal about weightings for students on work placements, adverted to in the HEA's letter of 10 September, was noted with concern. The Chair advised that each Faculty had been requested to identify a representative to meet with her, Dr Bohan and Ms Maeve Long, INTRA Programme Manager, to prepare a response. Noted that a very considerable staff workload attached to the preparation of students for INTRA as well as to supervision, follow-up work and relationship management with employers.

6. IQUB quality review report

Deferred to the next meeting of the Education Committee.

Date of next meeting:

Wednesday 29 October 2008, 2.00 p.m. in A204

Signed: _____
Chair

Date: _____