

EDUCATION COMMITTEE

MINUTES

Wednesday 3 February 2010

2.00-4.00 p.m. in A204

Present: Professor Anne Scott (Chair), Dr Claire Bohan,
Mr Jim Dowling, Professor Eithne Guilfoyle,
Professor Eugene Kennedy, Mr Gordon McConnell,
Ms Louise McDermott (Secretary), Dr Kay MacKeogh,
Mr John Murphy, Professor Richard O'Kennedy,
Professor Bernard Pierce, Dr Mary Shine Thompson,
Professor Malcolm Smyth

Apologies: Mr Billy Kelly

In attendance: Ms Aisling McKenna (for Item 4.1)

SECTION A: AGENDA, MINUTES AND MATTERS ARISING

1. Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted subject to the deferral of Item 4.3 to the 3 March 2010 meeting of the EC.

2. Minutes of the meeting of 13 January 2010

The minutes were confirmed and signed by the chair.

3. Matters arising from the minutes

3.1 Noted that a proposal on AP(E)L would be submitted for consideration by the University Standards Committee at its meeting of 4 February 2010. (Item 3.1)

- 3.2** Noted that a report on the HEA Labour Market Activisation Initiative would be made to the 3 March 2010 meeting of the EC and that the Initiative was also to be discussed by the IUA Registrars' Group, with particular reference to the recent involvement in the Initiative of course providers from the private sector. (Item 3.3)
- 3.3** Noted that suggested wording related to the responsibilities of Heads of School and Chairs of Programme Boards would be made available to the EC in due course. (Item 3.4)
- 3.4** Noted that the outcome of such discussions on the DCU student profile and characteristics as might arise in the course of the Institutional Review of Irish Universities would be made available to the EC after the review of DCU had taken place. (Item 3.5)
- 3.5** Noted that a significant item on student persistence on programmes, progression through programmes, and related issues, would be on the agenda for the 3 March 2010 meeting of the EC. (Items 3.6, 3.16 and 4.1)
- 3.6** Noted that a report on issues relating to Progression and Awards Boards would be made to the University Standards Committee at its meeting of 1 April 2010 and that this matter would then be reported on briefly to the EC at its meeting of 5 May 2010. (Item 3.7)
- 3.7** Noted that the Chair would discuss with Mr Billy Kelly the current and planned developments in relation to the Teaching Enhancement Exercise. (Item 3.9)
- 3.8** Noted that a working group of the University Standards Committee had been convened to make recommendations on a number of issues relating to approval of programmes and that these recommendations would be submitted to both the USC and the EC for approval. (Item 3.12)
- 3.9** Noted that the Accreditation Board for the BSc in Horticulture had met on 29 January 2010 and that the accreditation process had been successful. (Item 3.13)
- 3.10** Noted that the preparations for the accreditation of the proposed Graduate Diploma/MSc in Materials Engineering were ongoing, subject to the continued involvement of the proposed partner organisation, Athlone Institute of Technology. (Item 3.14)
- 3.11** Noted that the preparations for the accreditation of the proposed subject *Science Studies* on the Bachelor of Arts and Bachelor of Education programmes in St Patrick's College were ongoing, though some changes to the programme as originally validated were under consideration. (Item 3.15)

- 3.12** Noted that Dr Bohan would report to the EC, at its meeting of 3 March 2010, on the relevance to student persistence on programmes of (a) financial considerations and (b) student expectations of programmes vis-à-vis the reality they experience on entry. (See also Item 3.5 above.) (Item 3.16)
- 3.13** Details made available by Ms Muireann Ní Dhuigneáin, Careers Service, about the HEA First Destination Survey were noted. It was noted that it would not be necessary to advert to this Survey in the context of the item on student persistence/progression to be discussed by the EC at its meeting of 3 March 2010 (see Item 3.5 above). (Item 3.17)
- 3.14** Noted that meetings between Oscail and Faculty representatives to discuss areas of possible collaboration were being organised. (Item 3.18)
- 3.15** Professor O’Kennedy reported on discussions he had undertaken with a number of stakeholders about the possibility of providing a range of modules, on a flexible basis, focusing on subjects of broad relevance to students across the university. The following issues had been highlighted in the discussions: the importance of ensuring that the provision of such modules did not impact adversely on existing programme content or programme identity; the likelihood that students would opt for such modules to the extent that they recognised them as being of relevance to their needs, and not otherwise (the importance of the stated learning outcomes was mentioned in this connection); the need for endorsement at a senior level in the university of any proposal to provide such modules; the importance of agreeing procedures on core issues such as the funding model and delivery and assessment methods; the desirability of recognising that some of the issues that might be covered in such modules are already taught by means of existing modules. The possibility of providing such modules on a pilot basis was noted as an option. The Chair noted the importance, for the university, of making a decision in principle as to whether or not the matter should be given further consideration. It was agreed that, to inform further discussion, Professor O’Kennedy would ascertain the position taken by Academic Council, in the context of discussions on the Academic Framework for Innovation, on both flexibility of provision and the extent to which a student could select optional modules to count towards an award. Professor O’Kennedy undertook to report on this matter to the 3 March 2010 meeting of the EC. (Item 4.3.1)
- 3.16** Noted that members of the EC are requested to submit to Ms Aisling McKenna, Institutional Research and Analysis Officer, recommendations for criteria that might be used in 2010 in compiling the Times Higher Education–Thomson Reuters world university rankings. (Item 5)
- 3.17** Noted that a location on the OVPLI website would be identified at which documentation of interest to the EC would be posted on a regular basis. (Item 6)

- 3.18** Noted that the proposed BSc in Health Studies had been considered by the Validation Subgroup at its meeting of 19 January 2010 and had been recommended for further development towards accreditation. The detailed recommendations of the Subgroup are contained in the validation report to be submitted for approval by Academic Council at its meeting of 10 February 2010. (Item 7)
- 3.19** Noted that the proposed Graduate Certificate in Digital Marketing had been considered by the Validation Subgroup at its meeting of 19 January 2010 and that the Subgroup had recognised it as having the potential to meet the needs of a group of marketing professionals for whom there is currently no provision in Irish higher education. The proposers had, none the less, been requested to resubmit the proposal for consideration, taking account of the following recommendations: the credit rating for the proposed programme needs to be brought into line with Marks and Standards, and this will entail some restructuring; some queries about the financial issues need to be clarified with the Finance Office; in addition to the planned on-campus delivery, the option of delivering the programme on line or by means of blended learning should be explored. (See also Item 7 below.) (Item 8)
- 3.20** Noted that the additional information which had been requested about the proposed restructuring of the MSc in Bioinformatics would be made available to the EC at its meeting of 3 March 2010. (Item 10)
- 3.21** Noted that the Associate Deans for Teaching and Learning/Education would be represented on the EC by Mr Billy Kelly, Associate Dean for Teaching and Learning in Dublin City University Business School. (Item 13)

SECTION B: STRATEGIC MATTERS FOR DISCUSSION

4. Report on progress of EC goals 2009/10

4.1 Programme ‘health check’

- 4.1.1** Ms Aisling McKenna, Institutional Research and Analysis Officer, explained the background to the criteria proposed to underpin the ‘health check’ exercise, noting that many had originated in recommendations from the EC and that the procedures for seeking data for the ‘health check’ and data for programme reviews had been streamlined to avoid duplication of work. It was noted that there were specific times of year at which it would be particularly relevant to seek data relating to the ‘health check’ and also specific times at which various types of data would be particularly useful. It was agreed that Ms McKenna would liaise with the Associate Deans for Teaching and Learning/Education so that the views of the Faculty Teaching and Learning/Education committees about the most useful schedule could

be ascertained. It was agreed that data for each Faculty should be made available to that Faculty and that all data should be available to the EC. Ms McKenna also noted that some technical issues remained to be resolved with regard to the system of flagging potential problem areas with regard to programmes and that it would be important to balance the provision of historical data with the provision of snapshots of data relevant at a particular point in time.

- 4.1.2** Dr MacKeogh noted that she intended to roll out the student survey which she is piloting with Oscail students to all undergraduate students at the end of March, following evaluation of the pilot. She hopes to complete all the work relating to the survey by the end of April 2010. This survey is based on the University of Sydney Course Experience Questionnaire.

4.2 Report from subgroup on DCU student profile and graduate characteristics

- 4.2.1** The Chair noted that the group had met on two occasions to date and would continue its work with a view to completing it by early Summer 2010. Dr MacKeogh has provided initial figures on student profile in a range of institutions and is now to refine them to include information from Dublin Institute of Technology as well as international comparisons and also to provide the information on postgraduate taught and postgraduate research students in separate categories. She invited the members of the EC to make further recommendations on data that might prove useful for inclusion.

- 4.2.2** The Chair explained that a range of sources of information had been examined in the course of the discussions about the actual and desired characteristics of the DCU graduate, including the survey of alumni carried out in April 2009, data from quality reviews and the views of the Learning Innovation Advisory Panel. Mr Dowling undertook to arrange for the views of a range of external stakeholders, including industry stakeholders and guidance counsellors, to be ascertained with respect to the Faculty of Engineering and Computing. It was agreed also that Mr McConnell would raise with the Marketing Group the possibility of commissioning an external market research company to conduct relevant research and that Dr Bohan would seek the advice of Ms Muireann Ní Dhuigneáin as to the existence of any relevant studies about employability which might be made available to the Subgroup.

4.3 Research-led teaching

Deferred to the 3 March 2010 meeting of the EC.

4.4 Emerging subject areas

Professor O’Kennedy noted that the outcome of the quality review of DCU within the context of Institutional Review of Irish Universities would be helpful in

informing discussion on this issue and that therefore it would be raised again with the EC following the review.

5. Recommendations on issues to be addressed when preparing proposals for joint awards with other institutions

The recommendations were approved, and it was agreed that Mr McConnell and Ms McDermott would work towards implementing them and report on this matter to the EC as soon as possible.

SECTION C: PROGRAMME- AND MODULE-SPECIFIC ISSUES

6. Validation proposal: MSc in Organisational Change and Leadership Development

6.1 Agreed to submit this proposal for consideration by the Validation Subgroup at its meeting of 9 February 2010.

6.2 The following were noted as being among the issues to be noted and/or discussed by the Subgroup:

- it is noted that the word ‘health’ does not appear in the title, though the organisation which will initially provide the students is in the health sector
- a question arises as to the extent to which it will be possible to apply the aims and objectives to other organisations in due course
- the reference to ‘module certification’ in Section 6.5 needs to be clarified
- the possibility of innovative delivery methods might helpfully be explored further.

7. Validation proposal: Graduate Certificate in Digital Marketing

Agreed that it would not be necessary to refer this revised proposal to the Validation Subgroup, since all the issues raised by the Subgroup at its meeting of 19 January 2010 had been addressed satisfactorily, and that it should be recommended to Academic Council that the proposed programme be approved for further development towards accreditation.

8. Proposal to restructure the Bachelor of Nursing Studies (plus CVs of the proposed members of the electronic Accreditation Board)

Approved.

9. Proposed strand in Community Development on the Adult Learning BA programme in All Hallows College

Approved. An additional proposal, to offer this programme on a full-time as well as the existing part-time basis, was also approved.

10. Any other business

10.1 Noted that it was intended to develop a template form for use by programme proposers when submitting CVs for approval.

10.2 Noted that Mr Eamonn Cuggy, Finance Officer, or his nominee would attend future meetings of the Validation Committee to clarify any queries that might arise about financial projections for proposed programmes.

Date of next meeting:

<p>Wednesday 3 March 2010, 2.00 p.m. in A204</p>

Signed: _____
Chair

Date: _____