

ACADEMIC COUNCIL

MINUTES

10 April 2013

2.00-3.25 p.m. in AG01

PRESENT:

L Barry
C Bohan
O Bree
C Brennan
P Brereton
J Bruen
J Brunton
P J Byrne
J Carroll
B Casey
Mary Clynes
D Cordial
J Costello
M Crane
E Cunningham
Y Delauré
R Devery
M Doherty
J Dowling
Jim Doyle
John Doyle
H Esmonde

M Farren
S Fox
M Glynn
E Guilfoyle (VPAA)
P James
B Kelly
M Kirwan
C Long
L Looney
C Mac an Bhaird
B MacCraith (President)
L McDermott (Secretary)
C McDonagh
I McEvoy
A McGrady
G McGuinness
P McMorrow
P McNally
D Molloy
M Molony
G Murphy
M Nic Giolla Mhichíl

Rory O'Connor
Robert O'Connor
E O'Riordan
J Péchenart
M Pryce
J Rami
C Renehan
M Roantree
H Ruskin
R Sadleir
P Sheridan
D Sinclair
M Slowey
P Smith
J Stokes
A Stover
R Tobin
R Walshe
G Warrington
S Wickham
P Willis

APOLOGIES:

S Belton
J Bosak
M Byrne

M Humphrys
D Kenny
S Knowlton

E McGlynn
B McMullin
C McMullan

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| A Clogher | P Landais | G Moore |
| Martin Clynes | J Lynch | A Morrissey |
| E Connolly | C Mac Murchaidh | P Ó Flatharta |
| P Cummins | B McConalogue | K Rafter |
| S Flanagan | T McCormack | P Sheehan |
| B Flood | Á McGillicuddy | A Sinnott |
| A Harvey | C McGivern | F Waldron |

IN ATTENDANCE (for Item 7):

M Long

1. Adoption of agenda

The agenda was adopted.

A: Minutes and related issues**2. Minutes of the meeting of Academic Council of 13 February 2013**

The minutes were confirmed and were signed by the Chair.

3. Matters arising

3.1 It was noted that the two sets of guidelines for Programme Chairs in terms of chairing Progression and Awards Boards would be made available within a fortnight. (Item 3.1)

3.2 With respect to developments in terms of university selection and entry, the Chair noted the announcement by the Minister for Education and Skills, on 27 March 2013, of commitments to reduce the overall number of entry routes to Level 8 programmes in higher education, reduce the number of grade bands in the Leaving Certificate and address problematic predictability in the Leaving Certificate examinations. With respect to the reduction in the overall number of degree programmes in higher education, all the university Presidents have agreed a set of principles which will be made available for the consideration of their Academic Councils as soon as possible. (These principles will be circulated in advance to DCU Academic Council.) Certain exceptions are to be made to the general move towards broader entry mechanisms – e.g. for programmes in healthcare, programmes requiring professional accreditation by external bodies and programmes deemed to be of particular strategic significance for

institutions. The Chair noted also the desirability of distinguishing admissions processes from marketing

processes and of encouraging applicants to be aware of the range of specialisms that will remain available to them notwithstanding the planned broader entry mechanisms. (Item 3.2)

- 3.3** It was noted that the dates of graduation ceremonies, Progression and Awards Boards and promulgation of examination results in Autumn 2013 had been agreed and published in the Academic Calendar 2013/14. (Item 3.3)

4. Minutes of the meetings of the Education Committee of 9 January 2013 and 6 February 2013

Approved. With respect to Item 3.11, it was noted that, while the overall policy on joint research supervision and awards had been approved by Executive, specific proposals which fell under this policy would, as a matter of course, require the approval of Academic Council. With respect to Item 4.2, it was noted that the achievement of the remaining goals under the Academic Framework for Innovation would be dependent on the availability of an appropriately flexible student management information system.

5. Minutes of the meeting of the University Standards Committee of 7 January 2013

Approved.

5.1 Minutes of the meeting of the Graduate Studies Board of 29 November 2012

Approved.

B: Policy and strategy issues

6. President's report

- 6.1** The definitive landscape in respect of higher education is expected to be made known soon – possibly by the end of April 2013. It is believed that the HEA plans to submit its final recommendations to the Minister for Education and Skills very shortly. The information to be made available will include final details both of the forthcoming clustering arrangements and of the operational criteria with respect to clustering. At its

- meeting with the HEA on 15 February 2013, the University had outlined its view that entering a clustering arrangement with Institutes of Technology in the Dublin area, as had been mooted, would be unlikely to assist it in achieving its strategic aims as developed in the light of the *National Strategy for Higher Education to 2030*.
- 6.2** The Director of the 3U Partnership has been identified: the appointee is Dr Ruth Davis, currently of the HEA. Dr Davis will take up her post on 14 May 2013. An appointment will also be made in the near future to the post of Head of the 3U Pathways Programme.
- 6.3** With respect to the forthcoming incorporation of St Patrick's College, Mater Dei Institute of Education and the Church of Ireland College of Education into the University, an independent chair has been appointed: Mr Gerry Kearney, formerly Secretary General at the Department of Community, Rural and Gaeltacht affairs. CICE has formally signalled the termination of its partnership with Trinity College Dublin and its intention to enter into an agreement with DCU. The tendering process with respect to an external agency to advise on the operationalisation of the incorporation is under way. Four working groups have been established to progress aspects of the incorporation: two of these cover academic issues with respect to Education and academic issues with respect to Humanities and Social Sciences; the other two are the Registrars' and Librarians' groups. Further working groups will be set up to deal with other areas.
- 6.4** Discussions are in progress with All Hallows College with respect to the renewal of the linkage agreement.
- 6.5** Work is ongoing on the development of the common approaches with Dundalk Institute of Technology in relation to Level 9 and Level 10 programmes.
- 6.6** Data on CAO applications to date indicate that the University has seen a slight increase in overall preferences and a slight decrease in first preferences. It will therefore be particularly important to ensure that potential applicants are encouraged to consider the University in the context of the change-of-mind process. More broadly, it is critically important for the University to consider the efficiency and efficacy of its recruitment strategy and to develop this as necessary. To this end, the Executive Director of External and Strategic Affairs, Mr Ciarán Ó Cuinn, and members of his team are in discussion with the Deans of Faculty and other stakeholders.
- 6.7** Visits by the President and Senior Management to the Faculties, to discuss *Transforming Lives and Societies*, the University's strategic plan 2012-2017, have now taken place, and visits to Units are under way. The five component strategic plans are at a very advanced stage of development and will shortly be completed.

- 6.8** The new University website is expected to be launched in late April. The Faculties and many Units will be included in the new website on this date, with remaining Units following shortly afterwards.
- 6.9** Thanks and congratulations are due to all those involved in the organisation of the graduation ceremonies on 23 March 2013, which were very successful.
- 6.10** Among the recent successes which the University has enjoyed in terms of research funding are the EU-funded Re-Play project and the funds obtained by members of CLARITY with other colleagues in the Faculty of Science and Health and the Faculty of Engineering and Computing in the context of the SFI Insight Centre. Congratulations are extended to all concerned.
- 6.11** Applications are closing for the student start-up accelerator programme, USTART, and the significant contribution of Dr Ciarán Mac an Bhaird of Fiontar towards the development of this programme is acknowledged with thanks. Similarly, the significant contribution of Dr Emer Ní Bhrádaigh of Fiontar to the fostering of social entrepreneurship, which recently (19 March 2013) led to the designation of DCU as one of the first two European Changemaker Campuses, is acknowledged with thanks.
- 6.12** The University has been particularly successful in its commitment to the CoderDojo initiative and is one of the few institutions which functions as a permanent location for CoderDojo workshops. Thanks are due to all volunteers who assist with this initiative.

7. INTRA

7.1 Report on INTRA activities 2012

In presenting this report, Ms Maeve Long, Director of INTRA, noted the very positive feedback from employers in relation to the calibre of the students on placement. The Chair noted the possibility of making this positive perspective more widely known and appreciated than may be the case at present. On the subject of tutor visits, Ms Long expressed appreciation to all members of academic staff who had carried them out in 2012, but noted that some visits had not been carried out and that, in the case of some visits that had been carried out, reports had not been submitted to the INTRA Office. It was noted that it would be helpful for Heads of School to be apprised of the status of visits due to be undertaken, ideally by means of a database which they could access.

7.2 Recommendations of the working group on INTRA

Professor Eithne Guilfoyle, Vice-President Academic Affairs (Registrar), expressed appreciation to the members of the working group for having formulated the recommendations. She undertook to establish and chair an implementation working group which would agree procedures for the operationalisation of these recommendations and would report to the Education Committee. It was noted that the references to accreditation in recommendation 2.1.2 would be replaced by references to validation.

C: Items for formal approval/noting

8. Matters from the Education Committee and the University Standards Committee

8.1 The matters from the Education Committee were approved.

8.2 The recommendations of the University Standards Committee with respect to changes to *Regulations and Guidelines: External Examiners for Taught Programmes/Modules* were approved.

8.3 The recommendations of the University Standards Committee with respect to changes to the English-language requirements for native speakers of other languages, on a pilot basis, were approved subject to their being applied to the entire Faculty of Engineering and Computing (including the School of Computing) rather than only to the Schools of Electronic Engineering and Mechanical and Manufacturing Engineering as had originally been proposed. In the discussion that preceded the decision to approve the recommendations, the following points were made:

- the commitment by the Faculty to undertake detailed monitoring of the progress of students admitted with the new requirements will be essential, particularly in view of the fact that University College Cork, which had agreed lower requirements for applicants to its Engineering programmes, had decided to change the requirements back up to the previous level
- it will be equally important to provide supports for students admitted with the new requirements; one of these could potentially take the form of an initial, intensive English-language course; it is acknowledged that resources to provide supports are in scarce supply across the University
- in some disciplines (though largely not in Engineering and Computing) the issue of the provision of supports is particularly important in view of the requirement for non-native speakers of English to participate in group work alongside native speakers.

9. Validation report: MSc in Chronic Disease Management

Approved.

10. Accreditation report: MEng in Healthcare Technologies

Approved.

11. Re-appointment of Chairperson to Appeals Board

Approved.

12. Any other business

None.

Date of next meeting:

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| <p>Wednesday 5 June 2013 2.00 p.m. in AG01</p> |
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Signed: _____
President

Date: _____