

## ACADEMIC COUNCIL

### MINUTES

13 February 2013

2.00-2.50 p.m. in AG01

#### PRESENT:

P Brereton  
K Browne  
J Bruen  
J Brunton  
J Carroll  
B Casey  
A Clogher  
Mary Clynes  
J Connolly  
D Cordial  
E Cunningham  
Y Delauré  
R Devery  
M Doherty  
J Dowling  
Jim Doyle  
H Esmonde  
M Farren  
B Flood  
S Fox

M Glynn  
E Guilfoyle (VPAA)  
S Ingle  
B Kelly  
M Kirwan  
L Looney  
C Mac an Bhaird  
B McConalogue  
B MacCraith (President)<sup>1</sup>  
L McDermott (Secretary)  
C McDonagh  
I McEvoy  
A McGrady  
G McGuinness  
B McMullin  
P McNally  
M Molony  
G-M Muntean  
G Murphy

M Nic Giolla Mhichíl  
C Ó Ciardubháin  
Robert O'Connor  
J O'Hara  
J O'Higgins-Norman  
E O'Riordan  
J Péchenart  
M Roantree  
H Ruskin  
P Sheehan  
P Sheridan  
M Slowey  
P Smith  
J Stokes  
R Tobin  
R Walshe  
G Warrington  
S Wickham  
P Willis

---

<sup>1</sup> Professor MacCraith chaired the meeting for Items 1-6 inclusive. Professor Guilfoyle chaired the meeting for Items 7-11 inclusive.

**APOLOGIES:**

S Belton	S Knowlton	A Morrissey
J Bosak	P Landais	P Ó Flatharta
O Bree	C Long	Rory O'Connor
C Brennan	J Lynch	V Potì
M Byrne	C Mac Murchaidh	M Pryce
P J Byrne	A McCartney	K Rafter
Martin Clynes	T McCormack	C Renehan
J Costello	Á McGillicuddy	D Reynolds
M Crane	E McGlynn	R Sadleir
P Cummins	P McMorrow	D Sinclair
S Flanagan	C McMullan	A Sinnott
Y Gao	D Molloy	A Stover
M Humphrys	G Moore	F Waldron
D Kenny		

**1. Adoption of agenda**

The agenda was adopted subject to the deferral of Item 8 to the 10 April 2013 meeting of Academic Council.

**A: Minutes and related issues****2. Minutes of the meeting of Academic Council of 12 December 2012**

The minutes were confirmed and were signed by the Chair.

**3. Matters arising**

- 3.1** With respect to the processes for validating and approving examination results, Mr Billy Kelly, Chair of the working group charged with making recommendations on these issues, noted that various measures had been proposed and had been divided into categories: those amenable to implementation in the short term (by June 2013); those amenable to implementation in the medium term (by June 2014); those amenable to implementation in the longer term (by June 2015). The first category contains two measures, and these will be implemented soon: they are the establishment of guidelines for those chairing Progression and Awards Boards with respect to decision-making in relation to extenuating circumstances (with a view to promoting clarity and

consistency), and the establishment of guidelines for those chairing Progression and Awards Boards with respect to decision-making more generally. (Item 3.2)

**3.2** The President noted the following in relation to the work of the Task Group on Reform of University Selection and Entry:

- he has consulted the Deans of Faculty about the issues
- Professor Philip Nolan, President of the National University of Ireland, Maynooth and Chair of the Task Group, is due to visit all the university Presidents to discuss the issues
- there is a strong possibility that a recommendation will be made that all universities move to offering a relatively small number of broadly-based degree programmes (though exceptions may be made where practical considerations dictate this)
- any and all changes recommended will have to be approved by the Academic Councils of all the universities
- DCU Academic Council will be kept abreast of developments.

In the ensuing discussion, the following were noted:

- having students make decisions about specialisation only after the first year of higher education might prove advantageous to the extent that the decisions would be likely to be made on a more informed basis than is currently the case
- first-year class groups would be more varied in terms of abilities and interests than currently tends to be the case
- it will be important to take steps to ensure that students wishing to specialise (post first year) in disciplines requiring a high level of achievement in a subject or subjects at Leaving Certificate would be obliged to demonstrate such achievement before entry to university
- it will be important also to maintain the market advantages enjoyed by currently denominated degree programmes (e.g. by highlighting their existence as options after a broadly-based first year)
- professional entry requirements for professional accrediting bodies will continue to be respected
- it will be important to engage with the issue of minimum entry requirements.

(Item 3.5)

**3.3** With respect to the Academic Calendar for 2013/14, it was noted that the dates of the graduation ceremonies in November 2013 would shortly be determined and, following this, the dates of the Progression and Awards Board meetings for final-year Master's programmes and the corresponding dates for the publication of examination results would be determined. The dates of PAB meetings and of publication of examination results in June 2014 will be determined in the context of the recommendations of the working group on validating and approving examination results (see Item 3.1 above). It will be possible to change the consultation dates between staff and students, for

Summer 2014, to the same week as that in which the examination results are published. For technical reasons, a corresponding change cannot be fully implemented in Summer 2013. However, a partial solution is possible, and it was therefore agreed that the consultation dates for Summer 2013 would be Friday 28 June (which is in the same week as that in which the examination results are published) and Monday 1 July. (Item 9)

**4. Minutes of the meetings of the Education Committee of 7 November 2012 and 5 December 2012**

Approved.

**5. Minutes of the meeting of the University Standards Committee of 15 November 2012**

Approved.

**5.1 Minutes of the meeting of the Graduate Studies Board of 18 October 2012**

Approved.

**5.2 Policy on Recognition of Prior Learning in respect of research programmes**

Approved. Dr Lisa Looney, Dean of Graduate Studies, noted that the policy had been circulated in draft form for discussion in Faculties prior to being finalised and that one outcome of its implementation would be that decisions on admission of non-standard candidates would be taken within Faculties rather than, as has been the case up to now, by the Graduate Studies Board, though the GSB would monitor the pattern of decisions. It was noted too that care had been taken to ensure, in the policy, that the potential supervisor was not put in the position of having to take the role of advocate with respect to the prospective student. Dr Looney thanked Dr Sheelagh Wickham, Associate Dean for Teaching and Learning in the Faculty of Science and Health, for having provided the template for the existing policy on Recognition of Prior Learning in respect of taught programmes.

**B: Policy and strategy issues****6. President's report**

- 6.1** The document published by the HEA on 16 January 2013, *Completing the Landscape Process for Irish Higher Education*, acknowledges the proposed developments between the University and St Patrick's College of Education, Mater Dei Institute of Education and the Church of Ireland College of Education. It also acknowledges the proposed developments between the University and Dundalk Institute of Technology. The document also refers to the forthcoming regional clusters, though it makes it clear that the information on this is not final. It will need to be ensured that the relationship between the University and All Hallows College is made clearer in future documentation than is apparent in the 16 January document. Additionally, clarification will be required as to which regional clusters Dublin Institute of Technology, the Institute of Technology, Tallaght and the Institute of Technology, Blanchardstown will belong to. The final announcement about the landscape is expected in April 2013 following recommendations by the HEA to the Minister for Education and Skills, Mr Ruairí Quinn, in March.
- 6.2** With respect to the 3U Partnership, it is expected that the appointment of the Director will be announced soon. The 3U event held in DCU on 17 January 2013 for staff from the 3U Partnership institutions was a very considerable success, yielding information about collaborative initiatives that have been pursued to date. Members of Council are encouraged to explore additional initiatives.
- 6.3** The Joint Steering Group with respect to the forthcoming Institute of Education is meeting on a regular basis – approximately fortnightly. It is expected that this Group will shortly benefit from the involvement of an independent chair and the services of an external facilitator. Two working groups, on academic programmes in Education and academic programmes in the Humanities and Social Sciences, have been established to date. The update sent to all University staff on 7 February 2013 will be repeated on a regular basis to ensure that knowledge about developments is disseminated.
- 6.4** Work is in progress to develop common approaches with Dundalk Institute of Technology with respect to Level 9 and Level 10 programmes.
- 6.5** The visits by the President and senior colleagues to Faculties to discuss the implementation of *Transforming Lives and Societies*, the strategic plan 2012-2017, have taken place. Visits to administrative units, with a similar objective, will now take place.

- 6.6** The DCU Innovation Campus was opened by Mr Richard Bruton, Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation, on 17 January 2013. On this date also, the UStart Accelerator Programme, which provides opportunities for students to create start-ups on a funded basis, was launched.
- 6.7** The Enterprise Advisory Board held a meeting in the University on 23 January 2013.
- 6.8** The 2013 President's Research Awards were awarded to Professor Greg Hughes of the School of Physical Sciences and Dr Dorothy Kenny of the School of Applied Language and Intercultural Studies. Congratulations are extended to both colleagues on behalf of Academic Council. The awards were made at a very successful ceremony which took place on 6 February 2013.

**C: Items for formal approval/noting**

**7. Matters from the Education Committee and the University Standards Committee**

Approved.

**8. Validation report: MSc in Chronic Disease Management**

Deferred to the meeting of 10 April 2013.

**9. Progression and Awards Boards recommendations for March 2013 conferring**

Approved.

**10. Faculty Awards Boards recommendations for March 2013 conferring**

Approved.

**11. Any other business**

None.

**Date of next meeting:**

**Wednesday 10 April 2013  
2.00 p.m. in AG01**

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_  
President

Date: \_\_\_\_\_