

**UNIVERSITY STANDARDS COMMITTEE****MINUTES**

Thursday 7 January 2021

9.30 a.m. – 10.15 a.m. via Zoom

**Present:** Dr Brad Anderson, Dr Maura Coulter, Ms Margaret Irwin-Bannon (Secretary), Mr Billy Kelly (Chair), Dr Anna Logan, Dr Kenneth McDonagh, Mr John McDonough, Dr Jennifer McManis, Ms Phylomena McMorrow Ms Michele Pringle and Dr Blanaid White

**Apologies:** Dr Lorraine Delaney, Dr Yseult Freeney, Prof Joseph Stokes and Mr Lucien Waugh Daly

The Chair opened the meeting and welcomed Dr Brad Anderson to University Standards Committee as representative of the Heads of School.

**SECTION A: MINUTES RELATED ISSUES****1. Adoption of the agenda**

The agenda as circulated was adopted.

**2. Minutes of the meeting of 19 November 2020**

The minutes of 19 November 2020 were approved. It was noted that formal minutes would be signed at a later date.

**3. Matters arising from the minutes of 19 November 2020**

**3.1** It was noted that the Chair had consulted with the Vice President for Academic Affairs/Registrar with respect to the 2.5 credit module which is part of the structure on DCU Business School first year undergraduate degree programmes, and which is not aligned with Marks and Standards. It was agreed that the related structures would not change for 2019-2020 however, it was advised that this situation should not continue for 2021, and notwithstanding the fact that students have completed the module, this matter should be resolved for 2020-21 within the academic structure process (Item 3.1).

**3.2** It was noted that the Chair had sent a communication to the Associate Deans for Teaching and Learning requesting they communicate within their faculties that external examiners should be enabled to review representative MCQ tests where the test comprises a substantial part of the module assessment (item 6).

- 3.3** It was noted it had been clarified that the external examiner nominated to examine the BSc in Actuarial Mathematics programme would combine this role with that of independent examiner for the Institute and Faculty of Actuaries (Item 4.1.1).
- 3.4** It was noted that follow-up was completed with respect to the nomination of the external examiner for the MSc in Business Administration. It was noted that although modules appeared 'pending' on the Guru system, all modules were approved in full for the academic year (Item 4.1.6).
- 3.5** It was noted that a minor amendment to the BSc in Physical Sciences with Mathematics programme regulations was approved by Chair's Action, 10 December 2020.
- 3.6** It was noted that the nomination of an external examiner to examine the Graduate Diploma in Web Technologies was approved by Chair's Action, 2 December 2020.

## **SECTION B: FACULTY ISSUES**

### **4. External examiners for taught programmes**

#### **4.1 Nominations**

4.1.1 Karlstad University  
Modules in DCUBS  
Approved

4.1.2 University College Dublin  
BA in International Relations  
Not approved, as the nomination was not aligned with the regulations for the appointment of external examiners. USC considered the case made by the School for this appointment however it was felt, in terms of the nominee's specific expertise, the argument to appoint him was not sufficiently compelling. In addition, it was felt that an existing external examiner's appointment should not be terminated as long as there are continuing students on a programme. USC recommended that an alternative nomination would be made.

#### **4.2 Renewal of appointment/changes to duties**

4.2.1 Maynooth University  
MA in Children's and Young Adult Literature  
Approved, it was noted that this appointee would be a temporary replacement for an existing external examiner taking pre-agreed leave.

## 5. **FACULTY: OTHER ISSUES:**

### 5.1 **DCUBS**

#### 5.1.1 Legacy readmission request: MSc in Finance

Approved in principle. An issue was raised with the respect to the following as outlined under (Q5): that the student would be required to complete '*additional content provided by the Programme Chair to specifically map the previous module EF5123 that was not passed*'. It was recommended, if there were reasons for the student to be required to cover additional content, it should in the form of an accredited module(s). It was requested that clarification would be provided as to the required modules the student should complete, over and above EF5160.

### 5.2 **Open Education**

#### 5.2.1 Notification of Periodic Programme Reviewers

The appointment of existing external examiners to participate in the Periodic Programme Review of the following programmes were noted:

- BSc in Information Technology
- BSc in Information Technology
- BSc in Management of Information Technology and Information Systems

### 5.3 **DCU Institute of Education**

#### 5.3.1 Legacy readmission request: Professional Master of Education (Primary)

Approved. It was requested, as the student will have successfully completed five credits over and above the minimum credits required, that consideration would be given to calculating the final precision mark in a manner that is equitable to other students.

#### 5.3.2 Request for change to Marks and Standards, Graduate Diploma/Graduate Certificate classification

The following proposed change to Marks and Standards was considered as follows:

*Marks and Standards:* Section 8.5.2: Amend Level 9 Certificate and Diploma classification from a Distinction (70%+), Credit (60-69%) and Pass (40-59%) to a First Class Honours (70%+) 2.1 (60-69%), 2.2 (50-59%), Third Class Honours (40-49%) award classification.

It was noted that the proposal was for discussion only at this point to allow an opportunity for faculties to consider the proposal and to provide feedback to USC to inform a decision at the February 2021 meeting of USC. In the brief discussion which followed it was noted that the classification of NFQ level 9 Graduate Certificates and Graduate Diplomas is not consistent across the sector at a national level. It was proposed that faculties would give the

matter due consideration and a decision would be made at the February meeting of USC. If the change was to meet USC approval, Marks and Standards would be amended in the annual revisions made in May, and submitted for the consideration of Academic Council in June 2021.

**SECTION C: Other issues (not Faculty-specific)**

**6. Appointment of replacement external examiners for extended sick-leave or maternity /paternity / adoptive leave**

The Secretary introduced this item noting that although there is provision for specified sick-leave and maternity leave outlined within the regulations and guidelines for the appointment of external examiners, there is no guidance as to how schools and faculties may temporarily replace external examiners who avail of this leave. It was proposed that replacement external examiners could be appointed on a short-term basis in these very specific circumstances and nominations would be considered on a case-by-case basis.

The amendment was approved. It was noted that the *Regulations and Guidelines for External Examiners for Taught Programmes/Modules* would be amended to reflect the agreed change as above.

**7. Any other business**

There were no items of business.

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

**Date of next meeting:**

Thursday, 25 February 2021

9.30 a.m. via Zoom