

**UNIVERSITY STANDARDS COMMITTEE
MINUTES**

Thursday 25 February 2021

9.30 a.m. – 10.20 a.m. via Zoom

Present: Dr Brad Anderson, Dr Lorraine Delaney, Dr Yseult Freney, Dr Mark Glynn, Ms Margaret Irwin-Bannon (Secretary), Mr Billy Kelly (Chair), Dr Anna Logan, Dr Kenneth McDonagh, Mr John McDonough, Dr Jennifer McManis, Ms Phylomena McMorrow, Dr Niamh O’Sullivan, Ms Michele Pringle and Mr Lucien Waugh Daly

Apologies: Dr Maura Coulter and Prof Joseph Stokes

The Chair opened the meeting and welcomed Dr Niamh O’Sullivan to University Standards Committee in her role as Associate Dean for Teaching and Learning, Faculty of Science and Health.

SECTION A: MINUTES RELATED ISSUES

1. Adoption of the agenda

The agenda as circulated was adopted.

2. Minutes of the meeting of 7 January 2021

The minutes of 7 January 2021 were approved. It was noted that formal minutes would be signed at a later date.

3. Matters arising from the minutes of 7 January 2021

3.1 The Chair updated the Committee on two longer-term issues on the matters arising documentation:

He acknowledged that the issue of the requirement of DCU students to relinquish a minor award to return to complete a major award, where non-DCU students may retain their original award remains to be addressed.

He indicated that the TEU intended to draw down some funding to examine ‘attendance’ as it related to Programme Regulations and work was ongoing in this regard. Further updates would be provided to University Standards Committee.

3.2 It was noted that it had originally been recommended that DCU Business School first year undergraduate degree programmes structures which are not aligned with Marks and

Standards would be remedied for 2020-2021. It was noted that at this point it was not possible to change structures as previously recommended and it was agreed that the matter would be resolved for the 2021-2022 academic year (Item 3.1).

- 3.3** It was noted that an alternative external examiner nomination for the School of Law and Government had been submitted for the consideration of this meeting of USC (Item 4.1.2).
- 3.4** It was noted that clarification had been provided with respect to the legacy re-admission application for a student onto the MSc in Finance programme (Item 5.1.1).
- 3.5** It was noted that the proposed amendment to the classification for level 9, graduate certificates and graduate diplomas was on the agenda of this meeting for decision (Item 5.2.3).

SECTION B: FACULTY ISSUES

4. External examiners for taught programmes

4.1 Nominations

- 4.1.1 University of South Wales
Professional Doctorate in Elite Performance (Sport)
Approved
- 4.1.2 Manchester University
BA in International Relations
Approved
- 4.1.3 University of Cambridge
Modules in DCUBS
Approved, subject to the provision of information on the nominee's teaching/programme design/programme management experience in Higher Education
- 4.1.4 University of Limerick
Modules in DCUBS
Approved
- 4.1.5 University of Stirling
MSc in Nursing: Advanced Practice
Approved
- 4.1.6 Metanoia Institute
MSc in Psychotherapy
Approved

4.2 Renewal of appointment/changes to duties

There were no items for consideration.

5. Other issues: Faculty**5.1 Open Education****5.1.1 Student registration on two qualifications**

The proposal to permit a student to continue studies on more than one DCU programme for the current academic year, and develop a pathway for the student to allow them to pursue their future studies in line with DCU academic regulations was approved in this particular circumstances.

5.1.2 Module exemption request: BSc in Information Technology

The module exemptions requested were approved.

5.2 DCU Business School**5.2.1 Legacy readmission request: MSc in Investment, Treasury, and Banking**

Approved

5.3 Faculty of Science & Health**5.3.1 Nomination re. PPR External Expert: School of Physical Sciences**

Approved

5.3.2 Framework for consideration of students with outstanding assessment material for Category 2 modules in exceptional circumstances

The proposed framework for Progression and Award Boards to allow the possibility of providing additional time for students to submit assessment material for Category 2 (no resit opportunity) modules after the June PAB, in exceptional circumstances, was approved for implementation in the Faculty of Science and Health.

In the discussion which followed, it was noted that other faculties would have broadly similar student circumstances (projects and placements) that could be addressed by this proposed framework. It was agreed that a sub-committee of USC would meet to examine the possibility of its wider application.

5.4 Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences

5.4.1 FETAC entry pathway to the BA in Jazz and Contemporary Music Performance (JZCM) programme for 2021/22 entry

Noted

C: Other issues (not Faculty-specific)

6. Amendment to Marks and Standards 2021-2022: Classification of Level 9, Graduate Certificate and Graduate Diplomas

Proposed: 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%), 3 (40-49%) award classification.

It was noted that the proposal above had been the subject of an initial discussion at the University Standards Committee meeting of 7 January 2021 and it had been indicated that the classification of level 9 Graduate Certificates and Graduate Diplomas is not consistent across the sector at a national level, and therefore DCU was not limited by sectoral practice. It had been agreed that consultation would take place at Faculty/Unit level and feedback on the proposed change would be provided to this meeting to enable a decision to be made on whether or not it would be approved.

In the discussion which followed, it was reported that this change was broadly welcomed by all Faculties and Units and the implementation of the new classifications was agreed. It was noted that the changes would be made to Marks and Standards and submitted for Academic Council approval following the USC May 2021 meeting, which considers Marks and Standards for the following academic year.

It was further proposed that to ensure a consistency across Marks and Standards that the proposed change to classification would be extended to all Level 8 certificates and diplomas also. This was agreed.

7. Further Education Entry Routes to DCU Undergraduate Programmes (for noting)

The Chair noted that he was bringing this paper to the attention of USC as the University's policies on admissions, including non-traditional admission is within its remit. He informed the Committee that he had submitted the paper, as circulated to Education Committee, as it was part of a wider strategic initiative to widen participation. The proposal was approved by Education Committee on 13 January 2021. The paper was for noting by USC.

He informed USC that Faculties had been asked to consider allowing Further Education entry for programmes where it is not currently offered and for existing FE entry routes to be simplified, if possible.

8. Update on Academic Integrity and Plagiarism Policy

The Chair provided an update on the DCU Academic Integrity and Plagiarism Policy. He outlined that DCU's policy had been drafted from a plagiarism perspective and therefore did not fully address newer developments. He noted that there is emerging concern about contract cheating by students and this has been discussed by the National Academic Integrity Network (NAIN) of which he is Chair. He noted that NAIN has developed a lexicon of academic integrity terms and draft guidelines which are expected to be published in mid-April 2021. He noted that the guidelines should inform policies in all Higher Education institutions.

He indicated that he will be seeking volunteers across Faculties to review DCU's current policy in the context of the new guidelines and lexicon.

9. DCU Online Examinations Supplemental Regulations

The Director of Registry outlined that the current DCU examination regulations were written in the context of on-campus supervised written examinations. However, the regulations do not address the current context of online examinations, and there was a need to provide clarity to students on the conduct expected during online examinations.

The proposed supplemental regulations were approved, subject to the following amendment:

- Paragraph 2.4: replace 'through the relevant programme board' with 'by the relevant module co-ordinator'.

It was agreed that the document would be submitted for Academic Council approval at its April 2021 meeting to ensure dissemination to the student body in advance of the semester two 2021 online examinations.

10. Any other business

There were no items of business.

Signed: _____ Date: _____

Date of next meeting:

Thursday, 1 April 2021 9.30 a.m. via Zoom
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