

ACADEMIC COUNCIL

MINUTES

11 June 2014

2.00-2.50 p.m. in AG01

PRESENT:

L Barry
S Belton
C Bohan
M Brennan
P Brereton
D Brougham
J Bruen
J Brunton
M Byrne
J Carroll
K Casey
B Corcoran
E Costello
J Costello
Y Crotty
R Devery

J Dowling
B Flood
P Flynn
M Glynn
E Guilfoyle (VPAA)
B Kelly
D Kenny
P Landais
L Looney
B MacCraith (President)
L McDermott (Secretary)
C McDonagh
Á McGillicuddy
E McGlynn
P McMorrow
C McMullan

C Mac Murchaidh
D Molloy
G Murphy
M Nic Giolla Mhichíl
C Ó Ciardubháin
P Ó Duibhir
Ciarán O'Connor
J O'Hara
J Rami
J Stokes
A Stover
R Tobin
F Waldron
S Wickham
P Willis

APOLOGIES:

M Brown
P J Byrne
D Collings
J Connolly
B Daly
John Doyle

H Esmonde
S Fox
S Ingle
A McGrady
P McNally
G Moore

K Moran
N O'Reilly
C Renehan
A Sinnott
A Way

IN ATTENDANCE

P Gill
G Gillick

1. Adoption of agenda

The agenda was adopted subject to the deferral of Item 12 to the meeting of 30 June 2014 and the inclusion of one submission under Item 14.

A: Minutes and related issues

2. Minutes of the meeting of Academic Council of 9 April 2014

The minutes were confirmed and were signed by the Chair.

3. Matters arising

None.

4. Minutes of the meetings of the Education Committee of 5 March 2014 and 2 April 2014

Approved.

5. Minutes of the meeting of the University Standards Committee of 27 February 2014

Approved.

6. Minutes of the meeting of the Graduate Research Studies Board of 6 March 2014 and 17 April 2014

Approved.

B: Policy and strategy issues

7. President's report

- 7.1** The *Higher Education System Performance Report* including, *inter alia*, profiles of the higher education institutions and details of the HEA compact with each institution was published by the HEA on 11 June 2014. The members of Council are encouraged to read this report. It is hoped that a statement on the budgetary sustainability process

with respect to higher education will issue from the Department of Education and Skills soon.

- 7.2** The initial planning phase of the Incorporation project has reached a conclusion, with the *Planning Document for the Implementation Phase* having been made available to all staff in the participating institutions. The focus will now move to the implementation phase, and a communications website is expected to go live by 20 June 2014. Engagement with the unions is continuing and, more broadly, there will be a continuing emphasis on engagement and dialogue with all staff in respect of developments.
- 7.3** The formal launch of the 3U Pathway Foundation Programme took place on 6 June 2014 in the Emerald Cultural Institute at Milltown Park. This programme will make it possible for overseas students to take foundation modules with a view to progressing to degree programmes at DCU or NUI Maynooth. Another development with respect to the 3U Partnership is the recent acquisition of three co-located offices, one per institution, in Beijing.
- 7.4** Executive has approved the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding with the University of Ulster which builds on significant previous engagement and is expected to lead to further developments with respect to research and in other areas also. The initiative will be launched publicly on 2 July 2014.
- 7.5** The first review of the DCU Strategic Plan (*Transforming Lives and Societies*) has just been completed. The Senior Management Group discussed the proposed amendments to the action items (reflecting progress to date and other developments); these were approved by Executive on 10 June 2014 and will go for noting to the meeting of Governing Authority of 12 June 2014 with a view to final approval by Governing Authority at its meeting of 18 September 2014.
- 7.6** The recently-introduced U-Multirank system for comparing universities has yielded very positive results for DCU, which features in the top 4% of participating institutions. The flexibility of this system, which allows for customised comparisons as distinct from overall league tables, is noteworthy. Appreciation is expressed, on behalf of Council, to the Schools which participated in this first phase of the U-Multirank roll-out: Dublin City University Business School, the School of Mechanical and Manufacturing Engineering and the School of Physical Sciences.
- 7.7** The Anti-Bullying Centre was formally launched on 20 May 2014 by the Minister for Education and Skills, Mr Ruairí Quinn, and is expected to play a significant role in addressing the problems associated with bullying.
- 7.8** Congratulations are extended, on behalf of Council, to Dr Enda Donlon of Mater Dei Institute of Education, winner of the President's Award for Innovation 2014, and

Dr Eithne Kennedy of St Patrick's College, winner of the President's Award for Engagement 2014.

- 7.9** Appreciation is extended, on behalf of Council, to Mr Ciarán O'Connor, outgoing Vice-President – Education Officer of the Students' Union, and the outgoing Faculty Convenors, for their significant contribution to the work of Council, and of the University more generally, during their terms of office. Council welcomed the incoming Vice-President – Education Officer, Mr Gary Gillick, the incoming Faculty Convenor for the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, Mr Peadar Gill (both in attendance) as well as the other incoming Faculty Convenors.
- 7.10** The University notes with sadness the news that All Hallows College is to close. A formal process has been put in place to ensure that the University supports All Hallows College appropriately at this time. Any and all relevant queries are to be directed either to Mr Jim Dowling, Deputy President of DCU, or Mr Ronan Tobin, Deputy President of All Hallows College.
- 7.11** It was with deep regret that the University learnt of the very sad and untimely death of Dr Michael O'Connell of the School of Biotechnology. Deepest sympathy is extended, on behalf of Council, to Dr O'Connell's family and to his colleagues in the School.

8. Accreditation of research degrees at Dundalk Institute of Technology

- 8.1** In the discussion about the proposed accreditation, the following were noted:
- the proposed two-stage process represents an innovative approach to this type of initiative and is designed to safeguard the interests of both DCU and DkIT
 - the Qualifications and Quality Assurance (Education and Training) Act 2012 makes it incumbent on institutions to ensure very careful oversight of quality assurance in their linked providers, and this will be done in this instance
 - it is possible that further developments with respect to Level 9 and Level 10 offerings in DkIT may take place in due course, but only following detailed discussion; Level 8 DkIT offerings will not fall within the University's remit
 - benefits to DCU are likely to include the fact that DkIT has complementary strengths (replication of offerings is not envisaged) and the fact that DCU's PhD metrics will be enhanced by the addition of the DkIT students
 - benefits to DkIT are likely to include an enhancement of the PhD student experience, as will be required in the forthcoming HEA/QQI *Quality Framework for Doctoral Education*, and more flexible opportunities for researchers than are available at present
 - further detailed discussions will be required to ensure appropriate processes and procedures with respect to all the issues that relate to the first phase.

- 8.2 The proposal on accreditation of research degrees at Dundalk Institute of Technology was approved.

9. Proposed amendments to *Academic Regulations for Postgraduate Degrees by Research and Thesis*

- 9.1 The proposed amendments were approved subject to the following: Item 13.2.4 to be reworded to indicate that, where a meeting of the Appeals Standing Committee is chaired by an Associate Dean for Research, the ADR in question will not have had previous relevant involvement with issues relating to the appellant; Item 13.3.4 to be reworded to include a cross-reference to Item 7.16.
- 9.2 It was noted that, prior to promulgation in September 2014 with a view to implementation in 2014/15, the amended *Academic Regulations* would undergo final editing and hyperlinks to relevant documentation would be inserted. It was noted too that information supplementary to *Academic Regulations* is included in the guidance documentation for appellants.
- 9.3 It was agreed that issues relating to thesis format (for example, whether single- or double-sided printing should be used and, more broadly, whether consideration should be given to electronic rather than hardcopy submission) would be referred to the Graduate Research Studies Board.
- 9.4 Dr Looney expressed appreciation to the members of the GRSB and Faculties for their very significant engagement with *Academic Regulations* over the past three years, noting that while considerable revision had taken place to date it was hoped that the scale of such revision would be substantially smaller in future.

C: Items for formal approval/noting

10. Items from recent meetings of subcommittees of Academic Council

Approved.

11. Proposal on Academic Calendar 2014/15

Approved.

12. Accreditation report: MSc in Public Policy

Deferred to the meeting of 30 June 2014.

13. Proposed protocol on 3U joint programmes

Approved.

14. Any other business

- 14.1** The Chair expressed appreciation to all the members of Council for their commitment to the work of the University in the course of the academic year, noting that this is particularly valued in the context of the challenging external environment.

Date of next meeting:

**Monday 30 June 2014
2.00 p.m. in AG01**

Signed: _____
President

Date: _____