

**EDUCATION COMMITTEE  
MINUTES**

Wednesday, 17 May 2023

2.00 p.m. – 4.10 p.m.

- Present:** Dr Claire Bohan, Ms Jennifer Bruton, Professor Michelle Butler, Professor Brian Corcoran, Mr Eoin Crossen, Professor Derek Hand, Dr Rachel Keegan (Secretary), Professor Anne Looney, Professor Lisa Looney (Chair), Ms Aisling McKenna, Ms Pauline Mooney, Professor Joseph Stokes and Dr Monica Ward.
- Apologies:** Dr Sarahjane Belton, Professor Mark Brown, Professor John Doyle, Professor Dominic Elliott, Dr Jennifer McManis and Professor Blánaid White.
- In Attendance:** Dr Siobhain McGovern [Item 9]

**SECTION A: AGENDA, MINUTES AND MATTERS ARISING**

**1. Adoption of the agenda**

The agenda was adopted.

**2. Minutes of the meeting of the Education Committee of 19 April 2023**

The minutes of the meeting of 19 April 2023 were approved.

**3. Matters arising from the minutes of 19 April 2023**

- 3.1** It was noted that feedback in respect of the MSc in Specialist Nursing had been addressed (item 6.1).

#### **4. Minutes of the meeting of the Strategic Learning Innovation Project Steering Group of 1 March 2023**

The minutes were noted.

### **SECTION B: STRATEGIC MATTERS**

#### **5. Strategic Academic Initiatives**

##### **5.1 Teaching and Learning Strategy**

The Chair informed members that the new DCU Strategic Plan had been approved at the most recent meeting of Governing Authority. She informed members that an event to launch the Strategy was being planned for late August and that work on a website was being progressed in the meantime. She advised members that an advanced draft of the 'Pioneer a Transformative Student Experience' Pillar text would be progressed over the summer and would be brought to the September meeting of Education Committee for consideration.

Professor A. Looney provided a brief update on progress made with respect to the FET pathway aspect of the 'Flexibility' pillar priority noting, in particular, the highly ambitious target adopted by Senior management to have 10% of undergraduate students come to DCU via an FE route.

She informed members that work was underway to see if an existing partnership model of advanced entry to DCU Business School could be extended. She noted the significant work of Ms Georgina Roberts, Registry, in progressing this work.

Professor A. Looney also noted the planned development of a number of shared programmes in the sector, and she highlighted some of the challenges being encountered.

Dr C. Bohan informed Education Committee that work was being undertaken to refine the student profile model in terms of the makeup of the future undergraduate student body, and she advised members that the University is committed to ensuring relevant supports encompass all underrepresented groups, including those entering via the FET sector.

Professor A. Looney noted that several aspects of the new Strategy are dependent on good on-campus attendance by students. Members agreed that low attendance is a complex issue and how we approach the start of the next academic year would be very important.

## 5.2 Student Feedback on Teaching Working Group, Terms of Reference

The Chair provided a brief overview of the draft Terms of Reference, noting her thanks to Ms P. Mooney and Professor D. Elliott for their work in this regard.

She noted that the working group's purpose is to establish a systematic way of gathering and responding to student feedback on teaching.

Education Committee approved the Terms of Reference subject to the following amendments:

- Section 1, paragraph 1: the text should make explicit reference to 'students' perceptions and experiences of the quality of teaching'.
- Section 1, bullet point 4: the text should be amended to reference 'approved approaches'
- Membership: the membership should be expanded to include a member of staff from Student Learning in Student Support and Development. It was noted that any further necessary changes to membership would be within the gift of the working group as per 3.4 (amendments to Terms of Reference and Standing Orders)

## SECTION C: PROGRAMME AND MODULE-SPECIFIC MATTERS

### 6. Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences

#### 6.1 Revised Academic Offering: Graduate Certificate in Climate Change

Professor D. Hand briefed members on the proposed programme that is being developed explicitly for Deloitte in the first instance. He noted that this would not preclude the programme from being offered to other learners in the future.

Education Committee approved the stand-alone Graduate Certificate in Climate Change, noting that successful graduates could progress to the existing MSc in Climate Change: Policy, Media and Society.

Education Committee also approved the Graduate Certificate in Climate Change as an exit award from the MSc in Climate Change: Policy, Media and Society.

Education Committee requested that a number of minor amendments be made to the documentation as follows:

- The following text should be removed from the RAO form: Students who wish to transfer to the MSc in Climate Change programme may apply at the final course board and if approved by the board, they will not receive the Grad Cert but instead enter MSc in Climate Change programme in the following year with exemptions on the LG5034, GY502, and CM5029 modules.
- The alignment of module learning outcomes to programme learning outcomes in Course Builder should be reviewed for accuracy and completion.

## **7. Annual Programme Review Reports 2021/22**

The Chair noted that the APR reports included a mix of what occurred in 2021/22 with some indications of what was happening in 2022/23. She highlighted that some reports refer to the tight turnaround for marking, and she advised members that the timeframes agreed upon for the new calendar were no shorter than in previous years. It was noted that the issues raised may have been in relation to the overlap in marking and teaching in 2021/22, which was subsequently addressed for 2022/23.

The Chair noted that the reports vary and that further consideration is needed on the structure and context of the reports so that issues relevant to Education Committee can be surfaced.

Ms P. Mooney noted the systems issues raised in the reports, and she informed members of the challenges in getting to route causes and mitigating these risks. She noted the issues raised in relation to timetabling, informing members that a new system will not address all of these challenges, many of which are fundamental issues with how and when we timetable.

The Chair informed members that relevant issues highlighted in the APR reports would be summarised and reported to University Executive

### **7.1 DCU Business School**

The report was noted.

**7.2 DCU Institute of Education**

The report was noted.

**7.3 Faculty of Engineering and Computing**

The report was noted.

Education Committee noted that a couple of points in the report would benefit from some elaboration, and it was agreed that an updated report would be submitted to the Secretary for the record.

**7.4 Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences**

The report was noted.

Education Committee noted that the APR report makes reference to the MSc i nGnó agus i dTeicneolaíocht an Eolais being renamed as MSc sa Bhainistíocht agus Gnó Digiteach. Education Committee queried if this had been recorded on a previous annual report of devolved decisions.

Education Committee noted that the APR report indicates significant curriculum reform in the MA in Social Media Communications. Education Committee requested clarification on the extent of the changes to determine whether these would warrant a revised academic offering form being submitted.

**7.5 Faculty of Science and Health**

The report was noted.

**8. Report of Devolved Decisions**

The report was noted.

**9. DCU Business School: Memo: Graduate Diploma in Financial Technology and Innovation, HCI Pillar 1**

The Chair welcomed Dr Siobhain McGovern to the meeting to speak to item 9, noting that an early discussion on the proposal would help ensure successful completion of an accreditation process in time for a January 2024 launch date.

Dr McGovern informed Education Committee that DCU Business School had been approved for funding under HCI Pillar 1 for the creation of a new Graduate Diploma in Financial Technology and Innovation. She provided a brief overview of the proposed programme and the following points were raised by members:

- Members agreed that the embedding of an Intra placement into a postgraduate programme was a welcomed development.
  
- Members would be interested to see how assessment would be designed in light of developments in AI-based tools. It was noted that, if accredited, this would be the first programme launched since the rapid advancement of AI technology.
- It was suggested that the programme proposer should pay particular attention to the arrangement of modules in the proposed compressed semesters, in particular, ensuring sufficient time is being allocated per ECTS.
- It was suggested that the programme proposer should pay particular attention to the balance and potential overlap between work placement and immersive learning, and the grounding of theory and practice.
- It was suggested that the programme proposer should give consideration to the balance and spread of credits between the semesters.

**SECTION D: OTHER MATTERS**

**10. Any other business**

Dr M. Ward informed members that a DCU Guide to CBL pathways was launched today, that it builds on the definition adopted by Education Committee and the work of the CBL working group, and she shared hard copies of the guide with members.

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

**Date of next meeting:**  
Wednesday, 13 September 2023  
at 2.00 pm  
Location TBC