ACADEMIC COUNCIL

MINUTES

2 April 2025

2.05 p.m. – 3.10 p.m.

AG01, Glasnevin Campus

Present:

C. Bohan	A. Bourke	M. Breen
A. Brennan	J. Bruton	A. Butler
J. Cherry	P. Clarke	O. Clarkin
M. Coulter	Y. Crotty	SJ. Cullen
B. Daly	N. Dunne	M. Efthymiou
C. Fassbender	J. Foster	Y. Freeney
C. Furlong	F. Gallagher	J. Gaughran
C. Gurrin	D. Hand	B. Harney
E. Healion	A. Heeney	R. Keegan
D. Keogh (Chair)	V. Lambert	L. Looney
T. Lynn	A. Maillot	A. Matthews
U. McCabe	J. McDonough	P. McMorrow
M. McSharry	P. Murphy	W. Murphy
T. Ní Mhuirthile	S. O'Brien	J. O'Kelly
M. Rocchi	M. Ryan	SR. Sambandam
S. Smyth	M. Venker	G. Visoka
M. Ward	A. Whelan (Secretary)	B. White

Apologies:

C. Brennan	E. Conway	D. Elliott
N. Kerrigan	J. Lynch	P. Mooney
B. Nolan	M. Pryce	A. Sinnott
G. Uí Laighléis		

In Attendance:

V. Cooke	M. Crehan (for Item 8.1)	G. Daughton (for Item 12)
D. McCarthy (for Item 12)		

1. **Adoption of agenda**

   The agenda was adopted.

A. **Minutes and related issues**

2. **Minutes of the meeting of Academic Council of 5 February 2025**

   The minutes were <u>approved</u>.

3. **Matters arising**

   It was <u>noted</u> that the matters regarding Semester One grading 2027-2028 remain under discussion with Executive Deans, Registry and Students Union.

4. **Minutes of the meetings of the Education Committee of 22 January 2025 and 19 February 2025**

   The minutes were <u>approved</u>.

5. **Minutes of the meetings of the Graduate Research Studies Board of 16 January 2025**

   The minutes were <u>approved</u>.

6. **Minutes of the meetings of the University Standards Committee of 9 January 2025**

   The minutes were <u>approved</u>.

B.   Policy and Strategy issues

7.   President's report (oral report)

7.1   The President noted that the Spring graduation ceremonies had taken place on 28 March and saw almost 1,000 graduates conferred. The President remarked that there was a large number of staff present and the feedback on the ceremonies was very positive.

7.2   The President drew attention to DCU's secured funding of €3.2m under Research Ireland's Research Infrastructure Programme, which will greatly enhance the university's research capacity and reputation.

7.3   The President extended congratulations to Professor Nicholas Dunne, School of Mechanical and Manufacturing Engineering on the €1.02m funding awarded to DCU under the Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions (MSCA) Doctoral Network call, which was announced today.

7.4   Noting the importance of investment in research the President remarked that at a recent meeting with the Minister for Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science, the President of the Irish Research Council stated the necessity for increased investment in research, with funding being allocated consistently and strategically rather than sporadically.

7.5   The President called attention to the recent launch of DCU's Bachelor of Education in Home Economics and Technology, in partnership with the Technological University of the Shannon. This post-primary education programme is significant as it is the only programme nationally that offers the combination of home economics and technology subjects. It recognises the Institute of Education as a centre of excellence in teacher education.

7.6   The Vice President for Academic Affairs/Registrar informed members that the Student Information System Programme is embarking on the final stages of implementation, and that a considerable volume of work remains in coming weeks to facilitate the processing of final student results via Banner. It was noted also that a necessary Banner upgrade is currently underway. The Vice President for Academic Affairs/Registrar stated that clarity will be provided regarding the processing of INTRA grades this year and the timelines for the PGR2 process. The complexity of the work being completed was noted and thanks were extended to Faculty colleagues who have continued to work very collegiately as Banner has been implemented.

8.   Strategic academic initiatives

8.1   SATLE Initiatives – Impact on Teaching and Learning at DCU

Dr Martina Crehan, Head of the Teaching Enhancement Unit, joined the meeting for this item.

The Vice-President for Academic Affairs/Registrar introduced this item by noting that a multi-annual funding model had been introduced in recent years by the Teaching and Learning National Forum which now sits within the Higher Education Authority. This funding model, compared to single year funding, better facilitates the planning of strategically important teaching enhancement initiatives within the University.

The Head of the Teaching Enhancement Unit remarked that the funding awarded by the National Forum can be deployed under three headings: Education for Sustainable Development (ESD), Digital Transformation and Academic Integrity. It was noted that DCU's approach to utilise this funding has been to create both a supportive structure via the integration of three SATLE posts in the Teaching Enhancement Unit (TEU), and by funding projects across the University.

The three SATLE posts within the TEU correlate with each of the headings under which the National Forum funding is awarded. Barry Peake occupies the role of Education for Sustainable Development Officer, Motasem al Haj Ali occupies the Digital Transformation role, and Samantha (Jiaxin) Xu occupies the role of Academic Integrity Officer. The expertise provided via these three roles has facilitated the provision of ESD workshops and a Digital Badge in Education for Sustainability, the creation of a Loop planner to support students in their approach to assessments, and expert input to the review of university policies and procedures related to academic integrity.

SATLE funded projects have also focused on the three themes of ESD, Digital Transformation, and Academic Integrity, with 56 projects initiated to date. These funded projects are open for application from professional and academic staff and have included the exploration of a wide range of theme specific topics such as 'Mapping and Enhancing Education for Sustainable Development in Engineering Education in DCU' and 'Moral issues surrounding the use of ChatGPT (and other generative large language models)'.

Student partnership, external reach and collaboration were highlighted as integral to the work of the SATLE funded posts and projects and deliver meaningful engagements with DCU Students' Union and external stakeholders. It was noted that the sustainability of this work is dependent on the continuation of funding.

The Vice-President for Academic Affairs/Registrar acknowledged the leadership of the Head of the Teaching Enhancement Unit and the Dean of Teaching and Learning in the successful operationalisation of the SATLE funding allocated to date, which highlights the University's ability to drive teaching and learning innovation and enhancement when a right-size funding model is provided.

Dr Martina Crehan, Head of the Teaching Enhancement Unit, left the meeting after this item.

C.   Items for formal approval/noting

9.   Recognition of Prior Learning Decision Appeal Procedure

The Director of Registry noted that this is a new procedure, created to ensure that students who apply for admission via the Recognition of Prior Learning entry route are provided with a mechanism to appeal the decision should they wish to do so.

Approved

10.   Academic Integrity Policy

The Dean of Teaching and Learning stated that the agreed timeline for review of Academic Integrity Policy was one year after implementation of the updated policy. It was noted that the associated Procedure for Academic Misconduct Investigation and Sanction had since been revised and approved by Academic Council. It would be prudent for the Policy and Procedure to be reviewed in tandem in the next academic year, when the Procedure has been implemented for a year. In the meantime, a high-level review of the Academic Integrity Policy has been completed.

Approved

11.   Accreditation Reports

11.1   MSc in Business Analytics

Approved

11.2   MSc in Physiotherapy

<u>Approved</u>

12.   DCU's Application for TrustEd Quality Mark

Ms Goretti Daughton, Head of Academic Governance and Quality Assurance, and Dr David McCarthy, Academic Secretariat, joined the meeting for this item.

The Vice-President for Academic Affairs/Registrar introduced this item by stating that internationalisation is a priority of the DCU Strategy 2023-2028. The national context in terms of how HEIs offer an approved list of programmes to international learners, and they are awarded study visas to attend, is changing. The existing Interim List of Eligible Programmes (ILEP) is due to be discontinued upon the implementation of the TrustEd Quality Mark. The TrustEd Quality Mark will be required by all Higher Education and English language providers to recruit students who require study visas.

The Head of Academic Governance and Quality Assurance informed members that the TrustEd Quality Mark is a statutory quality mark that will be issued by Quality and Qualifications Ireland (QQI) and is legislated under the Qualifications and Quality Assurance (Education and Training) Act 2012, revised in 2019. The aim of the TrustEd Quality Mark is to underpin the quality of learning provided to international learners and will apply across the Higher Education and English language sectors.

The Academic Secretariat outlined that although there will be no differentiation between the TrustEd Quality Mark that is awarded to English Language and Higher Education providers, there are separate Codes of Practice for both. There are six principles within the Higher Education Code of Practice. DCU must demonstrate compliance with at least 80% of the applicable criteria and ensure that an 80% compliance rate is achieved in each of the six principles. It was noted that there were several steps involved in compiling DCU's application for the TrustEd Quality Mark which included a self-assessment, internal stakeholder engagement, compliance checks, actions and input, and the preparation of DCU's IEM Application Statement. Some of the actions taken include the development of DCU's English Language Policy and the creation of the International Student Emergency Fund, the latter of which was lauded by the President as an impactful development. The Head of Academic Governance and Quality Assurance informed members that the outcome of DCU's application will not be known until QQI has completed its review of all applications submitted in this cycle.

Ms Goretti Daughton, Head of Academic Governance and Quality Assurance, and Dr David Mc Carthy, Academic Secretariat, left the meeting after this item.

Noted

13. **Report from GRSB Appeals Standing Committee**

Noted

14. **Outline Academic Calendars 2025/26 and 2026/27 – Approved Resit Examination Period**

Approved

15. **Any other business**

There were no other items of business.

Signed: _____   Date: _____

Date of next meeting:

9 June 2025

2:00 pm

Zoom