

**ACADEMIC COUNCIL
MINUTES**

27 November 2024

2.10 p.m. – 3.30 p.m.

B103, St. Patrick's Campus

Present:

P. Admirand	M. Breen	A. Brennan
J. Bruton	D. Burke	A. Butler
P. Clarke	O. Clarkin	E. Clinton
R. Connolly	E. Conway	M. Coulter
Y. Crotty	B. Daly	M. Flynn
Y. Freeney	P. Gallagher	T. Gans
D. Hand	R. Keegan	D. Keogh (Chair)
M. Leahy	A. Looney	L. Looney
A. Matthews	U. McCabe	P. McMorrow
P. Mooney	W. Murphy	T. Ní Mhúirthile
S. O'Brien	M. Pryce	M. Rocchi
M. Ryan	G. Uí Laighléis	M. Venker
M. Ward	A. Whelan (Secretary)	B. White
X. Zheng		

Apologies:

C. Bohan	PJ. Byrne	J. Cherry
J. Doyle	N. Dunne	D. Elliott
J. Foster	G. French	C. Furlong
C. Gurrin	E. Healion	N. Kerrigan
V. Lambert	J. Lynch	A. Malliot

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AC2024/A5

J. McDonough	E. Ní Mhaille	B. Nolan
A. Sinnott	G. Visoka	

In Attendance:

V. Cooke	D. Maguire (for Item 8.2)	Y. McLoughlin (for Item 8.1)
P. Murray (for Item 8.1)		

1. Adoption of agenda

The agenda was adopted.

A. Minutes and related issues

2. Minutes of the meeting of Academic Council of 2 October 2024

The minutes were approved.

3. Matters arising

It was noted that there were no matters arising.

4. Minutes of the meetings of the Education Committee of 18 September 2024 and 9 October 2024

The minutes were approved.

5. Minutes of the meetings of the University Standards Committee of 29 August 2024

The minutes were approved.

6. Minutes of the meetings of the Graduate Research Studies Board of 15 August 2024

The minutes were approved.

B. Policy and strategy issues**7. President's report (oral report)**

- 7.1 The President extended congratulations to the DCU graduates whose awards were conferred on to them at the recent DCU graduation ceremonies. 12 ceremonies were held over four days in the Helix to celebrate this milestone in the education of over 4,400 graduates. The awards conferred included Honorary Doctorates to Patricia Kavanagh and Chief Justice Donal O'Donnell.
- 7.2 The President noted the success of the recent DCU Open Days and informed members that feedback from potential students and guidance counsellors was very positive. He reminded members that the QQI Further Education and Training Open Day would take place soon, and he expressed his gratitude to all involved in the planning for these important events.
- 7.3 The President drew attention to the General Election debate held this week, which was hosted by the School of Law and Government, in conjunction with the Debate Society and the Politics Society, featuring candidates in the Dublin North West constituency. He recognised that while investment in higher education has been included in the manifesto of election candidates, the core funding gap of €307million still needs to be addressed. He also noted that a number of DCU alumni are standing for election, which is testament to the civic spirit of our graduates.
- 7.4 The President congratulated the DCU Library Team who have been shortlisted for the Outstanding Library Team in the Times Higher Education Awards 2024.

- 7.5 The President informed members of the recent launch of the DCU Alumni Chapter in London, by way of a panel discussion of award winning DCU alumni. This event presented an opportunity for London based DCU graduates to hear updates from the university and network with their fellow alumni. He noted that there has also been recent international travel to the United States and China to strengthen relationships with current and potential partner institutions. The Executive Dean of the Faculty of Engineering and Computing updated members on her trip to China to Wuhan University with whom the Faculty have a long standing partnership. She noted that Wuhan University has expressed interest in partnerships with other Faculties and reminded colleagues that the quality of DCU awards is upheld in the collaborative provision of these established Awards. The President noted the high calibre of students that undertake these programmes and contribute to advancing our international student population.
- 7.6 The President recorded his gratitude to colleagues for their dedication over this semester and drew attention to the annual Christmas celebration due to take place in December, which all staff are welcome to attend.

8. Strategic academic initiatives

8.1 Student Placement

Ms Paula Murray, Director of Placement, joined the meeting for this item.

The Vice-President for Academic Affairs/Registrar and the Director of Placement delivered a presentation on Student Placement in DCU.

The Vice-President for Academic Affairs/Registrar indicated that it was timely to draw attention to this topic. Significant effort has been undertaken to work towards the implementation of the operating model under which Placement will be redefined as a core value proposition for DCU students and programmes. The operating model sets out to ascertain strategic oversight of all placement activities, the relationships they are built on and the ways in which they are supported. The Vice-President for Academic Affairs/Registrar noted the recent submission of the 'DCU Placement Report 2022/23' to Academic Council at

its October meeting. This report replaces the previous annual 'INTRA' report and reflects a more integrated approach. It was noted that it is the responsibility of Faculties, as the owners of academic programmes, to continue to ensure the relevance and quality of placements, monitor and assess learning and identify and sustain partnerships.

The Director of Placement outlined the key activities of DCU Placement which involves the coordination and management of DCU student placements with third party organisations, along with placements facilitated in DCU for students of partner institutions. She highlighted the importance of maintaining strong relationships with partners in all aspects of placement, whether the students are undertaking accredited learning through enterprise, academic or professional/clinical placements. The Director of Placement noted the scale of placement in DCU, with over 6,200 students undertaking a placement during the 2022/23 academic year. A significant volume, circa 45%, of these placements were undertaken by students from DCU Institute of Education.

Attention was drawn to the proportion of inbound and outbound mobility students that are supported by DCU Placement. It was noted that the maintenance of the global partnerships that facilitate this mobility is a key factor in supporting the University's internationalisation agenda. It was remarked that the number of inbound and outbound Erasmus students should be roughly balanced, and that Study Abroad students add to the inbound number thereafter.

The Director of Placement noted current challenges that could impact on the placement service such as increased competition, the accommodation crisis in Ireland, global political unrest and limited funding available for international mobility. It was remarked that competition is intensifying and relates to all placement areas, not solely INTRA. DCU students face competition from each other to secure professional and industry placements, as well as competition from students from other higher education institutions nationally and internationally. She remarked that INTRA students should be encouraged to apply for any applicable job role available, as the placement is credit bearing and necessary to facilitate their academic progression. It was noted that national Erasmus+ funding is expected to be increased, however there is no guarantee what proportion, if any, would be allocated to DCU. It was also noted that new guidelines are expected early in 2025 from Quality and Qualifications Ireland regarding work-integrated learning.

It was noted that specific challenges are expected to impact nursing and education placements in the immediate future. Nursing placements will potentially be affected by a possible increase to the number of student nurses nationally which will cause competition for clinical placements to intensify, the opening of the National Children's Hospital and revised professional standards and requirements. Education placements are already being impacted by national teaching shortages in primary and post-primary schools, and competition with other institutions for a limited number of placement opportunities nationally. The President thanked the Director of Placement and her team for their work, and echoed the challenge of increased competition of securing professional and other placements, noting that the University cannot be complacent in this regard.

Ms Paula Murray, Director of Placement, left the meeting after this item.

8.2 New Graduate Outcomes Dashboard

Ms Yvonne McLoughlin, Head of Careers and Mr David Maguire, Business and Insights Analyst, Quality and Institutional Insights Office, joined the meeting for this item.

The Head of Careers noted that DCU is required to administer the Graduate Outcomes Survey (GOS) for graduates six to nine months after graduation, and submit this data to the Higher Education Authority as a statutory return. The completion of the survey by graduates is optional. The data contained within the survey responses is an excellent source of information to the University on the employment status of its recent graduates, as well as for prospective and current students for career planning purposes. The data is also used in the compilation of the QS World University Rankings and European Foundation for Management Development Global Quality System (EQUIS) accreditation. The Head of Careers stated that it was recognised that there was an institutional need for a dashboard to provide a comprehensive and cohesive overview of the data output from the GOS.

The Business and Insights Analyst, Quality and Institutional Insights Office provided a comprehensive demonstration of the dashboard to members. The demonstration illustrated how the dashboard provides a high-level overview of data which can then be filtered to provide specific data by faculty, school, or programme. The data can also be filtered by economic status, job type and median salary of graduates. It was noted that the trends will be impacted by response rates and efforts will be made to provide benchmarks. It was

remarked that work will be undertaken in the near future to extend access to the dashboard to relevant staff.

It was noted that the next GOS will be administered in March 2025, and efforts to encourage students to complete the survey are crucial. The Vice-President for Academic Affairs/Registrar remarked that the dashboard is a welcome resource that will be particularly beneficial when Annual and Periodic Programme Reviews are being completed. The President thanked the Head of Careers and the Business and Insights Analyst, Quality and Institutional Insights Office for this interesting presentation. He also congratulated the Head of Careers on the success of the recent Graduate Careers Fairs which attracted over 2,000 students.

Mr David Maguire, Business and Insights Analyst, Quality and Institutional Insights Office and Ms Yvonne McLoughlin, Head of Careers, left the meeting after this item.

C. Items for formal approval/noting

9. Validation Report: MSc in Physiotherapy

Approved

10. Accreditation Report: MEd in Arts Education Practice

Approved

11. Report from Winter 2024 examinations, Progression and Award Boards

Approved

12. Annual Examination Appeals Report 2024

Noted

13. University Disciplinary Committee Report 2024

Noted

14. Items from recent sub-committees of Academic Council

Approved

15. Research Supervision and Awards in Collaboration with Other Institutions

Noted

16. Any other business

There was no other business.

Signed: _____

Date: _____

Date of next meeting:

<p>5 February 2025</p> <p>2:00 pm</p> <p>AG01, Glasnevin Campus</p>
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