

## **UNIVERSITY STANDARDS COMMITTEE MINUTES**

Thursday 22 February 2024

10:05 am – 11:05 am

A204, Glasnevin Campus

**Present:** Mr Justin Doyle, Professor Yseult Freeney, Dr Seline Keating, Ms Phylomena McMorrow, Dr Mark O'Brien, Professor Sharon O'Brien, Dr Niamh O'Sullivan, Dr Monica Ward (Chair), Ms Aedín Whelan (Secretary), and Ms Jennifer Yore

**Apologies:** Dr Martina Crehan, Mr Eoin Crossen, Professor Theo Lynn, Dr Jennifer McManis, and Dr Ruth McManus

The Chair opened the meeting and welcomed new members to University Standards Committee as follows:

- Mr Justin Doyle, Director of Information Systems Services
- Professor Yseult Freeney, Associate Dean for Teaching and Learning of DCU Business School
- Professor Sharon O'Brien, Dean of Graduate Studies

### **A. Minutes and related issues**

#### **1. Adoption of the agenda**

The agenda was adopted.

#### **2. Minutes of the meeting of 11 January 2024**

The minutes of the meeting of 11 January 2024 were approved.

**3. Matters arising from the minutes of 11 January 2024**

It was noted that there are no immediate matters arising for action.

**B. Faculty issues****4. External examiners for taught programmes****4.1 Nominations**

4.1.1 Nottingham Trent University  
MSc in Education and Training Management (Leadership)  
Approved

4.1.2 University of Galway  
Module in the School of Applied Languages and Intercultural Studies  
Approved

The Chair encouraged Associate Deans for Teaching and Learning to request Heads of Schools to review current External Examiner appointments, noting those whose terms are due to end ahead of the next academic year. A list of examiners whose contracts are due to expire will be issued by the Academic Secretariat to Heads of School in the coming days to assist with this process. Nominations should be submitted to University Standards Committee for approval at its April or May meeting. The Chair also highlighted the importance of including adequate detail in External Examiner nomination forms, to sufficiently enable the Committee to make informed decisions.

**4.2 Renewal of appointment/changes to duties**

No items.

**5. Other issues: Faculty****5.1 DCU Institute of Education****5.1.1 Derogation request from Marks and Standards 2023/24: Doctor of Education (EdD)**

In the discussion on this derogation application, the Secretary noted that the derogation was not related to the requirements of a professional body, therefore does not meet the conditions of a derogation. Following a detailed consideration of the derogation request, it was agreed that the Associate Dean for Teaching and Learning and the Programme Chair of the relevant programme will meet with Registry to explore alternative methods of addressing the issues raised in the context of supporting students who fail a taught module.

**C: Other issues (not Faculty-specific)****6. Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) Update**

The Chair provided some background information regarding the process of reviewing DCU's Recognition of Prior Learning Policy, for the benefit of new members of the Committee. The process was undertaken as part of the national Recognition of Prior Learning and Lifelong Learning in Higher Education Project, which is supported by the Higher Education Authority, under the Human Capital Initiative (HCI) Pillar 3 fund. The DCU RPL Working Group has been established and is currently reviewing DCU's RPL process in the context of admissions; exemptions will be considered at a later stage. The Chair outlined that the Working Group has devised flow charts to display the undergraduate and postgraduate processes and is now formulating standard wording regarding RPL for use in accreditation and validation documentation.

**7. Review of Admissions Appeals Policy**

Registry have reviewed the Admissions Appeals Policy; no changes are recommended.

Approved

**8. Academic Integrity update**

The Chair outlined that the Academic Integrity Policy was updated and approved by University Standards Committee in 2023. At the time of approval, it was agreed that the Procedure for Academic Misconduct Investigation and Sanction would be reviewed in 2024. The Secretary and the Chair have updated this procedure as a desk exercise. The Chair expressed that the amendments to the procedure have been made in order to adopt the guiding principles that are included in the National Academic Integrity Network (NAIN) Framework for Academic Misconduct Investigation and Case Management. She outlined that DCU has robust local practices in place already but the updated procedure may be beneficial in determining the level of severity of a breach of the academic integrity policy and the sanction that should be applied. It was highlighted that the NAIN guidelines are not mandatory. It is envisaged that the updated procedure will be a support to academic staff as well as providing more transparency to students. The USC Sub-committee on Academic Integrity will be reconvened to review the updated procedure before it is brought to University Standards Committee for approval. It is intended that the revised procedure will be considered by Academic Council at its June meeting, with the intention that implementation can take place for the 2024/25 academic year.

**9. Any other Business**

The Secretary noted that Marks and Standards for the 2024/25 academic year would be due for final approval in May 2024. She indicated that she would write to colleagues in the coming days seeking information on any proposed updates in advance of the April 2024 meeting of University Standards Committee.

Signed \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

**Date of next meeting:**

Thursday, 11 April 2024 10:00am Room G401, St. Patrick's Campus
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