

UNIVERSITY STANDARDS COMMITTEE MINUTES

Thursday 16 May 2024

10 am – 12:10 pm

A204, Glasnevin Campus

Present: Professor Yseult Freney, Dr Jennifer McManis, Dr Ruth McManus, Ms Phylomena McMorrow, Dr Mark O’Brien, Professor Sharon O’Brien, Dr Niamh O’Sullivan, Dr Monica Ward (Chair), and Ms Aedín Whelan (Secretary)

Apologies: Dr Martina Crehan, Mr Eoin Crossen, Mr Justin Doyle, Dr Seline Keating Professor Theo Lynn, and Ms Jennifer Yore

In attendance: Dr Patrick Burke (for item 12)

The Chair noted that Mr Eoin Crossen’s term as the Students’ Union Vice President for Academic Life will conclude before the next meeting of the Committee. The Chair acknowledged his valued contribution to the business of the Committee.

The Chair informed members that Dr Patrick Burke, Teaching Convener for the School of Language, Literacy and Early Childhood Education, will substitute Dr Seline Keating for item 12.

A. Minutes and related issues

1. Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

2. Minutes of previous meetings

- 2.1 Minutes of the University Standards Committee meeting of 11 April 2024
Approved
- 2.2 Minutes of the USC Sub-committee on Academic Integrity meeting of 28 March 2024
Approved
- 2.3 Minutes of the USC Sub-committee on Academic Integrity meeting of 18 April 2024
Approved, subject to the inclusion of the following sentence in item 4:
The Students' Union Vice President for Academic Life referred to the decision taken at the last meeting of the sub-committee to remove scoring from the DCU rubric to map classifications to sanctions.
- 2.4 Minutes of the USC Sub-committee on Academic Integrity meeting of 30 April 2024
Approved
- 3. **Matters arising from the minutes of the University Standards Committee of 11 April 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 UCC
Modules in DCU Business School
Approved
- 4.1.2 Plymouth University
Bachelor of Arts, Bachelor of Religious Education and History
Approved

4.1.3 UCD
Modules in the School of History and Geography
Approved

4.1.4 Brunel University of London
BSc in Chemistry with Artificial Intelligence
Approved

4.1.5 University of Cassino and Southern Lazio
MSc in Management (Insight and Innovation)
Approved

4.1.6 TCD
BSc in Children's and General Nursing, Higher Diploma in Children's Nursing
Approved

A discussion ensued regarding the volume of modules that has been assigned to this external examiner. It was agreed that further consideration regarding the maximum number of modules that could be considered reasonable for an external examiner to be assigned is warranted, this will be added as an item to matters arising for exploration.

4.1.7 UCC
Common Entry into Actuarial and Financial Mathematics
Approved

4.1.8 University of Galway
Module Examiner in the School of Mathematical Sciences
Approved

4.1.9 University of Limerick
MSc in Advanced Nursing Practice
Not approved

4.2 Renewal of appointment/changes to duties

4.2.1 University of Southampton
MSc in Astrophysics and Relativity
Approved

4.2.2 Queens University Belfast
Modules in the School of Applied Languages and Intercultural Studies
Approved

The Secretary outlined that there is a high volume of External Examiners whose contracts are due to expire in September. It was emphasised that the outstanding nominees should be referred to the August meeting of USC so that appointments can be made before the start of the next academic year. It was agreed that the Secretary will provide a list of External Examiners whose contracts are due to expire to the Associate Deans for Teaching and Learning for review.

5. Other issues: Faculty

5.1 Faculty of Humanities and Social Science

5.1.1 Legacy Readmission Request: MA in Political Communication
Approved

5.1.2 Legacy Readmission Request: BA in Humanities
Approved

5.1.3 Legacy Readmission Request: MA in International Security and Conflict Studies
Approved

5.1.4 Programme regulations: International Master in Security, Intelligence and Strategic Studies 2023-2024
As all of the changes apply to the regulations of the University of Glasgow, rather than DCU, the Committee noted the updates that have been made.

5.2 Faculty of Science and Health

5.2.1 Change to Leaving Certificate entry requirements: BSc in Physical Education with Mathematics
Approved

5.2.2 Confirmation of current external examiners as Periodic Programme Reviewers

It was noted that current External Examiners will act as External Reviewers in the Periodic Programme Review of the following programmes during the 2023-24 academic year in the Faculty of Science and Health:

- MSc in Diagnostic and Precision Medicine
- Graduate Certificate in Sexuality Education and Sexual Wellbeing

It is to be noted that the academic year as indicated on the accompanying memo should state 2023-24, not 2022-23.

C: Other issues (not Faculty-specific)

6. Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) Update

The Chair informed members that the new RPL Hub on the DCU website is now live. Two educational sessions on RPL will take place next week, one for Programme Chairs and academic staff, and the other for professional staff. The Chair outlined that applicants who wish to be assessed via RPL must attach a covering note to their application in order for it to be categorised accordingly. It is anticipated that in a future iteration of the new Student Information System (Banner) there may be functionality to automatically flag an RPL application. The Chair noted that there will be a specific RPL Application Form developed, which will exist in addition to the current Special Case Admission form. She also noted that rubrics to assess RPL applicants and support the decision making process for academics should be devised. It was confirmed that advanced entry and exemptions will be reviewed at a later date.

7. Academic Regulations for Postgraduate Degrees by Research and Thesis 2024-2025

Approved

8. Regulations and Guidelines: External Examiners for Taught Programmes and Modules

Approved

9. Regulations to support Legacy Readmission Decisions

Approved

10. Programme Regulation Approval 2024-2025

The Secretary noted that Faculties were advised to only submit programme regulations for consideration by USC where changes had been made to the content, and that the academic year for all programmes would be updated on the website by Academic Secretariat as a matter of course.

The programme regulations submitted to date were deemed approved.

11. Marks and Standards 2024-2025

The Secretary outlined that as part of the ongoing revision of processes and procedures as part of the SIS Programme some modification to Mark and Standards may be deemed necessary during the next academic year. Any proposed changes will be referred to University Standards Committee for consideration when sufficient information / clarity is available to inform its decision making.

Approved

12. Procedure for Academic Misconduct Investigation and Sanction

Dr Patrick Burke, Teaching Convener for the School of Language, Literacy and Early Childhood Education, joined the meeting for this item.

The Chair introduced this item noting that the sub-committee of USC had met on three occasions during the academic year to revise the existing Procedure for Academic Misconduct Investigation and Sanction. This review follows the approval of the revised Academic Integrity Policy by USC in May 2023. The aim of the revised procedure is to align with the National Academic Integrity Network (NAIN) Framework for Academic Misconduct Investigation and Case Management, while remaining consistent with localised DCU processes. The revised procedure aims to provide greater transparency to students as well as providing guidance to academic staff. The updated procedure will bring our processes in line with international good practice and sectoral norms.

The procedure was approved, subject to the following amendments:

- A) Appendix II: Update Section B to replace the current table with the four categories of consideration when determining the level of academic misconduct and associated score allocated (as per Appendix IV).
- B) Appendix V: Update Level 1 sanction (a) to "A lower mark or a mark of zero for the assignment".
Update Level 2 sanction (a) to "A lower mark or a mark of zero for the continuous assessment element of the module".
Update Level 2 sanction (b) to "A lower mark or a mark of zero for the module".

Dr Patrick Burke, Teaching Convener for the School of Language, Literacy and Early Childhood Education, left the meeting after this item.

11. Any other business

There were no items of business.

Signed: _____

Date: _____

Date of next meeting:

Thursday, 29 August 2024 10:00am Room A204, Glasnevin Campus
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