

ACADEMIC COUNCIL MINUTES

3 June 2020

2.00 p.m. – 2:40 p.m.

Zoom Meeting

Present:

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| B. Anderson | F. Blin | S. Blott |
| C. Bohan | L. Boran | M. Brown |
| J. Brunton | J. Bruton | M. Butler |
| H. Byrne | P.J. Byrne | C. Commons |
| B. Corcoran | M. Crane | J. Doyle |
| N. Dunne | O. Farrell | L. Fitzsimons |
| B. Flood | P. Flynn | Y. Freeney |
| G. French | C. Furlong | L. Gallagher |
| P. Gallagher | Y. Graham | P. Guasoni |
| E. Guilfoyle | C. Gurrin | D. Hand |
| S. Hegarty | G. Hughes | G. Jones |
| A. Kearns | R. Keegan (Secretary) | B. Kelly |
| D. Keogh | P. Landais | A. Logan |
| B. MacCraith (Chair)* | M. McAdam | C. McArdle |
| K. McDonagh | E. McDonald | E. McGlynn |
| C. McGonagle | A. McKenna | J. McManis |
| P. McMorrow | E. McNulty | M. McSharry |
| P. Mooney | E. Morgenroth | J.P. Mosnier |
| G.M. Muntean | R. Murphy | F. Murphy |
| D. Nic Mhathúna | P. Ó Duibhir | M. O'Brien |
| S. O'Brien | D. Robbins | P. Robbins |
| P. Rosati | K. Sanders | P. Sharkey Scott |
| A. Sinnott | J. Stokes | T. Szecsi |
| J. Travers | J. Usher | L. Van der Werff |
| P. Van Kampen | B. White | |

In attendance: V. Cooke

Apologies:

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|----------------|---------------|------------------|
| P. Anandarajah | R. Gillanders | A. Looney |
| L. Looney | C. Loscher | C. Mac Murchaidh |
| P. Meleady | M. R. Sweeney | |

*The meeting was chaired by the President until 14:30 and thereafter the meeting was chaired by Professor Eithne Guilfoyle.

1. Adoption of agenda

The agenda was adopted.

A. Minutes and Related Issues

2. Minutes of the meeting of Academic Council of 8 April 2020

The minutes were approved. It was noted that formal minutes would be signed once on-campus activity resumes.

3. Matters arising

There were no matters arising.

4. Minutes of the meetings of the Education Committee of 11 March 2020 and 1 April 2020

Approved

5. Minutes of the meeting of the University Standards Committee of 20 February 2020 and 2 April 2020

Approved

6. Minutes of the meeting of the Graduate Research Studies Board of 27 February 2020 and 16 April 2020

Approved

B. Policy and Strategy Issues

7. President's report (oral report)

- 7.1** The President informed Council that the Crisis Management Team continues to meet on a daily basis to address both immediate crisis management issues and planning for the next academic year. The President acknowledged the major task undertaken by staff in preparing for alternative end of year assessments. The DCU Exam Support Centre, coordinated by Pádraig Ó Duibhir, provided direct support to students during the exam period and students have been very positive in their praise of how the process has been handled.

The President advised Council that focus is now moving from immediate crisis management to planning for the academic year ahead. The planning process is being coordinated by Prof. Daire Keogh with support from Prof. Lisa Looney. Scenario planning activities have taken place and we now have some certainty about the year ahead in regard to the academic calendar, the delivery model, student accommodation and the return to work modality. The President recognised the challenges facing staff in switching to a hybrid model of delivery and advised Council that additional supports are being put in place to assist in this regard.

8. COVID-19 – Continuity arrangements

8.1 Terms of Reference, Composition and Standing Orders of the Examination Appeals Boards

E. McGlynn summarised some necessary changes to the conducting of the Examination Appeals Board in light of COVID-19 restrictions. These include:

- The meeting of the Examinations Appeals Board will now be conducted via Zoom.
- The deadlines for appeals submissions and associated timelines have been shifted to take account of the revised dates for publication of results.
- All appeal forms will now be submitted electronically.
- Documentary evidence to support extenuating circumstances will not be sought.

E. McGlynn also provided context to the proposed amendment to the terms of reference, composition and standing orders of the Examination Appeals Board. This amendment has been made in anticipation of a possible increased number of students seeking to appeal results. This proposed change will allow for the establishment of sub-groups as required to facilitate the process to be completed within the normal timescale for appeal decisions. One member of the Examination Appeals Board will sit on each sub-group and will feed back decisions to the Board. This approach will only be triggered should the volume of appeals make it necessary.

It was acknowledged that the absence of supporting documentation for extenuating circumstances will make the process more complex for board members.

It is envisaged that the re-check and assessment review processes will proceed as normal. However, it was acknowledged that assessment re-checks may need to be revisited and some practical solutions devised given the lack of access to campus at present.

Academic Council approved the amendment to the Terms of Reference, Composition and Standing Orders of the Examination Appeals Boards.

8.2 Academic Calendar 2020-2021 (revised)

B. Kelly provided brief update on revisions to the academic calendar for 2020-2021 and changes to dates for the current year. In particular, B. Kelly drew attention to the publication of results which has been moved to 25 June. The resit examination period has also been moved by one week to 17 – 29 August.

A preliminary revised 2020-2021 calendar is now published on the DCU website with semester 1 now commencing on 5 October. B. Kelly highlighted plans to commence orientation for year 1

students on 21 September if allowed by CAO offers. The revised calendar will see semester 1 examinations taking place earlier and for a shorter period. B. Kelly clarified that changes to the examination period have been set in consultation with the Students' Union. The revised calendar will see the academic year finish at the same time as originally planned.

8.3 Review and approval of results

B. Kelly summarised changes to the process by which results are approved. The resulting new, streamlined process will ensure consistency across faculties. B. Kelly highlighted external examiner engagement as the most significant aspect of the process and detailed potential issues with reviewing documentation in particular for semester 1 of current academic year.

C. Items for Formal Approval/Noting

9. Items from recent sub-committees of Academic Council

Approved

10. Accreditation Reports

10.1 Med in Early Childhood Education

Approved

10.2 BSc in Psychology and Mathematics

Approved

11. Report from Quality Promotion Office

Noted

12. DCU Marks and Standards 2020.1

Approved

13. Academic Regulations for Postgraduate Degrees by Research and Thesis

Approved

14. Any other business

There were no others items for discussion under AOB.

Signed: _____

Date: _____

Date of next meeting:

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|-----------------|
| 22 June 2020 |
| 2:00 pm |
| Via Zoom |