

ACADEMIC COUNCIL MINUTES

5 February 2020

2.00 p.m. – 2:40 p.m.

AG01, DCU Glasnevin Campus

Present:

B. Anderson	F. Blin	S. Blott
C. Bohan	L. Boran	J. Bruton
H. Byrne	C. Commons	M. Coulter
M. Crane	J. Doyle	O. Farrell
L. Fitzsimons	P. Flynn	Y. Freaney
G. French	P. Gallagher	R. Gillanders
Y. Graham	D. Hand	S. Hegarty
G. Hughes	G. Jones	A. Kearns
R. Keegan (Secretary)	B. Kelly	P. Landais
A. Logan	A. Looney	L. Looney
B. Mac Craith (Chair)	M. McAdam	C. McArdle
A. McAuley	E. McDonald	C. McGonagle
G. McGuinness	J. McManis	P. McMorrow
M. McSharry	P. Meleady	P. Mooney
C. Ni Mhurchú	D. Nic Mhathúna	P Ó Duibhír
S. O'Brien	D. Robbins	K. Sanders
M. R. Sweeney	J. Travers	L. Van Der Werff
P. Van Kampen	B. White	

Apologies:

P. Anandarajah	S. Belton	M. Brown
J. Brunton	M. Butler	PJ. Byrne
D. Collings	B. Corcoran	E. Costello
N. Dunne	B. Flood	C. Furlong
E. Guilfoyle	C. Gurrin	J. Kelly
D. Keogh	C. Loscher	J. Lovatt
C. Mac Murchaidh	R. McElvaney	E. McGlynn
A. McKenna	I. McMenamin	E. McNulty
E. Morgenroth	G.M. Muntean	F. Murphy
M O'Brien	P. Robbins	P. Rosati
G. Sinclair	J. Stokes	J. Usher

1. Adoption of agenda

The agenda was adopted.

A. Minutes and Related Issues**2. Minutes of the meeting of Academic Council of 4 December 2019**

The minutes were approved and signed by the Chair.

3. Matters arising

There were no matters arising.

4. Minutes of the meetings of the Education Committee of 13 November 2019 and 11 December 2019

Approved

5. Minutes of the meeting of the University Standards Committee of 14 November 2019

Approved

6. Minutes of the meeting of the Graduate Research Studies Board of 24 October 2019 and 5 December 2019

Approved

B. Policy and strategy issues

7. President's report (oral report)

- 7.1 The President highlighted current joint efforts between the IUA, THEA and USI with a common focus on highlighting the issue of funding in the Higher Education sector in advance of the Irish general election. There have been events running across a variety of campus locations in the build up to election day.
- 7.2 The President informed Council that DCU has handed over Presidency of the IUA to TCD for 2020. The current biggest focus of all IUA members is the Human Capital Initiative call which will close on 24 March 2020. The President advised Council that a DCU working committee has been formed and that dialogue with potential enterprise and institutional partners is ongoing. Work is also underway on developing at least one sectoral bid to be submitted by the IUA.
- 7.3 The President welcomed the launch of the first DCU microcredential in FinTech this week which is being led by Professor Mark Cummins and Dr Pierangelo Rosati in DCU Business School. The course has been launched on the FutureLearn platform and is aimed at professionals looked to upskill or reskill in roles related to financial technology and innovation.
- 7.4 The President gave a brief update on his recent visit to Colombia where he met with government agencies and universities to explore possibilities for future collaboration.
- 7.5 The President provided an update on the Novel Coronavirus which is being closely monitored by the Chief Operations Officer and the Director of Student Support and Development. DCU is keeping in touch with the HSE on a daily basis and is following HSE best practice. It was indicated that, whilst off-campus, some Chinese students may have had some negative comments directed towards them. In order to safeguard the welfare of our students, any such incidents should be reported to the Chief Operations Officer or the Director of Student Support and Development.

- 7.6 The President informed Council of the new DCU impact review report which will be circulated in the coming days. The report titled 'Making a Difference' is intended to report on the many impacts of DCU which are not captured in the normal ways. Impacts have been identified under the 17 UN Sustainable Development Goals.

8. Amendments to the External Examiner Regulations and Guidelines

B. Kelly summarised for Council the main substantive changes to the External Examiner Regulations and Guidelines:

- Section 1.1: Revised wording to reflect the more modern role of an external examiner. The emphasis has been changed to 'review and revise' rather than 'arbitrate and adjudicate'. The emphasis is now on the examiner reviewing the process rather than the product.
- Sections 2.5.4 to 2.5.6: Additional wording to account for situations which, up to now, are dealt with on an ad hoc basis (i.e. maternity and parental leave, illness, resignation and termination).
- Section 3.5.1: Additional text to clarify the role of an external examiner as an advisor rather than as a sole decision maker.

It was suggested by Council that it would be useful for the rationale of the changes to the external examiner role be documented for circulation to Faculties so that Boards are fully informed as to where responsibilities lie.

The amendments were approved by Council.

9. English language entry requirements for international applicants to postgraduate taught programmes

Y. Freney summarised the proposed changes to English language entry requirements which would be piloted over a two-year period. The revised entry requirements would for the standardised test requirements to be waived where an application has other ways of demonstrating fluency in English. Evidence of equivalent English language attainment would be accepted where:

- An applicant has lived and worked in an English speaking country for at least four years, has undertaken professional employment in a role that requires a high level of written and verbal communication in English *and* can provide supporting documentation to evidence this.
or
- An applicant has completed their undergraduate degree through the medium of English no more than two years prior to admission and can provide transcripts to this effect.
- In some circumstances, an applicant may be accepted where they can evidence English competence through results in examinations other than those outlined above.

How the success of the pilot will be determined was raised and it was agreed that a holistic evaluation would be required.

Council approved the pilot for a two-year period.

10. Revised Academic Calendar Implementation

B. Kelly gave Council a brief overview of plans to review the academic calendar for 21/22. Work for this will currently commence with establishment of the Academic Calendar Implementation Group.

The Terms of Reference and Standing Orders of the Academic Calendar Implementation Group was approved.

C. Items for formal approval/noting

11. Admissions Appeals Policy

Approved

12. Recent items from sub-committees to Academic Council

Approved

13. Validation Report: Med in Early Childhood Education

Approved

14. Recommendations from Progression and Awards Boards for March 2020 conferring

Approved

15. Recommendations from Spring 2020 Faculty Awards Boards for Research Degrees for March 2020 conferring

Approved

16. Any other business

There were no others items for discussion under AOB.

Signed: _____

Date: _____

Date of next meeting:

<p>8 April 2020</p> <p>2:00 pm in B103</p> <p>DCU, St Patrick's Campus</p>
