

EDUCATION COMMITTEE**MINUTES**

Wednesday 27 May 2020

2.00 p.m. – 3.00 p.m. via Zoom

Present: Dr Claire Bohan, Professor Mark Brown, Ms Jennifer Bruton, Professor Michelle Butler, Mr Callaghan Commons, Dr Yseult Freeney, Ms Margaret Irwin-Bannon (Secretary), Mr Billy Kelly (Chair), Ms Aisling McKenna, Professor Anne Looney, Professor Lisa Looney, Ms Pauline Mooney, Professor Anne Sinnott and Dr Joseph Stokes

In attendance: Mr Martin Grehan

Apologies: Professor Eithne Guilfoyle and Professor Greg Hughes

SECTION A: AGENDA, MINUTES AND MATTERS ARISING**1. Adoption of the agenda**

The agenda as circulated was adopted.

2. Minutes of Education Committee 29 April 2020

The minutes of 29 April 2020 were approved, subject to a change to item 8.2. It was noted that formal minutes would be signed once on-campus activity resumes.

3. Matters arising from the minutes of 29 April 2020

- 3.1 It was noted that the process which would facilitate students progressing to a relevant master's programme immediately upon completion of a Springboard programme and not require them to graduate was almost complete. The Academic Secretary outlined that she had circulated the draft process document prepared by Registry colleagues following a meeting which involved the Deputy Registrar/Dean of Teaching and Learning, the Deputy Director of Registry and the Student Enrolment/Admissions Manager, to the Deans and feedback was awaited by close of business 27 May 2020. Thereafter it was agreed that the process document would be confirmed and circulated to faculties. It was noted that there would be no fee-related issues associated with the process (Item 3.4).

- 3.2 It was noted that work on the annual reports conducted by the Institutional Research and Analysis Office is ongoing. The most immediate priority is CAO analysis and subsequent DCU examination performance which would be completed over the summer period (Item 3.1).
- 3.3 It was noted that work on a position paper on double and dual awards will be ongoing over the coming months (Item 3.5).
- 3.4 It was noted that *Employability Statements*, would be considered at a later meeting of Education Committee (Item 3.6).
- 3.5 It was noted that teaching effectiveness, one of the key priorities of the Teaching and Learning Strategy will be discussed by the Director of Quality Promotion and the Chair (Item 3.7).
- 3.6 It was noted that work is ongoing on adaption of the PPR process with a view to ensuring there is a process for the quality assurance of the creation of 'new programmes' where the existing programme has changed substantially since its initial accreditation (Item 3.8).
- 3.7 It was noted that the alignment of the EQF and NFQ levels were confirmed for the MSc in Global Management (Item 3.9).
- 3.8 It was noted that a response had been provided to Education Committee in response to a query on the use of 'Clinical' in the BCL title and the matter was deemed complete (Item 7.2).
- 3.9 It was noted that the two recommended changes to the module CA652 from the MSc in Computing programme were completed (Item 8.1).
- 3.10 It was noted that the start date of the new entry routes to the School of Biotechnology and the School of Chemical Sciences was confirmed as September 2021 (Item 9.1).
- 3.11 It was noted that the proposed direct entry route to the BSc in Financial Mathematics, a decision on which had been deferred at the Education Committee meeting of 29 April 2020, may be submitted at a later date (Item 9.2).

SECTION B: STRATEGIC MATTERS FOR DISCUSSION/NOTING

4. Update on strategic activities undertaken within the IUA

The Chair reported on behalf of the Vice President Academic Affairs/Registrar with respect to the IUA Registrars' group, noting that much of the emphasis currently is on planning for the coming academic year and addressing sectoral issues with respect to student entry, entry conditions and entry regulations.

The Director of Quality Promotion reported that a new Quality, Integrity and Reputation working group has been formed by the Department of Education and Skills, with a membership spanning the Higher and Further Education sectors. She noted that the issues being examined by this group relate very closely to the interests of IUA Quality Officers and many of the requests for

information are being channelled through Quality and Qualifications Ireland (QQI). Her understanding was that the focus of the working group currently is on the impact of the Covid-19 crisis on teaching and learning and quality assurance and whether new modes of delivery are in line with the QQI Guidelines for Blended Learning.

The Chair indicated that he would be meeting with university and QQI representatives on this working group in the afternoon. He noted that the working group has been tasked with providing an interim report on how the higher education sector has responded to the Covid-19 crisis. The interim report would be prepared for early July 2020, and the longer term aim would be to ascertain what lessons could be learned through this experience over the coming year. He indicated that QQI would like the universities to share information that they may be gathering through surveys of students and staff.

In a general discussion which ensued, the view was expressed that it would be difficult to draw conclusions on an emergency response to a crisis which spanned four weeks of semester and to identify best practice from that experience. It was agreed that it would be possible to share insights about the experience, but not necessarily benchmark it against a standard which is not yet identified, given the short span of time involved.

The Chair clarified that the nature of what has happened is evolving and it was his view that DCU would learn over time and evaluate what has and has not been successful. He expressed the view that would be important that DCU would solicit and welcome feedback from students and staff as it would be valuable for planning for next year. It was noted, in addition, that it is important to analyse why certain approaches had worked.

The Chair indicated that he would have further information following the meeting on 27 May 2020.

5. Update on DCU Strategy implementation

The Chair noted that DCU strategy implementation has been temporarily replaced by scenario planning for the next academic year.

6. StudentSurvey.ie

The Director of Quality Promotion reported that the institution-level data from the Student Survey was received a number of weeks ago. The intention was to complete high-level analysis as soon as possible, and to then transfer Tableau reports to MS Power BI, so results would be available for the annual programme review process (APR) in October 2020.

7. APR University-level issues: summary by Faculty

7.1 DCU Business School

Noted

It was clarified that the development of an entry level assessment for the language for a programme and/or the year abroad was deemed a university issue by DCU Business School as language teaching sits outside of the Business School and there continues to be ongoing difficulties with student language skills.

7.2 DCU Institution of Education

Noted

The Dean of the DCU Institute of Education drew Education Committee's attention to an ongoing legacy issue with respect to consolidated modules. It was her view that specific attention should be paid to those modules in the upcoming review of the Bachelor of Education programme. She noted that feedback from students indicated that the modules in their current format are not consolidated and do not have an integrating principle and should therefore be reviewed from a student experience point of view. She noted she was not of the view that consolidated modules or the consequent required flexibility in terms of assessment and marking structures should continue.

7.3 Faculty of Engineering and Computing

Noted

Items highlighted:

- The need for additional resourcing
- The need to create exit awards at undergraduate level. The Chair noted this issue has arisen in other faculties also.
- The positive impact of the Operational Excellence initiative on the acceptance rate of offers to international students for FEC master's programmes.

7.4 DCU Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences

Noted

Items highlighted

- Marketing of postgraduate taught programmes to external markets
- The Chair undertook to follow-up with the Dean of Humanities and Social Sciences on what was meant in the report by 'highlight the need to carefully design IT support systems to allow greater flexibility in how programmes are managed'.

7.5 Faculty of Science and Health

Noted

Items highlighted

- The need for additional resourcing
- Internal review, double marking and moderation of scripts as raised by external examiners.

The Chair noted this is an issue that the University should look at more generally.

7.6 Open Education

Noted

Item highlighted

- The Chair drew the Committee's attention to a programme issue raised with respect to electronic proctoring practices and its significance in the current context.

SECTION C: PROGRAMME AND MODULE-SPECIFIC ISSUES

8 Exit Award, Professional Doctorate in Elite Performance (Sport)

The Chair outlined that at the validation stage (revised submission) of the programme Education Committee had recommended there would be an exit award at master's level from the Professional Doctorate in Elite Performance (Sport) in addition to the proposed Graduate Diploma. During the accreditation process a query arose as to whether the exit award should be classified as a research or taught award.

Dr Joseph Stokes provided further context to Education Committee on the item in his capacity as Chair of the Accreditation Board. He noted that the recommendation in the validation report was that the second exit opportunity would be a taught Master's degree, however in the context of the original framework presented for the Professional Doctorate (the original submission-- progression from a taught master's to the doctorate) which was not approved by Education Committee, it did not follow that there would be a taught master's exit award. Subsequently in the accreditation proposal the exit master's award was expanded by an additional 60 credits and it appeared to fit more to a research-based award than a taught master's award. However, it still did not have the required credits for an MSc by Research.

The proposal was discussed in detail and the following was agreed:

- That the exit award would be a 120 ECTS level 9, taught Master's award
- To be consistent with decisions made with respect to the Doctor of Education (EdD) that the award would be a taught MPhil
- The programme title would be MPhil in Elite Performance (Sport).

It was noted that this recommendation would not preclude the development of a new 90-credit taught MSc in the future.

9 Reporting from Faculties on decisions made during 2019-2020

(a) Change to programme titles

The following approved programme titles for programmes in the Faculty of Engineering and Computing were noted:

- **From** Bachelor of Science (Hons) in Computer Applications **to** Bachelor of Science (Hons) in Computer Science
- **From** Bachelor of Science (Hons) in Enterprise Computing **to** Bachelor of Science (Hons) in Computing for Business.

10 Any other business

10.1 COVID-19: Continuity Arrangements

Professor Lisa Looney noted two decisions that were made by the Crisis Management Team as follows:

- (i) the cancellation of outward mobility for students on Erasmus programmes
- (ii) a review and revision of academic structures in preparation for hybrid delivery model of teaching in the new academic year.

10.2 Extraordinary meeting of Education Committee

In the context of the review of academic programmes by the end of June 2020 as outlined above, it was agreed that Education Committee should meet to review and approve proposed programme changes made in the context of change of delivery for semester one 2020-2021. It was agreed that an extraordinary meeting of Education Committee would take place on Wednesday 8 July 2020 at 2.00 pm.

10.3 A vote of thanks to the Students' Union Vice President Academic Affairs.

The Chair extended a vote of thanks to Mr Cal Commons for his valued contributions, on behalf of students, to Education Committee over the last two years.

Signed: _____ Date: _____

Date of next meeting:
Extraordinary meeting
Wednesday, 8 July 2020
at 2.00 via Zoom Meeting