UNIVERSITY STANDARDS COMMITTEE
MINUTES

Thursday 19 November 2020

9.30 a.m. – 10.15 a.m. via Zoom

Present: Dr Lorraine Delaney, Dr Yseult Freeney, Dr Mark Glynn, Ms Margaret Irwin-Bannon (Secretary), Mr Billy Kelly (Chair), Dr Anna Logan, Dr Kenneth McDonagh, Dr Jennifer McManis, Ms Phylomena McMorrow, Prof Edgar Morgenroth, Ms Michele Pringle, Dr Joseph Stokes, and Dr Blanaid White

Apologies: Mr John McDonough and Mr Lucien Waugh Daly

The Chair opened the meeting and welcomed Dr Maura Coulter to University Standards Committee as the representative of the Associate Deans for Research.

SECTION A: MINUTES RELATED ISSUES

1.   Adoption of the agenda

         The agenda as circulated was adopted.

2.   Minutes of the meeting of 10 September 2020

         The minutes of 10 September 2020 were approved. It was noted that formal minutes would be signed at a later date.

3.   Matters arising from the minutes of 10 September 2020

3.1   It was noted that an issue had arisen with respect to the approval of the BSc in Marketing, Innovation and Technology programme regulations which also impacts on programme regulations for other first year business programmes. The Chair indicated that he would discuss the item with the Associate Dean for Teaching and Learning in DCUBS with a view to finding a solution to the issue which ensured the programme regulations were in line with Marks and Standards (Item 5.2.1).

3.2   It was noted that a revised nomination for an external examiner for Open Education is on the agenda (4.1.3) of this meeting (Item 4.1.6).

3.3   It was noted that clarification with respect to the registration details of a student applying to be re-admitted to the Professional Certificate/Diploma in Special and Inclusive Education was provided and the student was deemed eligible for re-admission (Item 5.3.1).

3.4   It was <u>noted</u> that changes recommended by USC to the Bachelor of Education programme regulations were completed (Item 5.3.4).

3.5   It was <u>noted</u> that a nomination for an external examiner for the Common Entry in Actuarial Mathematics programme was <u>approved</u> by Chair's Action, 4 November 2020 (Item 4.1.3).

3.6   It was <u>noted</u> that a legacy re-admission application for entry onto the BSc in Information Technology and Information Systems in Open Education was <u>approved</u> by Chair's Action 23 September 2020.

3.7   It was <u>noted</u> that a legacy re-admission application for entry onto the BA in Humanities in Open Education was <u>approved</u> by Chair's Action 23 September 2020.

3.8   It was <u>noted</u> that a minor amendment to the programme regulations for the BSc in Environmental Science and Technology was <u>approved</u> by Chair's Action, 23 September 2020.

3.9   It was <u>noted</u> that University Standards Committee considered and approved an Aegrotat award recommended by the Bachelor of Arts: Joint Honours Progression and Award Board on 1 October 2020. The approved recommendation was referred to the Academic Council meeting of 14 October 2020.

3.10   It was <u>noted</u> that a retrospective amendment to the programme regulations for the BA in Economics, Politics and Law 2019-2020 was <u>approved</u> by Chair's Action, 2 October 2020.

3.11   It was <u>noted</u> that an approval for a temporary replacement for an external examiner on the MSc in Science and Health Communication was <u>approved</u> by Chair's Action 15 October 2020.

3.12   It was <u>noted</u> that a legacy re-admission application for entry onto the MEd programme to exit with the lesser award of Graduate Diploma in Advanced Educational Studies was <u>approved</u> by Chair's Action 9 November 2020.

SECTION B: FACULTY ISSUES

4.   External examiners for taught programmes

4.1   <u>Nominations</u>

4.1.1   University College Cork
        BSc in Actuarial Mathematics
        <u>Approved</u>. It was requested that it would be clarified if the nominated external examiner was being nominated to examine the programme or was being appointed as an independent examiner to examine actuarial exemptions.

4.1.2   Eindhoven University of Technology
        MEng in Electronic and Computer Engineering
        <u>Approved</u>

4.1.3   Maynooth University
         BA in English and History
         <u>Approved</u>

4.1.4   Queen's University Belfast
         BSc in Chemical and Pharmaceutical Sciences
         <u>Approved</u>

4.1.5   Technological University Dublin
         BSc in Enterprise Computing
         <u>Not approved</u>. It was noted that this nomination was not in line with the regulations for
         appointment of an external examiner.

4.1.6   Virginia Commonwealth University (USA)
         MSc in Business Administration
         <u>Approved</u>, subject to resolution of how the modules and programme are appearing on Guru.
         It was <u>noted</u> that the external examiner would be working remotely and PNU would cover
         the costs should examiner be required to travel to PNU.

4.1.7   Item withdrawn

4.1.8   Maynooth University
         MSc in Computing
         <u>Approved</u>

4.1.9   University of Aberdeen
         MSc in Diagnostics and Precision Medicine
         <u>Approved</u>

4.1.10   University of Ulster, Magee Campus
         MSc in Public Policy
         <u>Approved</u>

4.1.11   UCD
         MA in European Law and Policy
         <u>Approved</u>

4.1.12   University of Ulster (Coleraine)
         Modules in the School of Applied Language and Intercultural Studies
         <u>Approved</u>

4.2   Renewal of appointment/changes to duties

         There were no items for consideration.

5.   OTHER ISSUES: FACULTY

5.1   Faculty of Science and Health

5.1.1   Programme regulations: MSc in Nursing/Healthcare Practice

Approved

5.2   DCU Institute of Education

5.2.1   Request for approval of external reviewer for the periodic programme review of the Bachelor of Early Childhood Education

Approved

5.2.2   Notification of external examiners acting as external reviewers for the periodic programme reviews of the Graduate Diploma in Inclusive Education, Learning Support and Special Education, and the Certificate in Religious Studies

Noted

5.2.3   Legacy readmission request: Professional Certificate/Diploma in Special and Inclusive Education

Approved

5.2.4   Legacy readmission request: BSc in Education and Training

Approved. It was noted that the student will re-enter the programme in semester two, January 2021 and will complete the programme in the academic year 2020-2021.

SECTION C: NON FACULTY SPECIFIC ITEMS

6.   Academic arrangements for the academic year 2020-21

The Chair outlined the background to the document as circulated noting that the OVPAA team had collated and reviewed academic regulatory changes made in 2019-2020 in response to Covid-19 and under the provision for a Force Majeure event, documented in Marks and Standard. The document summarised the regulatory changes and the decision on their continuation or otherwise in 2020-2021, in light of that review.

The Chair highlighted the following arrangements that would continue for the academic year 2020-2021:

- The retention of the Duolingo English test for admissions purposes for non-native speaks of English
- No on campus written tests in 2020-2021. There may be some exceptions made but these will require prior approval
- Suspension of Anonymous marking
- Amendments to duration of examinations because of the nature of online exams
- The set-up of an exam support centre for each diet of exams
- The review by external examiners of all significant assessments
- External examiners will not be required to attend Progression and Award Boards
- Documentation supporting extenuating circumstances, postponements and appeals will not be required. It was noted that the relevant forms are being modified to enable the gathering of more detail from students.
- The processing of exam outcomes will continue as per 2019-2020 for 2020-2021 and thereafter will be reviewed (e.g. PABs conducted through Zoom, reduced membership of PABs).

The following will not be retained:

- Accommodations on module marks and award classifications introduced in 2019-2020 due to the sudden and unexpected shift to remote learning
- The rule relating to the minimum mark of 40% for students retaking modules will not be retained in 2020- 2021, but will be reconsidered by USC when it is possible to implement operationally.

The document was noted by University Standards Committee. It was noted that students had provided positive feedback on the early availability of information so that they could plan their academic year.

The Director of Registry brought the following to the attention of USC. Due to the change from formal attended examinations to online exams, in some cases external examiners were not being provided with the opportunity to review MCQ examinations, as the MCQs were being developed directly on Loop, rather than being provided through Guru, where external examiners have access. It was noted that the linking between Loop and Guru was currently being investigated. It was noted too that practice exists whereby some schools provide a representative sample of questions to external examiners.   The Chair indicated that where external examiners are not currently being facilitated, they should be enabled to review a representative paper, particularly where it represents a substantial element of assessment.

7.   **Programme Regulation Template 2021-2022**

The Secretary informed USC that there were no changes to the programme regulations template for 2021-2022. She indicated that it was intended to follow the usual timeframe and the deadline for submission of regulations which would be 23 April 2021, for approval at the 20 May 2021 meeting of USC.

8.   **Faculty Periodic Programme Reviews**

The periodic programme reviews completed in 2019-2020 and for completion in 2020-2021 were <u>noted</u>.

9.   **Report on approvals of exceptional additional academic session by the Deputy Registrar, 2019-2020**

It was <u>noted</u> that seven students from the following listed programmes were granted an exceptional third repeat academic session in 2019-20 for registration 2020-2021.

Programme	Study Period
BEng in Electronic and Computer Engineering	4
BSc in Biotechnology	4
BA in Economics, Politics and Law	3
Bachelor of Arts (BAJG)	3
Bachelor of Business Studies	3
MSc in General Healthcare Practice	Continuous
BSc in Health and Society	2

10.   **Any other business**

There were no items of business

Signed: _____Date: _____

Date of next meeting:

Thursday, 7 January 2021 At 9.30 am via Zoom