

EDUCATION COMMITTEE

MINUTES

Wednesday 4 February 2015

2.00 - 3.45 p.m. in A204

Present: Professor Eithne Guilfoyle (Chair), Dr Claire Bohan, Dr Jennifer Bruen, Professor John Costello, Professor John Doyle, Mr Gary Gillick, Dr Mairéad Nic Giolla Mhichíl, Dr Sarah Ingle, Ms Margaret Irwin-Bannon (Secretary), Mr Billy Kelly, Professor Lisa Looney, Professor Barry McMullin, Professor Fionnuala Waldron

Apologies: Professor Mark Brown, Dr Anne Sinnott

In attendance: Ms Aisling McKenna

SECTION A: AGENDA, MINUTES AND MATTERS ARISING

1. Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted, subject to the inclusion of the report *Overview of Formal Withdrawal from Study at DCU*, under AOB. It was subsequently agreed this item would be considered at an earlier point in the meeting. The sequencing of the minutes reflects the original agenda.

2. Minutes of the meeting of 3 December 2014

The minutes were confirmed and were signed by the Chair.

3. Matters arising from the minutes

- 3.1** It was noted that an initial draft of a proposed mechanism for the Quality Assurance of Graduate Training Elements had been considered by Graduate Research Studies Board (GRSB) and had also been provided to the Deputy Registrar. It was anticipated that a final draft of the document will be considered at the next meeting of GRSB (Item 8).
- 3.2** It was noted that a memo has been sent by the Chair to University Executive, highlighting issues of resourcing, raised by Faculties through the Annual Progress Reports (APRs) (Item 7).
- 3.3** It was noted that an Incorporation timetabling project has been initiated to deal with timetabling for Incorporation for September 2015. As the integration of the timetable, to include St. Patrick's College and Mater Dei Institute, is likely to have an impact on all DCU Faculties, it was suggested that it was important to retain the existing timetable group, to ensure that the impact of any timetabling decisions in the context of Incorporation are considered in the light of all DCU Faculties (Item 3.4).
- 3.4** It was noted that the Dean of Graduate Studies will be meeting with Schools on an individual basis over the coming months to discuss the refinement and embedding of school-based structured PhD pathways. It was agreed that this item would be removed as an 'ongoing matter' and raised for the consideration of Education Committee in September 2015 (Item 8).
- 3.5** It was noted the availability of Education Committee members to attend Education Committee Standing Committee meetings was currently being ascertained (Item 3.8).
- 3.6** It was noted that a recorded 'ongoing' item relating to student retention needed further clarification (Item 3.9) and action would be taken in this regard, once clarified.
- 3.7** It was noted that external examiner related items, e.g. the review by external examiners of samples of continuous assessment (Item 3.10) and the non-submission of reports by external examiners (Item 10), were being considered in one single piece of work, and progress in this regard was ongoing.

- 3.8** It was noted that the SSOT is currently live and the Deputy Registrar indicated that he would be requesting support from the Student's Union to assist in encouraging students to complete the survey. It was further noted that the Deputy Registrar is currently writing up procedures relating to the non-SSOT elements of QuEST.
- 3.9** It was noted that a review of the progress of Education Committee goals would take place over the coming months.
- 3.10** It was noted that the revision of programme learning outcomes for the Bachelor of Arts (Joint Honours) programme had been completed (Item 10, 2 April 2014).

SECTION B: STRATEGIC MATTERS FOR DISCUSSION

4. Update on activities undertaken within the IUA

- 4.1** The Chair indicated that a meeting had taken place between the IUA Registrars and Quality Officers and noted that a recent negative judgement on the QQI accreditation of two Dublin-based language schools is likely to impact on the schedule for the introduction of the Institutional Education Mark (IEM).
- 4.2** It was noted that an MOU between the HEA and QQI has been signed.
- 4.3** The Department of Education and Skills has proposed that asylum seekers are charged EU undergraduate fees. The IUA Registrars have indicated that they are not in agreement with this proposal.
- 4.4** The HEAR/DARE scheme is being reformed at national level. The IUA Registrars are broadly in favour of the new proposals, however there is still an outstanding issue in relation to the long term home of the scheme which is under the remit of the IUA until 2016.
- 4.5** It was noted by the Registrars that the framework for Doctoral Education was much improved and almost complete. The Chair noted that the significant contribution, made by Prof L. Looney to the framework document, had been acknowledged by the Registrars Group.
- 4.6** Difficulties have arisen in the transfer of Irish Research electronic Library (IReL) to HEAnet and there are outstanding issues around governance and finances which are currently under discussion.

- 4.7** It was noted that conflicting advice in relation to the need, or otherwise, for university staff to be garda vetted has been obtained. The IUA are seeking to clarify the situation.
- 4.8** Prof Looney noted that the framework for Doctoral Education would be finalised at a meeting later this month.
- 4.9** The IUA Deans of Graduate Studies will be considering university priorities for the agenda of the proposed National Advisory Forum to support the National Framework for Doctoral Education. It is of concern that it appears that the timeframe for this initiative, planned in collaboration with the HEA and QQI, is being impinged upon by a Department Jobs, Innovation and Employment project related to the drafting of a new Strategy for Science Technology and Innovation. The term of reference of their project, to assess Ireland's future research infrastructure needs, has included reference to structured PhDs, the only aspect of human capital included in the brief.
- 4.10** The IUA is currently engaged with the Irish Research Council and the Deans of Graduate Studies suggested that IRC review their terms and conditions with a view to consolidating them with their published FAQs.

5. Presentation on E-portfolio

Dr C. Bohan made a brief presentation on the updated E-portfolio system. In the course of the presentation and in the discussion which followed the following were noted:

- Approximately 350 students have logged on to the system.
- Feedback has not yet been sought on potential improvements, as the system is only recently introduced.
- The Careers Service will roll out workshops over the coming months and Student Support and Development will over time, tag the undergraduate attributes to particular events.
- Prof L Looney noted that GRSB has reviewed the E-portfolio system in light of a potential roll-out to research students and has agreed that the IUA Graduate Skills should replace the undergraduate skills attributes in the context of research students. It remained to be explored how students migrate on the system from undergraduate to postgraduate level.

- The value of the e-portfolio system needs to be examined in the context of professional degrees.
- Although the system is quantitative, it was important to emphasise the importance of the quality of entries to students.
- It was noted that Associate Deans for Teaching and Learning/Education are compiling a list of modules that might align with the E-portfolio matrix.

SECTION C: PROGRAMME- AND MODULE-SPECIFIC ISSUES

6. BEng (Honours) in Electronic and Computer Engineering (single level 8 exit award title)

The proposal to establish a single NFQ level 8 exit award at Year 4 with the title BEng (Honours) in Electronic and Computer Engineering, to replace three existing Level 8 award titles, namely BEng in Electronic Engineering, BEng in Information and Communications Engineering and BEng in Digital Media Engineering was approved subject to the redaction of the entry on page 14 of the proposal documentation referring to additional staff resourcing.

In the discussion preceding approval the following were noted:

- That the new exit awards relating to DC190, B.Eng. Entry Pathway into Electronic and Computer Engineering, and available to new entrants, had not been approved previously by Education Committee.
- That the communication with the existing students of the changes to exit awards should be carefully managed and it was suggested that the School liaise with the Deputy Registrar/Dean of Teaching and Learning in this regard. In the event that there is not a consensus on the part of the existing students to opt to exit with the newly titled exit degree title, this should be communicated to Education Committee.
- The development team should be cognisant of the fact that there will be legacy students to be accommodated.
- It was suggested that the programme development team would consider replacing the term ‘major in’ and use ‘with a specialism in’ as an alternative.

7 Additional member of Accreditation Board for LLM in Law

This was approved.

8. Any other business**8.1 Overview of Formal Withdrawal from Study at DCU**

Ms. A. McKenna outlined that the report as circulated provided high level analysis of student withdrawals and cancellations to date in 2015, and also provided comparative data starting from 2005-2006. She drew particular attention to the following:

- There has been an increase in numbers of those students who cancel for reasons of deferral or transfer
- The numbers in general are reasonably steady and it was noted that relative to the increase in student population the percentage of students withdrawing was showing a decrease.

It was noted that the increase in transfers was a positive factor and it was key that the flexibility for students to transfer was maintained.

End.

Date of next meeting:

Wednesday 4th March, 2.00 p.m. in A204

Signed: _____
Chair

Date: _____