

EDUCATION COMMITTEE

MINUTES

Wednesday 4 March 2015

2.00 – 3.45 p.m. in A204

Present: Professor Eithne Guilfoyle (Chair), Professor Mark Brown, 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 Barry McMullin, Dr Anne Sinnott, Professor Fionnuala Waldron.

Apologies: Dr. Claire Bohan, Professor L. Looney

In attendance: Ms Aisling McKenna

SECTION A: AGENDA, MINUTES AND MATTERS ARISING

1. Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted with the addition of two items of AOB. Item 6 was brought to the top of the agenda but is minuted according to the agenda sequence.

2. Minutes of the meeting of 4 February 2015

The minutes were confirmed, subject to one minor amendment, 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 the finalised document would be completed shortly (Item 3.1)
- 3.2** It was noted that the working group on timetabling is continuing its deliberations (Item 3.3).
- 3.3** Referring to feedback provided following the approval of the BEng in Electronic and Computer Engineering, Prof B. McMullin indicated that it had been a long standing practice within Engineering at postgraduate level to use the term ‘major’ instead of ‘specialism’ and that there was no confusion in terminology within the discipline. He was thereby proposing to maintain the term ‘major’ as contained in the proposal documentation. This was agreed (Item 6).
- 3.4** It was noted that a funding call from the National Forum for the Enhancement of Teaching and Learning would issue over the coming months and that the issues relating to student retention would be reviewed in that context (Item 3.4).
- 3.5** It was noted that external examiner related items, e.g. the review by external examiners of samples of continuous assessment and the non-submission of reports by external examiners were being considered as a single item, and progress in this regard was ongoing (Item 3.7).
- 3.6** It was noted that work on the non SSOT elements of QuEST was ongoing. It was further noted that the SSOT is currently live and the Deputy Registrar indicated that e-mails had been sent to students to prompt more responses. Despite some consequent improvement, the overall response rate is currently at 5-6%, which is not significant enough to provide adequate information at module level. There followed some discussion on the survey and its effectiveness and it was agreed that in the short-term, the focus would be placed on the Irish Survey of Student Engagement (ISSE). It was anticipated that good programme level feedback would be provided through the ISSE. A review of the current SSOT process will be considered for the next academic year (Item 3.6).
- 3.7** It was noted that it was likely a review of the progress of Education Committee goals will take place at its next meeting in April (Item 3.7).

SECTION B: STRATEGIC MATTERS FOR DISCUSSION**4. Update on activities undertaken within the IUA**

As no IUA meetings had taken place, there was nothing to report.

5. Report on the Irish Survey of Student Engagement (ISSE)

It was noted that the Irish Survey of Student Engagement had been launched on 2 March 2015. Ms. A. McKenna indicated that she was looking for support from Faculties to promote the survey and the Students' Union was engaged in creating a promotional video to encourage students to participate. It was also noted that Ms. A. McKenna is a member of a National Working Group which is reviewing the ISSE questionnaire.

6. Presentation on PredictED (*Professor A. Smeaton, Dr. Mark Glynn and Dr. Sinead Smyth*)

Professor A. Smeaton presented a summary of the PredictEd process as it had operated in Semester 1 and outlined the plan for semester 2. In semester 1 ten first year modules with a high failure rate were chosen for the study, and 76% of students had opted in to the process. In the brief discussion which followed it was noted that:

- PredictEd may assist in identifying students 'at risk' earlier than is possible at the moment.
- It is technically possible to scale up this process, if required.
- The groups which showed the greatest improvement were the larger class groups.

7. Review of first semester examination results**7.1 January 2015, Examination Results Analysis**

Ms. A. McKenna presented a report on the first semester examination results for undergraduate entrants for 2015, with comparative data for the last three years. In

summary, the first year pass rates have improved with the average pass rate in each Faculty at over 90%. It was noted that there is a larger number of first year

entrants, in general, thereby further improving the overall upward trajectory. It was noted that very few modules have a pass rate of under 75%.

The effect score, where the module average is significantly higher (greater than +0.5) or lower (less than -0.5) than the Faculty average, was also analysed and some significant variances were noted within the Faculties of Science and Health and Humanities and Social Sciences.

Following a number of queries, Ms. McKenna undertook to provide the Faculty averages to the Executive Deans and to run a report which would identify whether marks or pass rates had gone up.

7.2 Identification and profiling of “at risk” students.

Ms. Mc Kenna reported the findings on the identification and profiling of ‘at risk students’. From analysis of semester 1 results, 225 ‘at risk’ students were identified. This represents 8.5% of the first year undergraduate population and is the lowest rate within a single cohort since the analysis began in 2009-2010.

In terms of the profile of ‘at risk’ students, it was noted that the non-traditional access routes remain stable, the median Leaving Certificate points for ‘at risk’ students is 415, whereas the overall median is 455 points, and in general, attainment at Mathematics at Leaving Certificate was lower in this group.

It was noted that identification of ‘at risk’ students is needed at an earlier stage in the academic year in order to be able to offer timely supports for ‘at risk’ students. Working with Dr M. Glynn, Ms. McKenna has initiated work on a new model for earlier identification of ‘at risk’ students.

SECTION C: PROGRAMME- AND MODULE-SPECIFIC ISSUES

8. Reinstatement of the Graduate Diploma in Special Educational Needs as a stand-alone level 9 programme

Approved. It was noted that this proposal was approved in the very specific context in which it was presented, in that the intake to the Graduate Diploma is determined by the national funded programme.

9. Request for re-titling of MA in Healthcare Chaplaincy

Approved.

10. Faculty of Science and Health**10.1 Outline proposal for Certificate in Process Biotechnology (Springboard Programme)**

It was noted that the deadline for application for Springboard funding was imminent and the Faculty required the approval of the outline offering to submit the funding application. It was indicated that this proposal is a joint offering between the School of Biotechnology and the National Institute for Bioprocessing Research and Training (NIBRT).

It was noted that in order to complete the proposed structure an existing level 9 module BE560 had been amended to reflect level 8 learning outcomes and required approval as BE460 for inclusion on the proposed structure.

It was further noted that more detailed information would be provided.

The proposal was approved.

10.2 Request to approve stand-alone module BE460, Bioprocessing Laboratory.

The module was approved.

11. Request for approval of CVs for CICE Accreditation Board

The Accreditation Board for the Bachelor of Education (CICE) was approved. It was noted that this accreditation was taking place in the context of the recent signing of the linked provider agreement.

12. Any other business**12.1 Draft documentation Task Group on Reform of University Selection and Entry (TGRUSE)**

It was noted that the Task Group on Reform of University Selection and Entry (TGRUSE) will be putting forward proposals towards the end of the academic year. The Chair indicated that preliminary draft documentation has been made available to Education Committee on the shared drive. She indicated that she planned to hold a meeting of the Admissions Policy Working Group, and requested informal feedback from members of Education Committee.

12.2 3U Partnership

The Chair indicated that a meeting had been held with the 3U Registrars to examine whether or not there should be exploration of further development of new joint programmes. The outcome of the meeting was there was no capacity at present for further development however, it might be feasible for each institution to open up individual modules on certain programmes for students at the partner institutions, and thereby broaden the choice of electives.

The Chair indicated that the availability of a fully equipped digital classroom in DCU should facilitate this. The Chair indicated that she would be speaking to Heads of School in this regard over the coming weeks.

End.

Signed: _____
Chair

Date: _____

Date of next meeting:

<p>Wednesday 1 April 2015, 2.00 p.m. in A204</p>
