

## UNIVERSITY STANDARDS COMMITTEE

### MINUTES

Thursday 28 May 2015 in A204

9.00 – 10.40 am

**Present:** Mr Billy Kelly (Chair), Dr Greg Foley, Mr Gary Gillick, Ms. Margaret Irwin-Bannon (Secretary), Professor Lisa Looney, Dr David McKeon, Ms. Phylomena McMorrow, Dr Caroline McMullan, Dr Pádraig Ó Duibhir, Professor Colm O’Gorman, Ms. Michele Pringle, Ms. Annabella Stover

**Apologies:** Dr Brian Corcoran, Dr Eamonn Costello, Professor Barbara Flood, Dr Mark Glynn, Dr Mairéad Nic Giolla Mhichíl, Dr Andrew O’Regan, Mr. Christopher Pressler

**In Attendance:** Mr. James O’Donoghue

The Chair opened the meeting and welcomed Mr. James O’Donoghue as incoming Education Officer

### SECTION A: MINUTES AND RELATED ISSUES

#### 1. Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted with the inclusion of two additional items under 4.2.2 and 5.2.4

#### 2. Minutes of the meeting of 2 April 2015

The minutes of the meeting of 2 April 2015 were approved and signed.

### **3. Matters arising from the minutes (USC2015/A2/3)**

- 3.1** It was noted that the drafting of proposals with respect to issues related to the external examiners' process had been deferred and it was further noted that work in this regard would be completed over the summer months (Item 3.2).
- 3.2** It was noted that the derogation required from Marks and Standards to allow a 3-hour examination for a five credit module on the BA Joint Honours programme would be proposed in the new academic year (Item 3.3).
- 3.3** It was noted that the Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) policy will be considered over the summer months and a revised policy will be available for consideration in the new academic year (Item 3.5).
- 3.4** With respect to the management of records of (re-)accreditations of programmes by external professional bodies, and the sign-off of documentation, it was noted that consideration was being given to the implementation of best practice and will be completed over the summer months (Item 3.6).
- 3.5** It was noted that, as requested, Faculties had included information in the Programme Regulations on modules where the credits and weightings did not correspond (Item 3.8).
- 3.6** It was noted that items relating to Marks and Standards, including legacy re-admission, resit categories and other issues were included in the Marks and Standards agenda item of 28 May 2015 meeting (Item 8 and 3.7).
- 3.7** It was noted that the cost sharing of expenses for an external examiner located outside Europe was explored with the relevant School (Item 4.1.1).

## **SECTION B: FACULTY ISSUES**

### **4. External examiners for taught programmes**

#### **4.1 Nominations**

- 4.1.1 Professor Tommie McCarthy, UCC  
BSc in Genetics & Cell Biology  
Approved

- 4.1.2 Dr Jeremy Dawson, University of Sheffield  
Modules in DCU Business School  
Approved
- 4.1.3 Dr Declan Fahie, UCD  
Professional Master of Education  
Not approved, as the nomination contravened the Regulations and Guidelines for the appointment of External Examiners for taught programmes/modules.
- 4.1.4 Dr Melanie Hoewer, UCD  
Modules in SALIS  
Approved
- 4.1.5 Dr Iona MacIntyre, University of Edinburgh  
Modules in SALIS  
Approved
- 4.1.6 Dr Gheorghita Ghinea, Brunel University  
MA/GD/GC in Telecommunications Engineering  
MA/GD/GC in Electronic Systems  
Masters Qualifier Course  
Independent modules  
Decision deferred subject to clarification with the School on the number of modules which will be undertaken by the external examiner. It was noted that once the external examiner's workload is clarified that the Chair would reconsider the nomination.
- 4.1.7 Dr Kristin Brogan, Tralee Institute of Technology  
Modules in SALIS  
Approved
- 4.1.8 Professor Asun Lopez-Varela, Universidad Complutense de Madrid  
Modules in SALIS  
Approved
- 4.1.9 Dr Fiona Copland, University of Stirling  
Modules in SALIS  
Approved

## **4.2 Renewal of appointment/changes to duties**

### 4.2.1 Ms. Paula Procter, Sheffield Hallam University School of Nursing and Human Sciences

It was noted that the School of Nursing and Human Sciences was seeking an extension of one year beyond the 4-year term in the particular and exceptional circumstances of this programme. It was noted that this online programme has been discontinued. The request to have the term of the external examiner extended for one year was to ensure continuity for the completion of the programme by existing students. This extension was agreed for one year only and on the clear understanding, should any students remain following the extended term, then a new external examiner should be appointed.

### 4.2.2 Dr John McEvoy, UCD School of Nursing & Human Sciences Approved

## **5. Other issues**

### **5.1 Faculty of Engineering and Computing**

#### 5.1.1 Readmission request on a legacy basis: Masters Engineering Qualifier Course

The decision to re-admit this student was deferred subject to clarification on the conditions of the Qualifier programme and confirmation that the candidate should be considered as a re-admission applicant.

### **5.2 Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences**

#### 5.2.1 Readmission request on a legacy basis: MA in Intercultural Studies

The decision to re-admit this student was deferred subject to the re-submission of the legacy re-admission form reflecting that the application for re-admission was being recommended and supported by the Programme Board.

5.2.2 Readmission request on a legacy basis: MA in Film & Television Studies  
Approved

5.2.3 Readmission request on a legacy basis: MA in Journalism Studies

Approved, subject to the following conditions: The extension of the completion time to September 2016 and clarification on whether or not the dissertation will be completed on a full-time or part-time basis. (If the student is working on the dissertation on a full-time basis, registration will be permitted in the current academic year (2014-2015), however if the student is completing the dissertation on a part-time basis then registration will not be permitted until September 2015).

5.2.4 Readmission request on a legacy basis: MSc i nGnó agus i dTeicneolaíocht an Eolais

Approved, subject to the following condition: As the student has 55 credits to complete the proposed maximum completion date is to be changed to 2016-2017.

### **5.3 Open Education**

5.3.1 Readmission request on a legacy basis: MSc in Operations Management

Approved

## **C. Other issues (not Faculty-specific)**

### **6. Marks and Standards issues**

#### **6.1 Revised Marks and Standards 2015-2016**

The Chair introduced this item, indicating that it had been recommended by the Internal Auditor that in the interests of good practice the *Frequently Asked Questions* document relating to Marks and Standards, should be integrated, in as far as possible into the Marks and Standards document. The revised version of Marks and Standards as presented to the meeting now incorporated the FAQ information and also reduced repetition contained in section 7. The changes proposed were

examined in turn and agreed, with a suggestion to rephrase section 5.1.3 (legacy re-admission regulation on currency of award).

It was noted that feedback received from the Director of Registry and the Student Awards Manager would be incorporated into the document. A finalised version would then be circulated electronically for the agreement of USC with the intention to then submit the final agreed version for the approval of Academic Council at the meeting of 22 June 2015.

It was noted too that a query had been raised in relation to Initial Teacher Education (ITE) programmes where the ECTS credits, due to Teaching Council requirements, exceed the 240 credit limit as stipulated in Marks and Standards for a level 8 Honours Bachelor Degree. It was noted that to date this issue has been dealt with by way of derogation from Marks and Standards, however it was agreed that a note in this regard would be drafted for incorporation into Marks and Standards.

## 6.2 Programme Regulations 2015/16

It was noted that Programme Regulations for 2015-2016 would be made available on a shared drive for Committee members' consideration and approval and the Secretary indicated she would be in touch by e-mail to confirm a completion deadline for mid-July 2015.

## 7. Incorporation Matters Update

### 7.1 Proposal on Regulations and guidelines: External Examiners for taught programmes/modules

The Chair indicated that the proposal as presented was the outcome of work conducted by a sub-group of the Student Experience Working Group. The group has formulated general principles by which the nomination of external examiners would be dealt with in the context of the changing landscape in terms of the forthcoming new Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences and the forthcoming Faculty of Education. The proposal contained a request that USC agree in principle to consider any requests for temporary derogations from the Regulations and Guidelines for the appointment of External Examiners for taught programmes/modules that might emerge. This was agreed.

## 7.2 Revised Academic Integrity and Plagiarism Policy

It was noted that the revised Academic Integrity and Plagiarism Policy as presented for consideration was the result of a merging of St. Patrick's College, Mater Dei Institute (MDI) and DCU policies. It was noted that the Associate Deans had mapped the policies of the three institutions and there had been very little divergence between them. The main change noted to the proposed document was the advisory note to students on how to avoid plagiarism, which had been taken from the MDI policy and added to the policy being considered for approval.

The changes to the policy were agreed subject to minor revisions, and it was noted that the finalised policy would be submitted for the approval of Academic Council at the meeting of 10 June 2015.

## 8. Proposed changes to Academic Regulations for Postgraduate Degrees by Research and Thesis for 2015/16

Professor L. Looney outlined the changes as proposed and agreed by Graduate Research Studies Board and noted in particular the following changes:

- Addition of a temporary paragraph at the start of the regulations to take account of the circumstances of Incorporation where DCU research students would be supervised by SPD and MDI colleagues. Once Incorporation has taken place this paragraph will no longer be required
- Greater clarification around deferral for research students
- Inclusion of item related to DKIT.

The changes were agreed and it was noted that the document will be submitted for the approval of Academic Council at the meeting of 10 June 2015.

## 9. Any other business

Some suggestions were made to improve information, for decision-making purposes, provided on the external examiner nomination and the re-admission form and it was noted that it was intended that a review of all relevant USC forms would be conducted over the summer months.

Date of next meeting:

Thursday, 10 September 2015 9.00 a.m. in A204
--

*End*

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_  
Chair

Date: \_\_\_\_\_