

## **EDUCATION COMMITTEE**

### **MINUTES**

Wednesday 11 January 2017

2.00 – 2.45 pm in A204

**Present:** Dr Claire Bohan, Professor Mark Brown, Dr Jennifer Bruen, Professor Michelle Butler, Professor John Doyle, Ms Margaret Irwin-Bannon (Secretary), Mr Billy Kelly (Chair), Dr Garrett McGuinness, Ms Aisling McKenna, Professor Barry McMullin, Ms Pauline Mooney, Professor Pádraig Ó Duibhir

**Apologies:** Professor Eithne Guilfoyle, Professor Greg Hughes, Professor Anne Sinnott

**In attendance:** Ms Karen Johnston, Institutional Research and Analysis Officer

The Chair welcomed Professor Michelle Butler to her first meeting of Education Committee in her capacity as recently appointed Dean of Faculty of Science and Health.

#### **SECTION A: AGENDA, MINUTES AND MATTERS ARISING**

**1. Adoption of the agenda**

The agenda was adopted subject to the addition of three items under AOB.

**2. Minutes of the meeting of 30 November 2016**

The minutes were approved and signed by the Chair.

**3. Matters arising from the minutes of 30 November 2016**

- 3.1 It was noted that Ms P. Mooney, having consulted with colleagues, was in the process of documenting the current procedure in the Finance Office, where there is a commitment from an employer to pay programme fees. She reported that she had consulted with the Vice President Academic Affairs/Registrar and it was agreed that Senior Management and Executive were the more appropriate forums for this issue (Item 12.1).
- 3.2 It was noted that following the introduction of the Guru system the External Examiner response rates in terms of submission of reports had increased from previous years. It is intended to review the item over the academic year 2016-2017 (Item 3.3).
- 3.3 It was noted that technical issues with respect to the publication of First Destination Survey outcomes on the university website were being dealt with by ISS (Item 3.4).

**SECTION B: STRATEGIC MATTERS FOR DISCUSSION/NOTING****4. Update on strategic activities undertaken within the Irish Universities Association (IUA)**

There were no updates on this item. It was noted that the next IUA group meetings will take place on 19 January 2017 in Maynooth University.

**5. Irish Survey of Student Engagement (ISSE) 2016-2017**

The Director of Quality Promotion noted she would hold a one-off working group meeting, which will include the Students' Union, over the coming weeks to discuss a co-ordinated approach to the communications strategy for the survey fieldwork, which will commence on 8 March 2017.

It was noted that a proposal on the institutional release of ISSE data is being prepared for the consideration of the IUA Registrar's group.

**6. Education Committee Goals 2016-2017**

There were no updates for this item.

**SECTION C: PROGRAMME AND MODULE-SPECIFIC ISSUES****7. Proposed restructure of the BSc in Genetics and Cell Biology**

It was agreed because of the interrelatedness of the BSc in Genetics and Cell Biology and the BSc in Biotechnology to consider both proposals together.

The proposed changes, which apply to both proposals submitted, were approved subject to the following recommendations/considerations:

- That the INTRA module specification would be updated to reflect the change in credits from 15 to 30. It was noted, in the context of the Biopharma stream, that revision of the INTRA module provides an opportunity to build in some aspects of the learning outcomes normally associated with the final year project
- It was queried if the module BE489A, Literature Review and Experimental Design module was core for all students, when 50% of the students would not be engaging in a research project
- It was noted that the 50/50 split of students taking either stream was potentially too rigid and it was suggested that the programme team consider capping each stream at 60% to allow for some flexibility of numbers in any given year
- It was requested that it is communicated very clearly, and in advance, to students that the ranking for streams occurs at the end of the third year
- It was noted that the revised programme will commence for students entering third year in the academic year 2017-2018 and the programme team are asked to ensure that transitional arrangements are in place.

It was noted that the programme proposers were not required to revert to Education Committee with respect to the above recommendations and considerations.

**8. Proposed restructure of the BSc in Biotechnology**

The proposal was approved subject to the recommendations/considerations outlined under item 7.

## **9. Master of Education in Literacy Professional Practice**

The Chair introduced this item, noting that the document as circulated was an updated version of the documentation submitted for the Master's in Literacy (Write to Read) which was approved at 13 January 2016 meeting of Education Committee and subsequently considered by an Accreditation Board on 6 May 2016. The Accreditation Board had recommended approval of the programme, but had also recommended relatively extensive changes. The School at that point had considered the recommendations made in the Accreditation Report and decided to withdraw the programme.

The Acting Dean of the Institute of Education outlined that some elements of the recommendations and feedback had been acknowledged, but it was felt that the Accreditation Board had taken the programme in a direction which the programme proposers had not originally intended.

In the discussion which followed it was felt from a procedural viewpoint, that it was not appropriate or necessary to re-submit the programme for validation and accreditation. It was proposed and agreed that Academic Council would be asked to consider the original Accreditation Report, accompanied by a response from the Faculty and School as to the reasons the recommendations were not being applied and/or outlining where recommendations were implemented.

It was also agreed by Education Committee that in advance of the documentation being submitted for the consideration of Academic Council that Education Committee Standing Committee (ECSC) would consider the documentation and provide an opportunity for the programme team to clarify or elaborate on its proposals.

## **10. Any other business**

### *10.1 Electronical approval of revised Accreditation Board for the International Master's in Security, Intelligence and Strategic Studies*

The Secretary reminded Education Committee that revised nominations to the Accreditation Board of the International Master's in Security, Intelligence and Strategic Studies had been circulated electronically for the approval of the Committee.

*10.2 Notification of proposal from Faculty of Engineering and Computing for delivery of MSc Princess Nourah Bint Abdulrahman University (PNU).*

The Dean of the Faculty of Engineering and Computing indicated that it was intended to submit a proposal to Education Committee in the near future for delivery of an MSc at Princess Nourah Bint Abdulrahman University (PNU).

*10.3 Responsibilities under Climate Action and Low Carbon Development Act 2015*

The Dean of the Faculty of Engineering and Computing brought the attention of Education Committee to the *Responsibilities under Climate Action and Low Carbon Development Act 2015* and in particular section 15, which outlines the specific new statutory obligations on public bodies (including universities). He outlined that in the context of the upcoming University strategic planning activity, there will be an opportunity for Education Committee to proactively develop an example of good practice for all universities in engaging with the spirit of the Act (as much as, or more than, the “legal letter”, i.e., going beyond a mere “compliance” perspective).

It was agreed that details of the Act would be circulated following the meeting.

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

**Date of next meeting:**

Wednesday, 15 February 2017

at 2.00 in A204