

**EDUCATION COMMITTEE  
MINUTES**

Wednesday 26 October 2016

2.00 – 3.20 in A204

**Present:** Dr Claire Bohan, Dr Jennifer Bruen, Mr James Donoghue, Professor John Doyle, Professor Eithne Guilfoyle (Chair), Ms Margaret Irwin-Bannon (Secretary), Mr Billy Kelly, Professor Lisa Looney, Professor Colette McDonagh, Dr Garrett McGuinness, Ms Aisling McKenna, Professor Anne Sinnott

**Apologies:** Professor Mark Brown, Professor Greg Hughes, Professor Barry McMullin, Dr Pádraig Ó Duibhir

**In attendance:** Ms Karen Johnston, Institutional Research and Analysis Officer, Ms Yvonne McLoughlin (Item 5)

The Chair opened the meeting and welcomed Professor Colette McDonagh, interim Dean of the Faculty of Science and Health and Dr Garrett McGuinness, representative of the Associate Deans for Teaching and Learning to their first meeting of Education Committee.

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

**1. Adoption of the agenda**

The agenda was adopted.

**2. Minutes of the meeting of 28 September 2016**

The minutes were approved and signed by the Chair, subject to an amendment under attendance.

### 3. Matters arising from the minutes of 28 September 2016

- 3.1 It was noted that with the introduction of the Guru system for external examiners, issues with respect to their engagement had largely been addressed. It was proposed that it would be ascertained in the New Year if the ongoing operation of Guru has resolved any remaining issues (Item 3.1).

It was noted that a proposal on an outline process for the review of External Examiners Reports was on the agenda of this meeting (Item 3.1).

- 3.2 It was noted that a report on feedback drawn from the Faculty Annual Progress Review Reports has been submitted to Executive (Item 3.2).
- 3.3 It was noted that technical issues with respect to the publication of First Destination Survey outcomes on the university website had been referred to ISS (Item 3.3).
- 3.4 It was noted that an update on the actions relating to the Education Committee Goal (Goal 6) '*Position DCU as a provider of innovative structured postgraduate research programmes*' had been received and the EC Goals document had been updated (Item 7).
- 3.5 It was noted that a proposal to provide a targeted intervention for 'at risk' students as early as possible following publication of semester 1 results would be available for the consideration of Education Committee at the 30 November 2016 meeting (Item 9).
- 3.6 It was noted that a revised validation process for joint taught programmes was in preparation and would be submitted to Education Committee shortly (Item 3.6).
- 3.7 It was noted that the Deputy Registrar/Dean of Teaching and Learning had met with the Associate Dean of Teaching and Learning in the Faculty of Science and Health to progress discussions on the approval of stand-alone modules by Faculties and related quality assurance processes. It was noted that the Faculty would prepare a proposal in this regard for the consideration of Education Committee.

A related query from the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences on the approval of stand-alone modules was raised. The Faculty has been asked by the International Office to develop modules equivalent to six ECTS credits for delivery to an international market. Following a brief discussion, it was agreed that further exploration of the issues involved would take place and the Deputy Registrar/Dean of Teaching and Learning would arrange to meet with the International Office to seek clarification on the requirements, and explore the ECTS credit issues involved.

- 3.8 It was noted that the ISSE 2013-2016 programme level report had been circulated to members of Education Committee, Heads of School and Programme Chairs.

## **SECTION B: STRATEGIC MATTERS FOR DISCUSSION/NOTING**

### **4. Update on strategic activities undertaken within the Irish Universities Association (IUA)**

Report on meetings of 10 October 2016 (IUA Registrars, Quality Officers and Deans of Graduate Studies).

#### *4.1 IUA Registrar's Group*

The Chair briefed Education Committee on the IUA Registrar's Group meeting and the following were noted:

- The discussion on the shared services unit for the HEAR and DARE scheme is continuing. It was noted that a proposal in this regard will be considered by the IUA Registrar's Group in April 2017.
- The proposed changes to the Garda vetting policy are being considered. It was confirmed that students who have already been Garda vetted will not have to undergo the process again.
- Discussions are ongoing on the potential impact of Brexit on Irish universities.
- The IUA Registrars have received some information on the top-slicing of the HEA budget and have requested a further detailed breakdown.

#### *4.2 IUA Registrar's Group and Institutional Quality Officers*

The Director of Quality Promotion and Institutional Research reported on the IUA Quality Officers meeting with the IUA Registrar's Group and the following were noted:

- A discussion took place about the publication of the Annual Quality Review Report for each institution. The IUA Quality Officers expressed the view that they were not in favour of publishing the individual institutional reports and the issue is currently under discussion. It was agreed that the IUA Quality Officers would share their individual returns amongst the Quality Officers Group.
- Agreement has been reached with the IUA Quality Officers and the IUA Registrars on the schedule of Institutional Reviews. The schedule, which will see DCU undergoing review in 2018, has yet to be finally agreed with QQI.

### 4.3 IUA Deans of Graduate Studies

The Dean of Graduate Studies provided a report on the 10 October 2016 meeting of the IUA Deans of Graduate Studies which included meetings with the HEA Director of Research Policy and the Director General of SFI.

#### HEA Director of Research Policy

- Under the compact discussions there are indications that the HEA may want an alignment of the type of PhD related data reported by each university, including completion time information.
- With respect to the National Framework for Doctoral Education the HEA have committed to drawing up draft terms of reference for the Advisory Forum.
- A new *Programme for Research in Third-Level Institutions (PRTLTI)* is likely to happen, but it is anticipated that the focus of the funding will be quite different to previous schemes, and look to developing capacity in metrics.

#### SFI Director General

- Under Innovation 2020 a commitment was made to increase the PhD student intake by 500 students nationally. Subject to sustainability of funding, SFI plan to launch a PhD initiative which will be run through the twelve existing SFI centres. It is planned that the assessment/intake process, continuing personal development and skills training will be conducted through the centres and that fifty per cent of the places available will be allocated to supervisors not affiliated to the SFI Centres, but the projects have to be within the legal remit of SFI.
- IUA Deans of Graduate Studies agreed to collate a ‘boundary conditions’ document which would inform SFI about the context which already exists across the sector, in terms of regulations and training practices.

The Dean of Graduate Studies informed Education Committee that the QQI are in the process of re-drafting the statutory guidelines on quality assurance of research degrees. In tandem with this document, the IUA Deans of Graduate Studies have agreed to collaborate on the revision of the IUQB 2009 document *Good Practice in the Organisation of PhD Programmes in Irish Universities*.

**5. Presentation on First Destination Survey of 2015 DCU graduates by Ms Karen Johnston and Ms Yvonne McLoughlin**

Ms Johnston and Ms McLoughlin presented on the outcomes of the First Destination Survey of 2015 DCU graduates. The following points were noted:

- The 2015 response rate of 58% (c1700 responses) was up from 49% in the previous year
- The overall employment figure six months after graduation is 76%
- The figure for those in further study is at 16% with an increase in those taking taught programmes
- Unpaid internships dropped to 0.1%
- In total 6% of DCU graduates are seeking employment six months after graduation
- There is a small rise in those who are self-employed
- It would be useful to compare those companies that hire DCU graduates with the list of companies who hire DCU students for INTRA placement.

Ms McLoughlin outlined that there had been a multi-faceted university-wide approach to increasing response rates to the survey which had been very effective. She extended her thanks to all those involved in promoting the survey noting particularly the support from the President's Office, the Student's Union and Programme Chairs.

The Chair thanked Ms Johnston and Ms McLoughlin for their presentation.

**6. Irish Survey of Student Engagement 2016-2017**

There were no updates for this item.

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

There were no updates for this item.

**8. Summary of activities of Education Committee 2015-2016**

The summary of activities was noted.

## 9. Proposal on review of External Examiner Reports

The Chair outlined that the implementation of the Guru system in 2016 has for the first time provided for a systematic review of external examiner reports at University, Faculty, School and Programme level. It is proposed from 2016 onwards that an annual review process will be put in place whereby the Vice President Academic Affairs (Registrar) will meet with the Executive Dean and Associate Dean for Teaching and Learning of each Faculty to review external examiner reports relevant to that Faculty. It was noted that the review is not intended to involve all external examiner reports but will focus on areas of concern indicated by external examiners.

The Chair indicated that she will report to Education Committee on an annual basis and advise on any areas of the external examining process which she believes should be reviewed or modified in light of these reviews.

Details of the proposal were discussed and the proposal as circulated was agreed.

## SECTION C: PROGRAMME AND MODULE-SPECIFIC ISSUES

### 10. Request to approve award title—Royal Irish Academy of Music

The request to approve the award title of Diploma in Music Performance as an exit award from the BA in Music Performance (vocal studies specialism) was approved.

### 11. Any other business

There were no items of AOB.

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

**Date of next meeting:**

Wednesday, 30 November 2016

at 2.00 in A204