

**EDUCATION COMMITTEE
MINUTES**

Wednesday 31 May 2017

2.00 – 4.25 pm in A204

Present: Dr Jennifer Bruen Professor Michelle Butler, Mr James Donoghue, Professor Eithne Guilfoyle (Chair), Ms Margaret Irwin-Bannon (Secretary), Dr Anne Looney, Professor Lisa Looney, Dr Garrett McGuinness, Ms Aisling McKenna, Ms Pauline Mooney, Dr Joseph Stokes

Apologies: Dr Claire Bohan, Professor Mark Brown, Professor John Doyle, Professor Greg Hughes, Mr Billy Kelly, Professor Anne Sinnott

In attendance: Ms Karen Johnston

SECTION A: AGENDA, MINUTES AND MATTERS ARISING**1. Adoption of the agenda**

The agenda was adopted subject to the following:

- Education Committee agreed to consider a late submission from the Faculty of Science and Health with respect to the MSc in Biomedical Diagnostics and the MSc in Financial Mathematics (introduction of a part-time offering, in addition to a full-time offering). It was noted that due to the timing of the submission, Education Committee would consider the proposal and revert with feedback/approval by 7 June 2017. The Secretary undertook to circulate the proposal electronically to all members.

2. Minutes of the meeting of 3 May 2017

The minutes were approved, and signed by the Chair.

3. Matters arising from the minutes of 3 May 2017

- 3.1** It was noted that the Deputy Registrar/Dean of Teaching and Learning will meet with members of the Communications and Marketing, and Student Recruitment Offices with a view to developing an externally facing report of the First Destination Survey outcomes for publication on the DCU website (Item 3.3).
- 3.2** It was noted that a revised proposal with respect to accelerated validation would be submitted for the consideration of Education Committee in September 2017. The revised proposal will encompass validation and accreditation processes in their totality and will also aim to address DCU's responsibilities as a Designated Award Body (Item 7.2).
- 3.3** It was noted that the development of a protocol for the cessation of arrangements with those external examiners who do not engage in the examining process is ongoing (Item 3.1).
- 3.4** It was noted that a summary of Faculty Annual Progress Report (APR) outcomes will be communicated to Executive following review of the Open Education APR at this meeting (Items 8.1 and 8.7).
- 3.5** It was noted that the Academic Calendar is on the agenda of this meeting and will be discussed in the context of the university strategy more generally (Item 11).

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

The Chair indicated that she wished to seek feedback on the financial impact, if any, of the Undergraduate Awards. Some concerns have been expressed by other institutions through the IUA Registrar's Group. Students in other institutions, who have been nominated, have been seeking financial assistance to cover the costs of participation in the awards, as it can involve some considerable expense. There were also some concerns expressed around Intellectual Property and double assessment.

In the discussion which ensued it was noted that:

DCU actively encourages participation in the Undergraduate Awards, and to date there have been no requests for financial assistance for participation (the fact that the awards are based in Dublin are a mitigating factor). It was noted that DCU would keep a watching brief on the IP and costs issues, but for now were continuing to encourage student participation.

5. Presentation on Irish Survey of Student Engagement (ISSE) 2017

Ms Karen Johnston presented on the outcomes of the Irish Survey of Student Engagement 2017 and the following were noted:

- The overall response rate in DCU had decreased from 31% to 26%.
- The average response rate across all the institutions surveyed was up from 22% to 27%
- The university response rate was 24%
- The majority of responses came from the first year population, followed by fourth years, with the least number of responses coming from taught postgraduate students
- A new feature of the ISSE data is the provision of effective size statistics (i.e. comparative statistics reflecting DCU performance versus the rest of the sector on particular criteria)
- The written feedback provided by survey participants is both constructive and complimentary and this information will be provided directly to the relevant faculties.

In the discussion which followed it was noted that:

- The information provided is very useful, particularly when reviewed over multiple years and where a pattern of response becomes evident
- The Director of Quality Promotion and Institutional Research indicated that she would welcome the opportunity to discuss the survey outcomes with all faculties and noted that the value of the survey is the ability to analyse separate academic disciplines and compare performance to other institutions in those disciplines
- The difficulty of eliciting a response from those on fourth year teaching placement was noted and further discussion will take place on how this can be addressed for future surveys
- The Institutional Analysis Office will explore using the data provided to look at thematic areas in the context of strategic issues

- It is important to communicate the outcomes of the survey to students and let them know that their feedback brings about change. It was suggested that it might be useful to provide the information during orientation.

The Chair thanked Ms Karen Johnston for her very useful and interesting presentation.

6. Education Committee Goals/Strategic Planning

6.1 Presentation by Professor Eithne Guilfoyle (Chair) on Strategic Planning

Professor Eithne Guilfoyle presented on the strategic planning process and the following points were noted:

- A draft strategy will be brought to faculties and units over the next few weeks
- The final version will be submitted to Governing Authority in June 2017
- Constituent strategies are due to be completed in February 2018
- There are two enabling initiatives which will underpin the constituent strategies as follows:
 - A new Student Information System—this will be a major two-phase project which will take 3-5 years to complete
 - Revision of the structure of the Academic Calendar. It was noted that a Working Group will be set up to review the Academic Calendar in light of strategic objectives.

Professor Guilfoyle indicated that she would be making a presentation to Academic Council in this regard at its 19 June 2017 meeting and there will be further consultation throughout the university.

In the ensuing discussion the following were noted:

- That there should be consultation with administrative staff collectively
- The introduction of a new student system will provide opportunities to review processes and to have a system which enables, rather than limits, strategic intent.

7. Annual Programme Review: Open Education

As Professor Mark Brown was absent on university business the Secretary noted the following summary points provided with respect to the Open Education Annual Progress Report:

- The External examiners gave largely positive feedback
- Most of the examiners' feedback has been acted upon, where this is possible
- The issue of declining student numbers in some programmes should be addressed with last week's announcement of additional funded Springboard+ places
- Currently DCU does not have a requirement for passing an examination in modules that consist of examination and continuous assessment components and Open Education does not see a strong reason for introducing one
- The National Institute for Digital Learning (NIDL) is currently an Associate Partner in an Erasmus+ project exploring remote electronic proctoring for tests and examinations but has no immediate plans to pilot this technology in the DCU Connected offerings. However, this is an area of development that DCU needs to continue to explore and monitor over the next few years.

SECTION C: PROGRAMME AND MODULE-SPECIFIC ISSUES

8. Doctor of Education (EdD): flexible delivery option

The proposal was approved subject to the following issues being addressed:

- 8.1 At the present time the Academic Regulations for Postgraduate Degrees by Research and Thesis state 'In normal circumstances, research students registered at DCU will reside within Ireland' (paragraph 4.4). Education Committee requested that a waiver is sought from the Graduate Research Studies Board (GRSB) that these students can reside abroad for the period of their substantive research project.
- 8.2 That an individual agreement, to meet DCU's quality for such arrangements, is drawn up for each candidate detailing the supervisory arrangements on a remote basis. This will have to be completed, approved at Faculty level, and notified to GRSB in advance of the students going back to their home country.

It was noted that these students will have eighteen months completed at DCU before the research agreement is drawn up for individual students and Education Committee noted an element of risk to this. It is requested that the programme proposers consider in advance whether or not they can ensure that adequate supervisory arrangements can be put in place and facilitated at this point?

- 8.3 In recognising a foreign qualification some countries have a requirement that a minimum amount of time is physically spent at the awarding institution. It is requested that the programme team put a checking mechanism in place at point of admission to ensure that the qualification will be recognised in the home country of the student.
- 8.4 It was noted that there should be consistency in how the offering type (i.e. flexible delivery) is used in documentation. The term 'flexible delivery' was advised to enable student visa applications. It should be ensured that there is a consistency of title use.
- 8.5 It was confirmed that the award remains the same as that for part-time delivery and that the title (reflected on the parchment) will be *Doctor of Education*.

9. Revised documentation: Doctor of Education (Ed)/MPhil (Education)

It was noted that the proposal as circulated attempted to correct an inaccuracy in the original documentation approved by Education Committee in October 2015 with respect to the incorporated Doctor of Education and its exit award, MPhil (Education).

An issue was raised with respect to the corrected submission as follows: at the time of the approval of a taught exit award from the EdD programme in 2014, it was agreed that the exit MPhil (Education) could be awarded upon the achievement of 120 credits from the EdD programme, but that there were two structure options available—either 120 taught credits **or** a combination of 90 taught credits with 30 credits attributed to a research dissertation (10,000 word piece of research equivalent to 30 credits).

The revised proposal to revise the 2015 wording was approved subject to the re-submission of the correct documentation reflecting the information provided above.

10. Validation proposal: MSc in International Accounting

Education Committee granted approval to the proposed MSc in International Accounting for further development towards accreditation subject to addressing the following query through the Accreditation documentation:

- Applicants do not necessarily need an accounting background for entry to the programme, and the Accounting modules reflect 20 out of the 90 proposed credits, is there any difficulty using 'Accounting' in the title?

11. Bachelor of Education Irish Sign Language Entry route/pathway

It was noted that the proposal for the BEd Irish Sign Language Entry route/pathway has been granted funding from the Higher Education Authority PATH funding to diversify access to initial teacher education.

The proposal was approved subject to the following:

- That it is made clear that applicants will not be interviewed to assess suitability for the programme prior to admission but that competency in Irish Sign Language only will be assessed in advance of admission.

12. International Foundation Programmes (formerly 3U Pathways)

The proposal was approved for 2017-2018 only and the following was noted in this regard:

Notwithstanding the fact that Education Committee was satisfied to approve the proposal it was noted that as the contract with EduCo had already been agreed and signed, the approval was somewhat pre-empted.

13. Proposal to retitle Bachelor of Arts and Bachelor of Arts (International)

The proposal to amend the titles of the Bachelor Arts and Bachelor of Arts (International) to Bachelor of Arts: Joint Honours, Bachelor of Arts: Joint Honours (International) respectively was approved, however Education Committee noted that the term 'Joint Honours' was not generally used in the sector and requested that the titles as agreed would be kept under review, particularly in the context of the introduction of a new student system.

14. Any other business

There were no items of business.

Signed: _____ Date _____
Chair

Date of next meeting:

Wednesday, 20 September 2017

at 2.00 in A204