

EDUCATION COMMITTEE MINUTES

Wednesday 15 January 2020

2.00 p.m. – 4.05 p.m. in A204

- Present:** Dr Claire Bohan, Professor Mark Brown, Professor Michelle Butler, Mr Callaghan Commons, Professor John Doyle, Dr Yseult Freeney, Ms Margaret Irwin-Bannon (Secretary), Mr Billy Kelly (Chair), Dr Anne Looney, Professor Lisa Looney, Ms Aisling McKenna, Ms Pauline Mooney and Professor Anne Sinnott
- Apologies:** Ms Jennifer Bruton, Professor Eithne Guilfoyle, Professor Greg Hughes and Dr Joseph Stokes
- In attendance:** Ms Karen Johnston

SECTION A: AGENDA, MINUTES AND MATTERS ARISING

1. Adoption of the agenda

The agenda as circulated was adopted.

2. Minutes of Education Committee 11 December 2019

The minutes of 11 December 2019 were approved and signed by the Chair.

3. Matters arising from the minutes of 11 December 2019

- 3.1 The Chair sought the views of Education Committee on the suggestion made at the Education Committee of 11 December 2019 that the ongoing viability of programmes might in future be assessed through Annual Programme Review (APR). Following discussion, it was agreed that consideration of viability of programmes should be a matter for Faculty Management, rather than the Annual Programme Review process (Item 3.3 pt. 2).

- 3.2 It was noted that the level of modules offered within a level 8 undergraduate certificate would be considered at a later date in the context of FutureLearn microcredentials (Item 3.1).
- 3.3 It was noted that the issues with the incentivisation model would be referred to Senior Management by the Chair (3.3 pt. 3).
- 3.4 It was noted that the NFQ level of taught modules on professional doctorate programmes would be addressed over the coming months (Item 3.4).
- 3.5 It was noted that the provision of more discipline-specific information for Schools on CAO points and its correlation with first year examination performance at DCU would be prepared using the Microsoft BI dashboard tool, following a pilot of the Graduate Outcomes Survey (Item 3.6).
- 3.6 It was noted in the context of ongoing MOOC development that the Executive Deans would develop a principles document to ensure that expertise is not replicated across the University (Item 3.7).
- 3.7 It was noted that the future naming and numbering convention for DCU MOOCs and modules is on the project list for the Academic Secretariat and would be taken off the matters arising list (Item 3.8).
- 3.8 It was noted that the agenda item *Employability Statements*, deferred at the 29 May 2019 meeting, would be considered at a later meeting of Education Committee (Item 3.9).
- 3.9 It was noted that work is ongoing in preparing a list of FutureLearn option modules available as a resource for faculties (Item 5.2, pt. 2).
- 3.10 It was noted that teaching effectiveness, one of the key priorities of the Teaching and Learning Strategy, will be discussed by the Director of Quality Promotion and the Chair (Item 5.2, pt. 3).
- 3.11 It was noted that a paper on double and dual awards is currently being prepared and will be submitted for the consideration of Education Committee over the coming months (Item 10).
- 3.12 It was noted that the finance validation template had been amended as requested by Education Committee, to reflect costs and income (Item 3.3 pt. 1).
- 3.13 It was noted that the validation proposal for the MEd in Early Childhood Education, a decision on which had been deferred at the 11 December 2019 meeting, is on the agenda of this meeting (Item 8).

- 3.14 It was noted that the proposal for the academic approval of the double award, MSc in Global Management, is on the agenda of this meeting. The approval in principle of the double award was granted at the 11 December 2019 meeting of Education Committee, subject to final academic approval (Item 9).
- 3.15 It was noted that the item 'Arrangements for the delivery of Microcredentials', which had been deferred from the 11 December 2019 meeting of Education Committee is on the agenda (item 11) of this meeting (Item 11).
- 3.16 It was noted that the External Examiner nominated to review the MSc in Global Management proposal was approved by Chair's Action, 20 December 2019.
- 3.17 It was noted that the Secretary was notified that the credits for the DCUBS Fin Tech module, the approval of which had been noted by Education Committee at its meeting of 11 December 2019, had changed from the proposed 7.5 ECTS to 5 ECTS (Item 10).

SECTION B: STRATEGIC MATTERS FOR DISCUSSION/NOTING

4. Update on strategic activities undertaken within the IUA

There were no updates to report.

5. Update on DCU Strategy implementation

It was noted that the implementation plan for year 3 of the DCU strategy was recently approved by Governing Authority.

6. StudentSurvey.ie

The Director of Quality Promotion outlined that an ongoing data agreement issue had been resolved. She indicated that the survey would be rolled out in weeks 2, 3 and 4 of semester (3rd-23rd February, 2020). It was noted that the fieldwork dates were earlier than previously, and it was hoped that the earlier dates would facilitate increased participation. It was noted that the Quality Promotion Office would be liaising closely with the Students' Union and Faculties with respect to engagement with the survey.

7. Presentation, Ms Karen Johnston: Correlation between Leaving Certificate performance and subsequent DCU examination performance 2016-17 to 2018-19.

Ms K. Johnston made a presentation on Leaving Certificate performance and subsequent DCU examination performance by first year students (2014-2019)¹.

The following were noted from the presentation:

- In 2019, 20.9% entered on 491-495 points and in 2020 this dropped to 18.9% on 491-495.
- DCU attracts 4.7 % of the 8.9% of the Leaving Certificate population who achieve over 550 points, and 7.6% of those who have 500 points.
- The median CAO points were 449.
- The first-year mean precision mark has remained relatively stable, 60.70 in 2018 and 59.64 in 2019.
- There remains a weak correlation between CAO points as a predictor of the first year precision mark.

The following points were noted in the brief discussion which followed on the value of the provision of this data to Education Committee, and whether or not it needed to be provided on an annual basis:

- The data has been very useful to enable informed decision-making at faculty level on CAO entry points. It was acknowledged that the data has not changed substantially over the years however it was noted it would be useful to compile the 'facts' for use on an ongoing basis for decision-making purposes.
- It would be useful to have a comparison of those who enter through standard and non-standard CAO routes and a picture of the diversity of our student population.
- It was noted that that the data for non-standard entrants is not readily available due to the accommodations that have to be made on the ITS system, however it was indicated that this data will be required by the HEA.

It was agreed that provision of the data on an annual basis in similar format was not necessary as it did not reveal anything new, however it was noted that it would be useful to have a multi-dimensional analysis of the data to include non-standard students, e.g. elite, mature, access etc. The Chair requested that some consideration would be given to a plan of action around this request.

¹ Data excludes entry pathways where students received a points reduction or entered as mature students.

SECTION C: PROGRAMME AND MODULE-SPECIFIC ISSUES**8. Faculty of Science and Health: Validation Proposal: BSc in Psychology and Mathematics, and framework for 'BSc in Psychology and ...'**

The proposed programme and framework were discussed extensively and the following recommendations/issues to consider were noted:

- The programme proposers were requested to provide additional detail on the proposed framework and their vision for its operation, e.g. to consider whether or not the individual subjects would be independent or integrated.
- Education Committee noted that the proposed programme as presented would be an integrated programme and the graduate outcomes and employability outlined in the proposal places an emphasis on data science. It was noted that there is an existing BSc in Data Science degree with similar graduate outcomes and addressing similar employer needs. It was recommended that the programme proposers review the BSc in Data Science offerings and liaise with colleagues in the School of Computing in this regard.
- In addition, it was noted that the mathematics element of this proposal focused on financial mathematics and did not necessarily provide students with the data science elements related to the projected graduate outcomes. It was felt that the maths modules focused on calculus rather than data and required further development.
- It was suggested, in the context of a proposed framework, that any future subject pairings should be distinct and strong.
- It was noted that the imbalance of the membership of the development team should be addressed.
- The proposal indicates that the programme provides a qualification as a mathematics teacher, which is the case, however it was recommended that it should be highlighted in the documentation that one subject registration may restrict employment opportunities.
- The programme proposers were asked to consider if Psychological Society of Ireland (PSI) accreditation was necessary for the programme, as it places large demands in terms of staffing ratios. Given the programme's potential to attract a large number of undergraduates for Psychology and 'other subjects' it may place too many restrictions on this potential. It was queried if those who take Psychology with another subject would necessarily intend to become professional psychologists requiring PSI accreditation, and if the conversion MSc in Psychology programme could be an alternative route for those who want to pursue psychology as a profession, following the undergraduate degree.
- It was queried why psychology does not recognise the prior learning of applicants. It was suggested it would be stated in the proposal if there is a professional accreditation reason for it not being considered.

- It was noted that the discipline expertise of the nominees for the Accreditation Board for the Mathematics element need to be strengthened to align more with the focus of the programme.
- Education Committee noted that the concept of a framework of Psychology 'and' had great potential and acknowledged also the University-wide potential for such a framework.

Education Committee requested that the proposal address the issues and recommendations as outlined above and that an updated proposal would be re-submitted for the future consideration of Education Committee.

9. DCU Institute of Education: Revised Validation Proposal: MEd in Early Childhood Education

Education Committee approved the revised proposal for the MEd in Early Childhood Education for further development towards accreditation. It was noted that all recommendations made by Education Committee at the meeting of 11 December 2019 were addressed.

10. DCU Business School

10.1 Double Award, academic approval: MSc in Global Management (Digital Disruption)

The academic elements of the programme were approved. It was noted that the programme since its original inception in 1999 as the MSc in International Management has changed substantially, for strategic and collaborative purposes. It was noted that it had also been extensively reviewed by an independent external examiner. It was agreed that this programme would be classified as a new programme.

It was noted that the learning outcomes, albeit that they complied with the European Qualifications Framework, should also satisfy the requirements of the National Framework of Qualifications, NFQ and revised programme learning outcomes should be re-submitted.

There was an extended discussion in the context of the approval noted above on how the substantial revision of programmes over time, and in response to changing needs, would be reflected on the record of the programme. It was agreed that the most appropriate process for this to be captured would be the Periodic Programme Review process where the clock on the original programme could end, and the new programme begin. It was noted that there would need to be a specific set of criteria drawn up and a quality assurance process in place in order for an existing accredited programme to be deemed a 'new programme'.

It was agreed that there would be a need to consider the PPR process in this context and draw up a separate but related process.

10.2 *Entry Agreement: Admission of NEOMA 5-year Grande École students onto the MSc in Global Management (Digital Disruption)*

It was noted that this proposal reflected a collaborative provision entry point rather than an articulation agreement. Education Committee approved the automatic admission of students under the 5-year MSc Grande École programme at NEOMA onto the DCU, MSc in Global Management (Digital Disruption) programme, subject to satisfying the specific conditions of 240 credits and a GPA after year 4 of 12.3 or above.

11. Arrangements for the delivery of Microcredentials

The proposed arrangements for delivery of microcredentials was discussed. It was noted that the document would be referred for the consideration of University Standards Committee particularly with a view to assessing the impact on Marks and Standards and the operational aspects of registration and enrolment.

There were two changes recommended to the paragraph *DCU Microcredential definition* as follows:

- Amend 'Common European Microcredential framework' to 'European MOOC Partners'
- Amend 'normally equate to 5 ECTS credits' to 'normally equate to not more than 7.5 ECTS'

In response to a query on the academic calendar limitations in the delivery of microcredentials, it was noted that in principle they could run outside of semester, however there would be operational and system issues to be overcome, until such time as the new student system is in place.

Education Committee noted the document and felt that there was a need for more discussion on the definition of a DCU microcredential as further developments occur.

12. Any other business

There were no items of business.

Signed: _____ Date: _____

Date of next meeting:
Wednesday, 12 February 2020
at 2.00 in A204