

## **UNIVERSITY STANDARDS COMMITTEE**

### **MINUTES**

Thursday 12 January 2017 in A204

9.30 – 11.40 am

**Present:** Mr Billy Kelly (Chair), Mr Jonathan Begg, Dr Jennifer Bruen, Dr Eamon Costello, Dr Greg Foley, Ms. Margaret Irwin-Bannon (Secretary), Ms Phylomena McMorrow, Dr Caroline McMullan, Dr Joseph Stokes

**Apologies:** Dr Garrett McGuinness, Dr Justin Rami, Dr Mark Roantree

The Chair opened the meeting and welcomed Mr Jonathan Begg to University Standards Committee (USC) in his capacity as representative of the Faculty Administration Peer Group.

### **SECTION A: MINUTES AND RELATED ISSUES**

#### **1. Adoption of the agenda**

The agenda was adopted.

#### **2. Minutes of the meeting of 10 November 2016**

The minutes of the meeting of 10 November 2016 were approved and signed by the Chair.

#### **3. Matters arising from the minutes**

**3.1** It was noted that long-standing issues with respect to communication with external examiners have been resolved to a large extent with the introduction of the Guru system for the management of external examiners. However, other areas of the management of external examiners remain to be addressed. It was noted that the Deputy Registrar/Dean of Teaching and Learning and the Secretary of USC are

currently reviewing practice in other institutions with the aim of producing a draft external examiner's manual for the consideration of USC (Item 3.2).

- 3.2** It was noted that the Akari project is ongoing (Item 3.3).
- 3.3** It was noted that some programme regulations for the DCU Institute of Education were yet to be approved. Further detail would be provided under item 5.2.5 (Item 3.4).
- 3.4** It was noted that a draft document outlining a procedure for rescinding an award in the case of plagiarism for research students is under preparation and will be submitted for the consideration of USC at a future date (Item 3.5).
- 3.5** It was noted that the work to collate the university cycle of PPR activities is ongoing (Item 8).
- 3.6** It was noted that consideration of changes to Marks and Standards was on the agenda of this meeting.
- 3.7** It was noted that a derogation with respect to the examination duration for the module MC313 was approved on a one-off basis by Chair's Action, 21 November 2016.
- 3.8** It was noted that a legacy re-admission application to the Professional Certificate in Special and Inclusive Education for a candidate in the DCU Institute of Education was approved by Chair's Action, 21 December 2016.

## **B. Faculty issues**

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

#### **4.1 Nominations**

- 4.1.1 Professor Neil Robinson, University of Limerick  
Modules in School of Law & Government  
Approved

4.1.2 Professor Robert Galavan, Maynooth University  
Modules in DCUBS

It was requested that USC consider this appointment notwithstanding that an external examiner from the same school in the same institution is already appointed. Although the request was not in line with the Regulations and Guidelines for the appointment of external examiners for taught programmes, it was agreed that due to mitigating factors the appointment would be considered.

Approved

4.1.3 Dr Muiris Mac Carthaigh, Queen's University Belfast  
MSc in Public Policy, School of Law & Government

Approved

4.1.4 Dr Karen Walshe, University of Exeter  
Modules in the School of Human Development

Decision deferred, pending clarification of duties. Noted that once clarified the appointment will be considered under Chair's action.

## 4.2 Changes to duties

4.2.1 Dr Michele Kavanagh, Queen's University Belfast  
Modules in School of Nursing and Human Sciences

Decision deferred, pending clarification of modules to be examined. Noted that once clarified the change of duties will be considered under Chair's action.

4.2.2 Dr Marie Clarke, UCD  
BSc in Science Education, BSc in Physical Education with Biology,  
BSc in Physical Education with Mathematics

Approved

4.2.3 Professor Mario Aguilar, University of St. Andrews  
BA in Theology & Religious Studies (Joint Honours)

Decision deferred, pending clarification to change of duties. Noted that once clarified the appointment will be considered under Chair's action

In a brief discussion on the change of duties form (EE2), it was noted that the introduction of the Guru system has called into question the usefulness of the EE2 form, as there is greater control on module detail at School/Faculty level. As the EE2 form still has an impact on the fee paid to the external examiner, it was noted

that it would be maintained for now, however review of fees was part of a larger exercise currently being undertaken with respect to external examiners.

## **5. Other issues**

### **5.1 Faculty of Humanities & Social Sciences**

#### **5.1.1 Legacy readmission request: MA in Journalism Approved**

### **5.2 DCU Institute of Education**

#### **5.2.1 Derogations: BEd programme**

##### *5.2.1a Proposed derogation*

‘For modules ED1018, Teacher as Reflective Practitioner 1 and ED2015 Teacher as Reflective Practitioner students will be required to pass the reflection element of the module. This element is on a pass/fail basis. In ED2015 this element is contained in a module that contains both a graded continuous assessment and examination element as well as the pass/fail element. In ED1018 the module is composed of two pass/fail elements. Students will be required to pass both.’

The derogation was not approved on the grounds that the Committee was not satisfied that there was a clear case made that a derogation is necessary to satisfy Teaching Council requirements. In assessing the Teaching Council extract supporting the request it was felt that the successful completion of both modules in full should satisfy the specified requirement, without the need for a derogation.

In addition, because ED1018 is a pass/fail module, there is no practical reason for a derogation to apply in this case. It was noted that the module code named on the derogation application as ED1008, should be ED1018.

### 5.2.1b *Proposed Derogation*

‘Students must pass the Literacy, Teagasc na Gaeilge, Mathematics and Gaeilge components of certain modules.’

The request above was not approved. Although the Committee could see grounds for the proposed derogation there were concerns about the transparency of marks for the two separate required elements in each module, and clarity around the achievement of learning outcomes. It was requested that the DCU Institute of Education would provide assurance that there are sufficient and robust processes in place that will indicate clearly to students, what is passed or failed. It was noted that ITS does not record multiple continuous assessment components, so a formal record (on ITS) of the derogation is not possible.

## 5.2.2 Derogations: Professional Master of Education (Primary)

### 5.2.2a *Proposed derogation*

‘For the module ED8039 Enabling Learning, students will be required to pass the reflection element of the module. This element is on a pass/fail basis.’

The derogation was not approved on the grounds that USC was not satisfied that there was a clear case made that a derogation is necessary to satisfy Teaching Council requirements. In assessing the Teaching Council extract supporting the request it was felt that the successful completion of the module in full should satisfy the specified requirement, without the need for a derogation.

### 5.2.2b *Proposed derogation*

‘Students must pass the Literacy, Teagasc na Gaeilge, Mathematics and Gaeilge components of certain modules.’

The request above was not approved. Although the Committee could see grounds for the proposed derogation there were concerns about the transparency of marks for the two separate required elements in each module, and clarity around the achievement of learning outcomes. It was requested that the DCU Institute of Education would provide assurance that there are sufficient and robust processes in place that will indicate clearly to students, what is passed or failed. It was noted that ITS does not record multiple continuous assessment components so a formal record of the derogation is not possible.

### 5.2.3. Legacy readmission request: Master of Education

USC granted conditional approval for the re-admission of the applicant to the MEd programme. The conditions are as outlined below:

- Clarification of the extent to which the modules completed by the applicant match the current curriculum or clarification that, if the student is adding the dissertation to modules already completed that the type of MEd awarded is clarified (there is very little detail on the transcript provided).
- Assurance that the applicant has been working in the discipline area. USC had concerns about the currency of the award, given the length of time that has elapsed since completion of the modules

It was noted that when clarification is provided, then full approval can be given under Chair's Action.

### 5.2.4 Legacy readmission request: Professional Certificate/Diploma in Special and Inclusive Education

Approved. It was noted that the programme is managed at local level and the Faculty is to be requested to provide a structure to enable the registration of the student.

### 5.2.5 Approval of Programme Regulations (*Round 5 folder*)

#### (i) *Bachelor of Education (BEd) 2016-2017*

Not approved as the derogation requested as above was not approved (see 5.2.1a and 5.2.1b)

#### (ii) *Professional Master of Education (Primary) (PMEP) 2016-2017*

Not approved as the derogation requested as above was not approved (see 5.2.2a and 5.2.2b)

Other issues raised for clarification or noting were as follows:

- Under the monitored attendance section (1.2), clarification was requested on the meaning of the word 'session' in the context of attendance.

- Under the monitored attendance section (1.2), further information is requested on the section as follows ‘In order to be permitted to complete the resit assignment, a student must have completed the assignments assigned by their tutor following their absence from any tutorial during the academic year’. The Committee noted concerns with respect to attendance being substituted by an assignment and noted too that procedurally, there is no process to prevent a student, who has not completed the assignments (due to absence) assigned by their tutor, registering for a resit.
- Under the heading ‘Derogations from Marks and Standards’, it is indicated that ED8040 has a derogation attaching to it, however this has not been considered or approved by USC.

(iii) *Master of Teaching (MTeach)*

Approved, subject to changes under paragraphs 3.1 and 3.2. It was noted that it had been agreed with Registry that section 3.1 and 3.2 would be deleted, however the version submitted for the consideration of USC did not reflect this. It was requested that the modules starting ‘MT’ (old SPD codes) are changed to ‘or equivalent’ to avoid confusion with current DCUBS module codes.

(iv) *Certificate in Religious Studies (Part-time) (CRSPT)*

Approved. Noted that over the longer term modules classified as category 2 would need to be reviewed.

(v) *Master of Education (MEd)*

Approved, subject to changes under paragraphs 3.1 and 3.2. It was noted that it had been agreed with Registry that section 3.1 and 3.2 would be deleted, however the version submitted for the consideration of USC did not reflect this.

In a brief discussion on the transition phase following incorporation it was noted that the Chair would contact the Interim Dean of the DCU Institute of Education to discuss the issues which have arisen with respect to Programme Regulations and derogations.

### **5.3 Open Education**

- 5.3.1 Proposed PPR experts: BA in Humanities, BA in English & History,  
BA in Humanities (Psychology Major)  
Professor Pete Hampson, Adjunct Honorary Professor, Maynooth University  
Approved

Dr Niall O’Ciosain, NUI Galway  
Noted (outgoing external examiner)

- 5.3.2 Programme Regulations: Higher Diploma in Science in Software Development

The proposed change under 1.1 was approved.

A brief discussion took place with respect to the Mobile Application Development module (SDA) and its categorisation as a category 2 module. It was agreed that consideration would be given to the module reverting to category 1 in 2017-2018.

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

### **6. Marks and Standards 2017.1 version, for discussion**

It was noted that the stated intention to approve Marks and Standards at an earlier stage would not now be practical due to the ongoing discussions with respect to category 3 modules, arising from discussions which took place at the December 2016 meeting of Academic Council.

It was noted that proposed amendments had been notified by the Student Awards Manager and would be included for the approval of USC. It was noted too that there was a requirement to add a clarification to Marks and Standards that students cannot carry a failed module for a second time.



**7. Any other business**

There were no items.

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

Chair

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

**Date of next meeting:**

Thursday, 23 February 2017

9.30 a.m. in A204