

UNIVERSITY STANDARDS COMMITTEE

MINUTES

Thursday 2 April 2020

9.30 a.m. – 9.50 a.m. via Zoom

Present: Mr Callaghan Commons, Dr Lorraine Delaney, Dr Yseult Freeney, Ms Margaret Irwin-Bannon (Secretary), Mr Billy Kelly (Chair), Dr Anna Logan, Prof Christine Loscher, Dr Kenneth McDonagh, Dr Catherine McGonagle, Mr Peter McGorman, Dr Jennifer McManis, Ms Phylomena McMorrow, Prof Edgar Morgenroth, Ms Michele Pringle and Dr Joseph Stokes

SECTION A: MINUTES AND RELATED ISSUES

1. Adoption of the agenda

The agenda as circulated was adopted.

2. Minutes of the meeting of 20 February 2020

The minutes of 20 February 2020 were approved.

3. Matters arising from the minutes of 20 February 2020

- 3.1** It was noted that an extraordinary meeting of the Progression and Award Board to ratify results for the Professional Diploma in Special and Inclusive Education due to take place over the coming week was postponed due to the current circumstances brought about the Covid-19 crisis, however alternative arrangement are due to be arranged over the coming weeks (item 3.2).

- 3.2** It was noted that work on the linking of programme regulations to the Loop programme page was ongoing (Item 3.1).
- 3.3** It was noted that 'attendance' as reflected in the programme regulations is being considered by the TEU (Item 3.4).
- 3.4** It was noted that the amendments to be made to the programme regulations for the Professional Master in Education (Primary) had been completed and approved by Chair's Action, 28 February 2020 (Item 3.3).
- 3.5** It was noted that the Chair had informed faculties that the roll-out of the procedure to amend examination result errors following semester 1 was extended to all faculties (Item 7).
- 3.6** It was noted that minor amendments to the *Standard for DCU Award Titles* document had been made and the document had been published (Item 8).
- 3.7** It was noted that the Chair had sent a communication to Heads of School outlining the change in emphasis of the role of the external examiner, as requested by Academic Council at the meeting of 5 February 2020 (Item 9).
- 3.8** It was noted that a revision to the programme regulations for the BA in Applied Language and Translation Studies/ the BA in Applied Language and Translation Studies (International) was approved by Chair's Action, 28 February 2020. The change was as follows: deletion of the minimum required in two languages to be achieved in semester one of year two for entry on to the Year Abroad (to apply to year 2 in 2019-2020 and year 2 in 2020-2021).
- 3.9** It was noted that due to the Covid-19 crisis, University Standards Committee approved electronically (12 March 2020) a change to Marks and Standards and the Examination Regulations as follows:

(i) Marks and Standards 2019.1

In the case of a force majeure event, for a defined period of time, the Vice President Academic Affairs/Registrar may replace aspects of Marks and Standards and associated programme regulations with alternative arrangements. The Vice President Academic Affairs/Registrar will inform Academic Council at the earliest opportunity.

(ii) Examination Regulations Fifteenth Edition

In the case of a force majeure event, for a defined period of time, the Vice President Academic Affairs/Registrar may replace aspects of examination regulations with alternative arrangements. The Vice President Academic Affairs/Registrar will inform Academic Council at the earliest opportunity.

SECTION B: Faculty issues**4. External examiners for taught programmes****4.1 Nominations**

- 4.1.1 University of Limerick
Modules in Open Education
Approved
- 4.1.2 European University Cyprus
MSc in Emergency Management
Approved
- 4.1.3 University of Ulster
Professional Diploma in Education
Approved
- 4.1.4 University College Dublin
Modules in DCU Business School
Approved

4.2 Renewal of appointment/changes to duties

There were no items for consideration.

5. Other issues: Faculty**5.1 DCU Business School****5.1.1 Proposal to award Aegrotat Degree: Bachelor of Business Studies**

The proposed Aegrotat Award was approved. It was noted that the proposal would be referred for final approval to the Academic Council meeting of 8 April 2020.

5.2 DCU Institute of Education**5.2.1 Legacy readmission request: Professional Certificate/Diploma in Special and Inclusive Education**

Approved, subject to the surrender of the Certificate in Special and Inclusive Education parchment.

5.3 Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences**5.3.1 Proposal for addressing Previous Element Contribution (PEC) to final degree award in light of revised assessment arrangements brought about by Covid-19 crisis**

It was noted that the proposal to change the Previous Element Contribution (PEC) to a final degree award in light of revised assessment arrangements brought about by the Covid-19 crisis was approved by the Vice President Academic Affairs/Registrar due to the need to communicate promptly with students.

It was noted in the discussion that alternative assessment arrangements are currently being reviewed and put in place in other faculties which may also impact on the Previous Element Contribution. There was a general discussion with respect to a sectoral approach to alternative assessment however it was noted that the various universities were taking different approaches.

It was noted that Education Committee had discussed with the Students' Union Vice President for Academic Affairs the petition for a 'no detriment policy' yesterday. He indicated that students were generally happy with the approach being taken at DCU and that the request for the policy pre-empted the work currently being done at faculty-level on alternative assessment.

C: Other issues (not Faculty-specific)**6. Covid19 – Continuity Arrangements****6.1 DCU key principles to inform development and approval of alternative assessments**

The DCU key principles were noted.

6.2 Template, Semester two examinations 2020

The Chair outlined that each module co-ordinator has been requested to complete the template as circulated, detailing the alternative assessment to the exam. This completed template will form part of the University's record on alternative assessment. He indicated that it was important for students that the academic standards applied this year would be equivalent to standards in other years.

6.3 Alternative test to replace the International English Language Testing System (IELTS) for DCU Admissions—interim arrangement

It was noted that the Vice President Academic Affairs/Registrar had approved the alternative Duolingo English test for DCU admission, due to the closure of testing centres for IELTS due to Covid-19. It was noted that subsequent to the approval of the Duolingo English test, both TOEFL and Pearson have developed online testing and DCU will accept the outcomes of those tests for admission.

The following were noted with respect to the use of the Duolingo test:

- The use of the Duolingo English Test (DET) will be a temporary measure from 1 April 2020 to 31 July 2020, for students entering the 2020/21 academic year only.
- The minimum requirement will be a DET score of 90 for the two-semester DCU IFP Foundation programme and 100 for the one semester DCU IFP foundation programme.
- The minimum requirement will be a DET score of 110 for programmes requiring an equivalent of 6.5 IELTS with no less than 6.0 in each component. This applies for all undergraduate applications and to all postgraduate Faculty of Engineering and Computing and Faculty of Science and Health programmes.

- Programmes having a higher IELTS of 7.0 overall at postgraduate level the minimum requirement will be a DET of 120. This applies to postgraduate master's in the DCU Business School and programmes at master's level in the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences.

The Chair noted that it is intended that those students admitted through this mechanism will be assessed and provided with supplementary English tuition as appropriate to their needs. This will give DCU an additional element of quality assurance in using this alternative test.

University Standards Committee noted the use of the Duolingo English test for DCU admission.

7. Any other business

There were no items of business.

Signed: _____ Date: _____

Date of next meeting:

Thursday, 21 May 2020
9.30 a.m. via Zoom