

## UNIVERSITY STANDARDS COMMITTEE

### MINUTES

Thursday 30 March 2017 in A204

9.30 – 10.30 am

**Present:** Mr Jonathan Begg, Dr Jennifer Bruen, Dr Eamon Costello, Dr Greg Foley, Mr Billy Kelly (Chair), Ms. Margaret Irwin-Bannon (Secretary), Dr Garrett McGuinness, Ms Phylomena McMorrow, Dr Justin Rami, Dr Mark Roantree

**Apologies:** Dr Caroline McMullan, Dr Brien Nolan, Dr Joseph Stokes

The Chair opened the meeting and welcomed Dr Justin Rami to University Standards Committee in his capacity as Associate Dean for Teaching and Learning, DCU Institute of Education. He also extended a welcome to Dr Joseph Stokes to USC in his capacity as Dean of Graduate Studies.

### SECTION A: MINUTES AND RELATED ISSUES

#### 1. Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted, subject to the addition of three items under AOB.

#### 2. Minutes of the meeting of 23 February 2017

The minutes of the meeting of 23 February 2017 were approved and signed by the Chair.

#### 3. Matters arising from the minutes

- 3.1** It was noted that a meeting had recently taken place with Akari to discuss the resolution of the last of the system issues and staff will be informed when the project is completed (Item 3.3).

- 3.2** It was noted that the Chair and 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).
- 3.3** 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 3.4).
- 3.4** It was noted that in preparing for the exercise to collate the university cycle of PPR activities it was discovered that although it was indicated in reporting to Education Committee that PPRs had been completed at School level, information on individual programme PPR dates was not available in every case. It was noted that the secretary would request more specific information from individual faculties with a view to developing a database of PPR activity since its inception. It was noted too that a record of external body accreditation recognition would also be included (Item 3.5).
- 3.5** It was noted that the amendment to resit categories, which arose as a result of the discussions at Academic Council in December 2016, relating to the Appeals process will be considered for inclusion in Marks and Standards 2018 (Item 7.2).
- 3.6** It was noted that discussions are ongoing with respect to a process for correction of module mark errors following the publication of Semester 1 provisional results online (Item 7.1).
- 3.7** It was noted that a discussion of proposed changes to Marks and Standards 2017 is on the agenda of this meeting (Items 6 and 6.1).
- 3.8** It was noted that the BEd Programme Regulations are on the agenda of this meeting (Item 5.1.3).
- 3.9** It was noted that a final version of the Professional Master of Education (Primary) Programme Regulations has been submitted and approved for publication (Item 5.1.4).
- 3.10** It was noted that a legacy re-admission application for a candidate onto the MEd programme, which had been given conditional approval, had been confirmed by Chair's Action on 13 March 2017, upon receipt of additional information (Item 5.2.3).

- 3.11** It was noted that the change of duties for an external examiner in Fiontar agus Scoil na Gaeilge had been approved by Chair's Action following provision of clarification by the School (Item 4.2.2).
- 3.12** It was noted that the appointment of a replacement external examiner for the School of Applied Language and Intercultural Studies had been approved by Chair's Action on 2 March 2017.

## **B. Faculty issues**

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

#### **4.1 Nominations**

- 4.1.1 Dr Gerard Ryder, Institute of Technology Tallaght  
BEng in Mechanical & Manufacturing Engineering  
Approved
- 4.1.2 Dr Theresa Dunne, University of Dundee  
Modules in DCUBS  
Approved
- 4.1.3 Dr Greg Stoner, University of Glasgow  
Modules in DCUBS  
Approved
- 4.1.4 Dr Margaret Graham, University of Limerick  
BSc in General Nursing  
Approved
- 4.1.5 Professor Hilary Mooney, Pädagogische Hochschule Weingarten  
BA in Theology and Lifelong Education  
Approved
- 4.1.6 Dr David Aldridge, Brunel University, London  
Modules in the School of Policy & Practice  
Approved

- 4.1.7 Dr Andrew Bielenberg, UCC  
MA in History  
Approved

## **4.2 Change of Duties**

- 4.2.1 Dr Eibhear Walshe, UCC  
School of English  
Approved

## **5. Other issues**

### **5.1 Open Education**

- 5.1.1 Legacy readmission request: BSc in Information Technology  
Approved

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

- 5.2.1 Amendment to derogation for the BEd programme

It was noted that the derogation originally submitted to the USC meeting of 19 January 2017 had contained incorrect codes and the detail of the derogation was corrected for formal record purposes. The derogation was approved. It was noted too that the approval applied to the 2016-2017 academic year only. USC requested that the programme team consider alternative ways of satisfying Teaching Council requirements.

- 5.2.2 BEd Programme Regulations

The BEd Programme Regulations were approved.

USC requested that a clearer articulation of section 1.2 *Monitored Attendance* is provided in the 2017-2018 regulations.

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

#### **6. Marks and Standards**

The amendments contained in the updated version of Marks and Standards proposed for 2017-2018 were reviewed and the discussion also included changes as outlined under 6.1a.

The proposed changes to Marks and Standards, as circulated were approved, subject to two amendments as follows:

- Item 2.2.2: insert ‘within the two teaching semesters’
- Glossary, Item 16 insert ‘in a single cognate discipline’

#### **6.1a Feedback on Marks and Standards 1.1.4 *Graduate Diploma and Graduate Certificate awards as exit awards or as awards without follow-on Master’s* and classification of Master’s awards**

The following feedback was provided with respect to a proposal to allow Graduate Certificate and Graduate Diploma awards as entry awards.

Although opinion in faculties was generally favourable to the proposed change, the following concerns were raised:

- The potential differential in fee payment between those who enter and exit on the Graduate Diploma and those who enter initially onto the Master’s but decide to exit with a Graduate Diploma
- The increase in administrative workload for faculty administration due to the increased numbers of academic structures which will need to be set up.

It was agreed that a short briefing document would be prepared for dissemination to faculties for further discussion to take place. It was noted that a final decision on this item would be made at the USC meeting of 25 May 2017.

A discussion took place on a proposed change to the classification of Master’s degrees. It was noted that DCU appears to be out of step nationally, in its classification of Master’s degrees (first class, second class and pass), with the majority of third level institutions now using the following classification and grade bands:

<b>Precision Mark</b>	<b>Award</b>
Greater than or equal to 70%	First Class Honours
Between 60% and 69% inclusive	Second Class Honours, Grade I
Between 50% and 59% inclusive	Second Class Honours, Grade II
Between 40% and 49% inclusive	Third Class Honours

It was noted that those with professional teaching qualifications in particular were being disadvantaged by DCU's current classification system. Positive feedback on the proposal to make the change to Master's classifications from faculties was discussed and the change to the classification, as laid out in the table above, was agreed. It is noted that the new classification will apply to those graduating from 2017-2018 and it was agreed that no retrospection would apply.

It was agreed that a final version of Marks and Standards would be presented to the USC meeting of 25 May 2017 for final approval and referral for submission to Academic Council.

## **7. Any other business**

### *7.1 Automation of External Examiner approval process through Guru*

The Secretary informed members that the initial version of the process to automate the External Examiner approval process has been developed by the Guru team and feedback on the system from an end-user point of view will be provided to the Guru team by OVPAA.

### *7.2 Programme Regulation 2017-2018 review and approval*

The Secretary reminded USC that Programme Regulations for 2017-2018 are due for submission by faculties on 27 April 2017 and will be available for USC review with a view to final approval of the regulations 2017-2018 at the meeting of 25 May 2017.

7.3 *DCU-Fuse Event*

The Chair reminded members to participate in the DCU Fuse Event taking place on 30 and 31 March 2017.

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

**Date of next meeting:**

Thursday, 25 May 2017

9.30 a.m. in A204