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**EDUCATION COMMITTEE**

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**MINUTES**

Wednesday 4 December 2013

2.00-3.50 p.m. in A204

**Present:** Professor Eithne Guilfoyle (Chair), Dr John Doyle, Dr Sarah Ingle, Mr Billy Kelly, Ms Louise McDermott (Secretary), Professor Barry McMullin, Mr Martin Molony, Mr Ciarán O'Connor, Dr Anne Sinnott, Dr Sheelagh Wickham

**Apologies:** Dr Claire Bohan, Professor John Costello, Professor Alan Harvey, Dr Lisa Looney

**In attendance:** Ms Valerie Cooke, Ms Aisling McKenna

**SECTION A: AGENDA, MINUTES AND MATTERS ARISING**

**1. Adoption of the agenda**

The agenda was adopted subject to the deferral of Item 7.3 to the meeting of 8 January 2014 and the inclusion of one submission under Item 9.

**2. Minutes of the meeting of 6 November 2013**

The minutes were confirmed subject to the inclusion of the words 'in cross-Faculty programmes' at the end of the fourth sentence in Item 3.5, after the words 'access to APR data'. They were signed by the Chair.

**3. Matters arising from the minutes**

**3.1** It was noted that a table of contents had been added to the folder on Google Drive which Ms McKenna had set up to make available to EC members and Programme Chairs the various reports she produces for the EC, as well as relevant associated documentation. (Item 3.1)

- 3.2** The draft protocol on mobile phone use was noted. It was agreed to replace the specific references to instances in which mobile phone data can be used with a more general reference, to reflect the fact that the specific references may not capture all the types of situation in which it is appropriate to use mobile phone data. It was agreed that the reference to following up a text message with a relevant e-mail should be deleted, as it is by no means always necessary or appropriate to do this. Mr Kelly undertook to rewrite the protocol. It was noted that it did not, and was not intended to, cover mass texts sent to class groups (e.g. to alert them to a change in the timetable made at short notice) and that any procedure for organising such mass texts would need a separate discussion. It was noted too that having templates for categories of notification (e.g. notifications about timetable changes), with an indication of the relevant DCU office at the beginning, would be helpful in the event that such mass texts were used. Ms McKenna noted that, if mobile phone numbers were made visible on Moodle, it would be of considerable assistance in the gathering of data for statutory purposes. (Item 3.2)
- 3.3** It was noted that a further presentation on e-portfolios would be made to the EC at its meeting of 8 January 2014. (Item 3.4)
- 3.4** It was noted that the issues relating to access to APR data where service teaching occurs cross Faculty had been resolved and would not arise again. (Item 3.5)
- 3.5** It was noted that Dr Ingle and Mr Kelly intended to prepare a set of protocols relating to access to, and approval of, APR and PPR reports. This is likely to be available for consideration at the 5 February 2014 meeting of the EC. Consideration is also being given to the optimum online location(s) for APR and PPR templates. (Item 3.5)
- 3.6** It was noted that the membership list for the working group on approval procedures was being finalised and that the first meeting of the group would take place early in 2014. (Item 3.9)
- 3.7** It was noted that a short-life working group to discuss and make recommendations in respect of modules for which failure rates are high would shortly be established. (Item 3.10)
- 3.8** With respect to the availability of online First Destinations data, post analysis, to staff members in the Careers Office, it was noted that this would not be possible in the near term but would, instead, be included in future developments with respect to OBIEE. In the meantime, Ms McKenna will make relevant data available to the Careers Office on an offline basis. (Item 6.1)
- 3.9** It was noted that the First Destinations data do not yield information about the extent to which graduates are employed by their former INTRA employers. However, this employment rate is estimated at 60%. (Item 6.2)

- 3.10** It was noted that the validation proposal in respect of the proposed MSc in Public Policy had been approved by the EC, on an electronic basis, on 27 November 2013. (Item 8)

## **SECTION B: STRATEGIC MATTERS FOR DISCUSSION**

### **4. Update on activities undertaken within the IUA**

- 4.1** Dr Ingle noted that there was a significant level of engagement between Quality and Qualifications Ireland and the Quality Promotion Officers. Topics being discussed on an ongoing basis include arrangements to ensure regular and appropriate communication between stakeholders, as well as quality assurance procedures vis-à-vis linked and collaborative providers. She undertook to report to the EC on developments, as appropriate.
- 4.2** The Chair noted that the Admissions Policy Group had held its first meeting and that it had been possible to identify ways of reducing CAO entry codes with a view to returning to the situation that obtained in 2011, as requested by the sectoral group which is leading on this issue. Discussions will now need to take place with Faculties to establish the mechanisms for implementing the reduction.

### **5. Report on the Irish Survey of Student Engagement**

- 5.1** Ms McKenna noted that the report on the outcomes of the 2013 ISSE would be launched on 13 February 2014 and that she was in the process of engaging with the Faculties to brief them on these outcomes and obtain feedback. The ISSE is to be extended to research students in due course, but not before the experience gained from the 2013 exercise has been assimilated into procedures.
- 5.2** A discussion took place on the optimum timeframe, within Semester 2 2013/14, for conducting the next iteration of the ISSE. Of the three options presented, the one that was agreed will involve the ISSE being conducted in the first half of March 2014. Among the advantages of this timeframe are that Faculties will be in a position to conduct local surveys should they wish and QuEST activity will not be compromised.

## **6. Report on correlation between academic performance in the Leaving Certificate and subsequently in higher education**

**6.1** In the course of Ms McKenna's presentation on this issue, and in the ensuing discussion, the following were noted:

- the impact of bonus points for Higher Level Leaving Certificate Mathematics is evident across student achievement generally, and not just in relation to STEM subjects
- the full effects of the introduction of bonus points may not yet be apparent, but it seems clear even at this stage that the initiative has succeeded in leading to a significant increase in the numbers taking Higher Level Mathematics
- it is possible that the introduction of bonus points has made high achievement in the Leaving Certificate more challenging than previously for students who would previously not have considered Higher Level Mathematics because they were likely to perform very well at Ordinary Level
- DCU students tend to have performed slightly less well in Higher Level Mathematics, and slightly better in Higher Level English, than students nationally.

**6.2** Ms McKenna undertook to send Dr Doyle the data indicating the correlation, for students in the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, between Leaving Certificate points and attainment in Mathematics, on the one hand, and performance in first year in DCU, on the other. She also undertook to make available the information in her report on a per-student basis.

## **7. EC goals 2013/2014**

### **7.1 Finalised list of goals**

Noted (including the fact that the list submitted to the meeting of 6 November 2013 had been updated to reflect very recent developments).

### **7.2 Recommendations on issues relating to the policy on assessment**

The recommendations, including the revised/combined policy on feedback and assessment, were approved. It was agreed that the policy would be placed on the web pages pertaining to the Deputy President/Dean of Teaching and Learning.

### **7.3 Report on PPR activity completed in 2012/13 and planned for 2013/14**

Deferred to the meeting of 8 January 2014.

#### 7.4 Updated information on other goals

The recent launch of the National Institute for Digital Learning was noted, as was its relevance to the development of the digital campus. The Chair noted, as a related issue, that she was in the process of consulting stakeholders with a view to drawing up a summary list of the limitations of the current student record system, and submitting it to the Chief Operating Officer, so that a decision could be taken about the steps needed to resolve the issues.

### SECTION C: PROGRAMME- AND MODULE-SPECIFIC ISSUES

#### 8. CVs of proposed members of the Accreditation Board: Professional Master's in Education, St Patrick's College

Approved.

#### 9. Any other business

A discussion took place about the impact on academic staff and students of the practice of requiring students to withdraw from lectures and access to resources such as Moodle in the event of non-payment of fees. Given the increased reliance on Moodle (and the enhanced pedagogical opportunities made available by Moodle 2), serious issues arise for academic staff in terms of supporting students while also respecting the fact that the University requires that fees be paid. It was agreed to refer this matter to the Senior Management Group. Professor McMullin undertook to prepare a written submission for the SMG.

**Date of next meeting:**

**Wednesday 8 January 2014, 2.00 p.m. in A204**

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

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