

UNIVERSITY STANDARDS COMMITTEE**MINUTES**

Thursday 14 November 2013

9.00-10.35 a.m. in A204

Present: Mr Billy Kelly (Chair), Dr Brian Corcoran, Mr Eamon Costello, Professor Barbara Flood, Ms Mairéad Nic Giolla Mhichíl, Dr Lisa Looney, Ms Barbara McConalogue, Ms Louise McDermott (Secretary), Dr Enda McGlynn, Ms Phylomena McMorrow, Dr Pádraig Ó Duibhir, Ms Michele Pringle, Ms Annabella Stover, Mr Ronan Tobin, Dr Sheelagh Wickham

Apologies: Dr Mark Glynn, Dr Caroline McMullan, Mr Ciarán O'Connor

The Chair, on behalf of the University Standards Committee, welcomed Dr Brian Corcoran, recently-appointed Associate Dean for Education in the Faculty of Engineering and Computing, to his first meeting. He expressed appreciation of the work of Mr Ray Walshe, who had preceded Dr Corcoran, during his period of membership. He noted that a successor to Dr Enda McGlynn as representative to the USC of the Associate Deans for Research was being sought.

SECTION A: MINUTES AND RELATED ISSUES**1. Adoption of the agenda**

The agenda was adopted subject to the inclusion of one submission under Item 4.1, a new Item 5.2 with two submissions, a new Item 5.3 with one submission, and one submission under Item 8.

2. Minutes of the meeting of 12 September 2013

The minutes were confirmed subject to the correction of Professor Flood's title, and were signed by the Chair.

3. Matters arising from the minutes

- 3.1** Noted that a report would be made to the USC meeting of 16 January 2014 on the implementation in Faculties of the policy on Recognition of Prior Learning. (Item 3.5)
- 3.2** Noted that the Associate Deans for Teaching and Learning/Education would report to the USC meeting of 16 January 2014 on issues, currently under discussion in Faculties, relating to the policy on assessment. Noted that these issues would also be discussed at the meeting of the Education Committee of 4 December 2013. (Item 3.6)
- 3.3** Noted that, with respect to a number of ongoing issues, updated information would be provided to the USC as and when possible and appropriate. (Item 3.7)
- 3.4** Noted that *Regulations and guidelines: external examiners for taught programmes/modules* had been amended in line with the change of wording approved by the USC, and by Academic Council at its meeting of 9 October 2013, and that the appropriate amendment had also been made to the letters of appointment sent to external examiners. (Item 3.9)
- 3.5** Noted that the working group on external examiners would shortly be reconstituted and that the draft revised EE1 and EE2 forms would shortly be made available to the USC with a request for comment. Agreed that it was likely that Faculties would welcome guidance on the management of communication with external examiners. (Items 3.9 and 3.11)
- 3.6** Noted, with respect to the revised policy on academic integrity and plagiarism, that Dr Colm O'Reilly, Director of CTYI, had kindly agreed to review it for comprehensibility. Agreed, however, that it would be important to retain an appropriate level of detail. Noted that perceptions of difficulty in terms of understanding policies such as this one arise from a number of factors, not all of which relate to the kind of language used. Agreed that consideration would be given to incorporating explanatory notes into the policy. Noted that the policy was on the Registry web page. (Item 3.10)
- 3.7** Noted that the programme regulations 2013/14, as approved by the USC, were available on the Registry web page. Noted, however, that a submission from the Faculty of Science and Health would, if approved by the USC, entail a revision to programme regulations for two programmes in this Faculty. (See Item 5.3.1 below.) (Item 3.21)

- 3.8** Noted that a draft form for nominating external experts for Periodic Programme Reviews would shortly be made available to the USC with a request for comment. Noted that information on PPR activities undertaken in 2012/13 and to be undertaken in 2013/14 would be made available to the USC at its meeting of 16 January 2014. (Item 3.23)
- 3.9** Noted that revised versions of EE1 forms had been submitted and had been approved by Chair's action on 3 October 2013. (Items 4.1.2, 4.1.3 and 4.1.4)
- 3.10** Noted that the Chair had mentioned to a School a procedural impropriety that had occurred with respect to a submission to the USC. (Item 5.2.2)
- 3.11** Noted that an unsatisfactory process had pertained to a request for readmission of a candidate on a legacy basis and that the Chair was following up on the issues with the relevant Programme Chair and would liaise with the relevant Associate Dean for Teaching and Learning also. Agreed that Ms McMorrow would establish what kind of communication had taken place between the relevant Faculty and the Registry. Agreed that, if it emerged that it would be helpful for communication of decisions to be made by the Secretary of the USC to the Registry as well as to Faculties, this would be done as a matter of course. (5.3.1)
- 3.12** Noted that the membership of the working group on Marks and Standards, shortly to be reconvened, would be indicated to the USC and, at its meeting of 11 December 2013, to Academic Council. (Item 6.1)
- 3.13** Noted, with respect to examinations held in remote locations, that where requests were submitted to the USC for the holding of such examinations in 2013/14, and were approved, the examinations would be organised, and that the procedures currently in use would be reviewed for fitness for purpose at the end of the academic year. (Item 7)
- 3.14** Noted that Dr Thomas McAuley of the University of Sheffield had been approved, by means of Chair's action on 19 September 2013, as external examiner for modules in Japanese on the BA in Applied Language and Intercultural Studies, the BA in Applied Language and Translation Studies, the BA in International Business and Languages, the BBS International, the MA in Translation Studies and the MSc in Translation Technology.
- 3.15** Noted that a candidate had been readmitted to the BSc in Analytical Science, on a legacy basis, by means of Chair's action on 2 October 2013.

SECTION B: FACULTY ISSUES**4.1 Appointment of external examiners**

- 4.1.1 Professor Guy Starkey, University of Sunderland
BA in Journalism, MA in Journalism
Approved. Agreed to ask the School for clarification in respect of the reference to a representative sample of theses or projects.
- 4.1.2 Professor David Bustard, University of Ulster
BSc in Computational Problem-Solving and Software Development
Approved.
- 4.1.3 Dr Kevin Conley, University of Pittsburgh
BSc in Athletic Therapy and Training
Decision deferred pending clarification of a number of issues relating to the nomination form.
- 4.1.4 Dr Felix Ó Murchadha, National University of Ireland, Galway
Modules in Philosophy on the Bachelor of Religious Education, Mater Dei Institute of Education
Approved.
- 4.1.5 Dr Muireann O’Cinneide, National University of Ireland, Galway
Modules in English on the Bachelor of Religious Education, Mater Dei Institute of Education
Approved.
- 4.1.6 Dr Matthew Collins, University of Chester
Modules in Scripture on the Bachelor of Religious Education, Mater Dei Institute of Education
Approved.
- 4.1.7 Dr William Curran, Queen’s University, Belfast
Modules in Psychology on the BA in Theology and Philosophy, All Hallows College
Approved.
- 4.1.8 Mr Paul King, Mercer
Graduate Certificate in Actuarial Applications
Approved.
- 4.1.9 Dr Denise Crossan, Trinity College Dublin
MSc in Management (Innovation in Social Enterprise)
Approved.

4.2 Changes to duties of external examiners

4.2.1 Professor Neville Cox, Trinity College Dublin
Modules in the School of Law and Government

Approved.

4.2.2 Dr Andrew Fogarty, Athlone Institute of Technology
MSc in Management of Sustainable Development, MSc in Management of Clean
Technologies

Approved.

5. Other issues

5.1 Oscail

5.1.1 Request for readmission of legacy candidate: MSc in Management of Information Systems Strategies

Approved subject to the completion deadline being indicated as September 2014 rather than January 2014. Agreed that, henceforth, Oscail would ensure that standard Registry transcripts, rather than Oscail spreadsheets, would accompany readmission requests.

5.2 Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences

5.2.1 Request for readmission of legacy candidate: MA in International Relations (part time)

Approved. Noted that the request had originally been approved by means of Chair's action on 17 December 2012 but that the candidate had not been in a position to register for the programme owing to unforeseen personal circumstances; hence the request had had to be resubmitted to the USC, in line with regulations.

5.2.2 Request for readmission of legacy candidate: MA in Development (part time)

Approved.

5.3 Faculty of Science and Health

5.3.1 Proposal on arrangements for continuing students: BSc in Physical Education with Biology and BSc in Physical Education with Mathematics

Noted that a number of issues required detailed discussion, both to ensure that the optimum arrangements were made for the students involved and because the decisions taken would be likely to be taken as precedents if similar situations arose in the future (on the basis of ongoing changes to programmes necessitated by Teaching Council regulations). Agreed that it would be helpful to ask the advice of the Council with respect to students in a transitional situation, as in the present case, and that this would be done. Agreed to convene a meeting of a subgroup of the USC (to include the Chair, Ms McMorrow, Ms McConalogue, Dr Ó Duibhir, Ms Nic Giolla Mhichíl, Ms Stover and Dr Wickham) to make recommendations on the proposal and that these would be made available for electronic consideration by the USC, with a closing date for comment of 13 December 2013.

SECTION C: OTHER ISSUES (NOT FACULTY SPECIFIC)

6. Marks and Standards issues

6.1 Proposal on issues relating to additional repeat academic sessions

Approved subject to the removal of the word ‘very’ in the last sentence and the inclusion of a step in the process whereby the circumstances are checked with the Faculty Office prior to the submission of a request to the Chair of the USC.

7. List of external examiners whose terms of office have expired

Noted. Noted also that the Chair had issued a reminder, at the Heads’ and Deans’ meeting of 30 October 2013, about the importance of timely submission of nominations of individuals to act as external examiner.

8. Any other business

Ms McDermott stressed the importance of efficient management of meetings, noting that timely advance notification of items by stakeholders, in line with the schedule of dates and deadlines her office had circulated in August 2013, was essential to facilitate such management.

Date of next meeting:

**16 January 2014
9.00 a.m. in A204**

Signed: _____
Chair

Date: _____