

ACADEMIC COUNCIL

MINUTES

3 October 2018

2.00 p.m. – 3.15 p.m.

AG01, DCU Glasnevin Campus

PRESENT:

P Anandarajah
C. Bohan
M. Brown
J. Bruen
J. Brunton
J. Bruton
M. Butler
C. Commons
G. Conole
B. Corcoran
M. Crane
S. Cullen
E. Cunningham
D. Curran
J. Doyle
M. Farrelly
L. Fitzsimons
K. Fay
B. Flood

Y. Freeney
L. Gallagher
E. Guilfoyle
C. Gurrin
D. Hand
C. Holland
M. Irwin-Bannon (Secretary)
G. Jones
A. Kearns
A. Kellett
W. Kelly
S. Kelly
P. Landais
A. Looney
B. MacCraith (Chair)
C. Mac Murchaidh
L. MacGabhann
M. McAdam

A McAuley
B. McConalogue
E. McDonald
G. McGuinness
A. McKenna
J. McManis
P. McMorrow
E. McNulty
P. Mooney
G. Muntean
D. Nic Mhathúna
B. Nolan
N. O’Sullivan
E. Regan
M. Roantree
A. Stalcup
P. Tiernan
B. White
P. Willis

APOLOGIES:

F. Blin
D. Collings
E. Costello
N. Dunne
G. French

M. Helfert
G. Hughes
D. Keogh
C. Loscher
J. Lovatt

R. Murphy
F. Murphy
B. Ní Áingléis
Maeve O’Brien
C. Pressler

C. Furlong
R. Gillanders
A Healy
S. Hegarty

D. McKeon
I. McMenamin
E. Morgenroth

J. Rami
A. Sinnott
J. Travers

1. Adoption of agenda

The agenda was adopted with the addition of two items under AOB.

A: Minutes and related issues

2. Minutes of the meeting of Academic Council of 18 June 2018

The minutes were approved and signed by the Chair.

3. Matters arising

There were no matters arising.

4. Minutes of the meetings of the Graduate Research Studies Board of 24 May 2018 and 21 June 2018

Approved

B. Policy and strategy issues

5. President's report (oral report)

- 5.1 The President noted that there have been no significant developments at national policy level to indicate that the Higher Education funding situation will change in the short to medium term. He noted that the IUA had made a pre-budget submission. However, in anticipation of little or no movement on Higher Education funding, the IUA was launching a campaign, entitled 'Save our Spark', aimed at encouraging the public to call on the Government to address the funding crisis in third level education.

- 5.2 The President drew the attention of Council to the recently launched IUA joint charter *Ireland's Future Talent – A Charter for Irish Universities*, which sets out six principles to protect and develop the Irish university education system for the future.
- 5.3 Referring to the implementation of the University Strategic plan, the President noted that the five constituent strategies were available on the DCU website and indicated to Council that a report would issue shortly following the review and renewal phase of year one of the strategic plan implementation. Once this stage was completed, he indicated his intention to commence consultation visits to all Schools and Units.
- 5.4 The President noted that DCU had accepted its highest number of students to date in September 2018, despite the overall drop in CAO figures generally. He noted that in year two of the DCU strategic plan it was intended to develop a strategic growth plan focusing on student profile that will take account of DCU's values and its plans for sustainability.
- 5.5 The President drew the attention of Council to the recent announcement of a €24 million co-investment, in the €50m FutureTech Building on the Glasnevin Campus.

He noted too the very positive reaction to the opening of the new Students' Union Building, the 'U', which was formally opened by President Michael D Higgins on 27 September 2018. He noted that its completion was a statement of DCU's commitment to the development of its students in all its dimensions.

6. **Proposal on new module type and its method of calculation**

Mr. B. Kelly provided the background to the proposal for a new module type. In some modules, continuous assessment represents a small proportion of the total marks for a module and is essentially formative in nature and all the module learning outcomes are assessed in a terminal examination; the awarding of marks is seen as essential to incentivise engagement with the formative continuous assessment. It is argued that without attaching marks to such continuous assessment, all students will not engage with these formative exercises; this is of particular concern in first year classes.

A recommendation on the treatment of these modules was made originally by University Standards Committee (USC) (29 May 2014). The issue was then raised by the Appeals Review Group report (7 December 2016). Following initial consideration at USC in April 2018, informal discussions were held with the Associate Deans for Teaching and Learning/Education about the introduction of a new type of module. This formal proposal was considered and approved at the USC meeting of 6 September 2018 and the following was proposed for the consideration of Academic Council:

- To create a new type of module where the continuous assessment continues to carry a mark but where that mark does not disadvantage a student who subsequently demonstrates achievement of the learning outcomes in a terminal examination. This new type of module could be used in limited circumstances and the overall mark calculation for the module will be adjusted to reflect the primacy of the terminal examination.

In circumstances where all the following conditions apply:

- i. all the learning outcomes of module can be assessed appropriately by a terminal examination;
- ii. the continuous assessment elements of the module address a subset of the module learning outcomes assessed in the terminal examination;
- iii. the continuous assessment element has a weighting of 20% or less.

The module mark will be calculated as the greater of (a) the weighted average of the continuous assessment percentage mark and the terminal examination percentage mark or (b) the terminal examination mark.

During a brief discussion of the proposal the following were noted:

- Faculties should review and maintain an oversight on the categorisation of such modules ensuring that learning outcomes are aligned with assessment and ensuring that all learning outcomes can be assessed through a terminal examination;
- The proposal will benefit students in that they have more opportunity to achieve module learning outcomes and to gain from engagement with formative assessment;
- The calculation of the new type of module would be integrated into the ITS calculate programme and would apply for the academic year 2019-2020.

The proposal was approved.

7. Update on Institutional Review, presentation, Ms Aisling McKenna, Director of Quality Promotion and Institutional Research

Ms A. McKenna provided an update to Council on the DCU Cinnte Review 2018 and outlined the following:

- The timeline for the review began in December 2017 with the convening of a DCU Institutional Self-Evaluation Report Working Group and will culminate in the Full Peer Review Visit from 22 October 2018 – 26 October 2018.

- The Self-Evaluation Report was informed by the student survey, staff and student focus groups, and surveys of external examiners, Peer Review Group members and Accreditation Board members and by Quality Enhancement Case-Studies.
- Over 170 individuals will meet with the Peer Review Panel ,with a total of 23 meetings taking place over the four days of the visit. Two campus tours will also take place.
- All staff will be invited to two open staff sessions, which will take place on Tuesday 23 October and on Thursday 25 October 2018.

The President thanked Ms A. McKenna for the presentation and the work completed thus far and encouraged members to participate in the review.

C. Items for formal approval/noting

8. Register of Academic Council members 2018-2019

Noted. It was noted some further updates of the membership list are awaited.

9. Register of members of the Education Committee, the University Standards Committee, the Graduate Research Studies Board, Standing Committee of GRSB to consider Appeals and the Examination Appeals Board

Noted

10. Update on committee activities 2017-2018

Noted

11. Report from Autumn 2018 examinations, Progression and Award Boards

11.1 Examination Report: DCU

Approved. It was noted that some minor typographical errors had been corrected on this report and the final corrected version uploaded to the Academic Council GDrive.

11.2 Examination Report: Ballyfermot College of Further Education

Approved

12. Report from DCU Autumn 2018 Faculty Awards Boards for Research Degrees

It was noted that the DCU autumn Faculty Awards Boards for Research Degrees 2018 would be circulated on Friday 5 October 2018 with an approval deadline of Tuesday 9 October 2018.

13. Research Students, Awards Report, Dundalk Institute of Technology

Approved

14. Research Students, Awards Report, Royal Irish Academy of Music

Approved

15. Updated DCU Academic Integrity and Plagiarism Policy

Approved

16. Validation Report: MA in Choral Studies

Approved

17. Report on completion of Accreditation process 2017-2018

Approved

18. Revocation of Award Policy

Approved

19. Legacy Student Records Final Project Report 2018

Noted

20. Any other business*20.1 Update on Academic Calendar Working Group*

The Vice-President Academic Affairs (Registrar) informed Council that an Academic Calendar Working Group had been meeting and consulting widely over the last several months and had submitted a report for consideration by the Senior Management Group. She noted that it was anticipated that recommendations arising from the report would be brought to the meeting of Academic Council of 5 December 2018.

20.2 Presidential Search Committee

The Vice-President Academic Affairs (Registrar) noted that the DCU President's 10-year term of office will end in July 2020 and that a search for a successor to Professor Brian MacCraith would be commencing.

She noted that a Search Committee, under the remit of Governing Authority, would be set-up to assist in the identification of potential DCU Presidential candidates. She indicated that Academic Council would be given the opportunity to nominate Council members for two positions on the Search Committee. She indicated that a call for nominations would issue shortly and noted that the two members (gender-balanced) would be selected by the Chancellor.

Signed: _____**Date:** _____**Date of next meeting:**

Wednesday, 5 December 2018

2:00 pm in B103

DCU, St Patrick's Campus