

EDUCATION COMMITTEE**MINUTES**

Wednesday 13 March 2019

2.00 p.m. – 4.20 p.m. in A204

- Present:** Dr Claire Bohan, Dr Jennifer Bruen, Ms Jennifer Bruton, Professor Michelle Butler, Professor John Doyle, Professor Eithne Guilfoyle (Chair), Professor Greg Hughes, Ms Margaret Irwin-Bannon (Secretary), Mr Billy Kelly, Dr Anne Looney, Professor Lisa Looney, Ms Aisling McKenna and Ms Pauline Mooney
- Apologies:** Professor Mark Brown, Mr Callaghan Commons, Professor Anne Sinnott and Dr Joseph Stokes
- In attendance:** Ms Karen Johnston

SECTION A: AGENDA, MINUTES AND MATTERS ARISING**1. Adoption of the agenda**

The agenda as circulated was adopted.

2. Minutes of the meeting of 13 February 2019

The minutes of the meeting of 13 February 2019 were approved and signed by the Chair.

3. Matters arising from the minutes of 13 February 2019

- 3.1 Ms A. McKenna reported that she had met with the Director of Information Systems Services and the Head of the Strategic Intelligence and Operational Excellence Unit to discuss in broad terms the publication of data such as the Graduate Outcomes Survey, CAO statistics etc. She noted that she is investigating a number of products with a view to a having short-term solution in place in advance of the introduction of the new Student Information System. She indicated that she would benchmark the products on offer and consult further in this regard (Item 3.3).

- 3.2 It was noted that the Secretary had consulted with the Finance Office with respect to the consultancy report commissioned by the Director of Finance. It had been anticipated that the report would have an impact on the validation finance template. However, it was noted that the report did not provide any outcomes that would impact on the finance model for new programmes. It was noted that the Finance Office, at the behest of the Executive Deans has begun working on a finance model for the incentivisation of the development of new programmes and would report to Senior Management Group with respect to its progress (Item 3.4).
- 3.3 It was noted that work is ongoing on the revision of the ‘Approval Form for Revised Academic Offerings’ to reflect approval decision changes agreed by Education Committee (Item 3.1).
- 3.4 It was noted that consideration of exit awards at undergraduate level will take place over the coming months (Item 3.5).
- 3.5 It was noted that the NFQ level of taught modules on professional doctorate programmes will be addressed over the coming months (Item 3.6).
- 3.6 It was noted that work is ongoing on current Teaching and Learning compact goals and their alignment to strategy (Item 3.7).
- 3.7 It was noted that the provision of more discipline-specific information for Schools on CAO points and its correlation with first year examination performance at DCU is currently being prepared and will be circulated when completed (Item 7).
- 3.8 It was noted that the update to the FutureLearn approvals document was awaited (Item 8).
- 3.9 It was noted in the context of ongoing MOOC development that the Executive Deans would develop a principles document to ensure that expertise is not replicated across the University (Item 8).
- 3.10 It was noted that initial research on the future naming and numbering convention for DCU MOOCs and modules would be completed by staff in the Academic Secretariat, once resources become available. It was noted that Ms Rachel Keegan has just been appointed to the Academic Secretariat, OVPAA (Item 8).
- 3.11 It was noted that work is ongoing on the development of a Professional Development Framework for Teaching and Learning (Item 9).
- 3.12 It was noted that the revised documentation for the Graduate Certificate in Management of Operations and the Graduate Certificate in Management of Enterprise Systems was submitted and both programmes were deemed approved (Items 12.1 and 12.5).

- 3.13 It was noted that Open Education had consulted with the relevant faculties with respect to the proposed Springboard programmes, originally considered at the 13 February 2019 meeting of Education, and revised proposals were submitted and are on the agenda of this meeting.
- 3.14 It was noted that the following were approved by Chair's action:
- Change of title from: Graduate Diploma in Children's Literature to Graduate Diploma in Children's and Young Adult Literature (approved 22 February 2019)
 - Creation of an exit award from the MSc in Multimedia: Graduate Diploma in Multimedia for graduation in March 2019, (approved 22 February 2019). It was noted that from September 2019, the diploma will be entitled Graduate Diploma in Emerging Media as a result of the title change to the MSc in Multimedia to MSc in Emerging Media approved by Education Committee 17 January 2018.
 - Change of title of Bachelor of Science (Mental Health Nursing) to Bachelor of Science in Nursing (Mental Health) to include the cohort exiting from the programme in 2018-2019 (approved 28 February 2019).

SECTION B: STRATEGIC MATTERS FOR DISCUSSION/NOTING

4. Update on strategic activities undertaken within the IUA

There were no updates to report.

Update on strategic activities undertaken within the IUA

5. Update on DCU Strategy implementation

The Chair reported that she had communicated with the Executive Deans to invite them to update Education Committee on the work being undertaken at faculty level with respect to curriculum review. She indicated that Professor Lisa Looney would provide the first in a series of presentations at the April 2019 meeting of Education Committee.

The Chair introduced an item related to a presentation to Academic Council at its February 2019 meeting with respect to the proliferation of second class honours grade I award classifications. A more detailed document on individual faculty grades was tabled and discussed and the following points were noted in the discussion that followed:

- The entry profile of students and the increased level of group work and continuous assessment may contribute to students bunching at the same level.

- Disciplines such as mathematics and engineering use a broader spectrum of marks and it is therefore not such an issue in those disciplines.
- Consideration should be given to using ‘norm referencing’ i.e. what constitutes a 2.1, 2.2 etc.
- Consideration should be given to using GPA grading.
- Clarity is required on what and how staff grade across the University.
- Consideration should be given to letter grading accompanied by a clear rubric.
- The discussion on this issue is timely both in relation to the introduction of the Student Information System but also as it impacts QS World University Subject Rankings.
- It was noted that this issue cannot be considered in isolation and must take account of national sectoral norms.

It was agreed that Education Committee would await the outcomes of the Curriculum Reviews being conducted at faculty level and will discuss grade conflation in this context, and in the context of the sector more generally.

6. Irish Survey of Student Engagement (ISSE)

Ms A McKenna reported that the ISSE opened on the 11 March 2019 and after two days of the survey there was a 9% (924 responses) response rate for taught students and an 8% (62 responses) response rate for postgraduate research students. She indicated that she would keep Executive Deans informed on an ongoing basis on the response rate and requested that the faculties would continue to encourage student participation.

7. Report on first semester examination results 2018-2019 and review of ‘at risk’¹ students, Ms K. Johnston

The following summary points were noted from the presentation on first semester examination results 2018-2019:

- Average pass rates of first year entrants on first year modules is at 93% and is broadly similar to the figures from the year before.
- Module level pass rates are below 80% in only eight of the 150 first year modules delivered in semester one.

¹ At student who fails two or more modules in January or , completes two or less modules in semester one and fails one of these modules

- In other study periods, 27 of the 600 modules delivered have a pass rate of lower than 75% representing 5% of modules undertaken
- Pass rates in the DCU Institute of Education for years 2-4 do not fall below 85% in any module.

It was noted that there are some modules where there is a marked difference in student performance from previous years and it was suggested that those modules would be examined. It was agreed, as occurred in previous years, that the Associate Deans for Teaching and Learning would investigate at faculty level.

At risk students

- With respect to ‘at risk’ students it was noted that 229 students were identified as ‘at risk’ representing 6.8% of new entrants in 2018-2019, which is a slight increase on last year where 192 students were identified representing 5.8% of new entrants.
- Those identified in the ‘at risk’ category have generally achieved in the range of 371-395 CAO points.

SECTION C: PROGRAMME AND MODULE-SPECIFIC ISSUES

8. Faculty of Science and Health: Validation proposal: Professional Diploma in Clinical Supervision

The proposal was considered and Education Committee referred it for further consideration to the next scheduled meeting of Education Committee Standing Committee (ECSC).

It was noted that the following items would be explored with the programme proposers by ECSC.

- 8.1 If taught doctorate students have already successfully completed the 20 credit module NS620 and want to complete the Professional Diploma in Clinical Supervision, then this would mean that there is a potential double-counting of credits. It also appeared from the documentation that there are additional hours to be completed for professional accreditation requirements for this module but the doctorate students will already have achieved the 20 credits for this module as part of the taught doctorate programme.
- 8.2 Financial considerations
 - If students taking the programme already have achieved 20 credits then the income may not be as projected for the award.

- It is stated in the documentation (page 2), that it is anticipated that there will be an additional member of staff joining the psychotherapy team, however the projection for academic costs only allows for €10,332.
- It is indicated in the documentation that there will be an intake to the Professional Diploma every two years, however the resource table indicates figures for an annual intake.

8.3 Education Committee should be provided with the appropriate information to approve the Irish Council for Psychotherapy nominee for the Accreditation Board.

8.4 Reference is made in the documentation on potential demand from Webster University, Geneva. Details on how this relationship might be envisaged should be provided.

9. Faculty of Science and Health: Validation proposal: Graduate Certificate in Dermatology

Concerns were expressed with respect to the projected fee income for the programme as some of the individual modules that make up the proposed Graduate Certificate are already in place. Students may have completed them on a stand-alone basis and therefore may not be registering for the entire programme. It was agreed that further clarity was required in this regard.

On a matter related to the point above, it was noted that DCU's fees thresholds should be reviewed and a bench-marking exercise completed with respect to DCU's competitors for similar programmes.

It was noted that a nominee for the Accreditation Board was a serving external examiner and an additional nominee was required.

This programme proposal was referred to the next scheduled meeting of ECSC for discussion of the above items.

10. Faculty of Science and Health: Springboard proposal: Certificate in Dementia Training

The programme was approved subject to a revision of the entry requirements, which should comply with standard DCU entry requirements at undergraduate level, and reflect that admission to the programme will be a competitive process.

11. Open Education: Springboard proposals

A general discussion took place on the academic approval procedures with respect to the Springboard Open Education proposals. It was suggested that a process should be put in place to ensure that there is a level of faculty consultation for proposed discipline-related programmes.

11.1 Graduate Certificate in Management of Clean Technologies

Approved

11.2 Graduate Certificate in Management of Sustainable Development

Approved

11.3 Graduate Certificate in Management of Information Systems Strategy

Approved

11.4 Higher Diploma in Computing & Networks

Approved

11.5 Certificate in User Experience

Concerns were expressed about the offering of level eight undergraduate certificates. The concern related in particular to the level of modules that will contribute to the proposed level 8 award, given that they are at foundation and intermediate level.

There was a general discussion on the broader issue of module levels within a level eight award and it was noted that DCU had not adopted a stratified approach to levels within a level eight award. A solution suggested was to develop a rubric to identify what 'level' of modules should contribute to an award.

It was noted that the articulation of the entry requirements in line with DCU standard entry requirements was required and the Deputy Registrar undertook to advise the programme proposers in this regard.

The proposal was approved (see note under 11.8).

11.6 Higher Diploma in Management of Information Technology

Approved

11.7 Certificate in Software Systems & New Venture Creation

It was noted that issues raised with respect to the Certificate in User Experience also applied to this proposed certificate.

The proposal was approved (see note under 11.8).

11.8 Certificate in Computer Programming

It was noted that issues raised with respect to the Certificate in User Experience also applied to this proposed certificate.

The proposal was approved.

With respect to the consideration of what constitutes a level 8 certificate (proposals under 11.5, 11.7 and 11.8) and the level of modules that make up that award, it was agreed that a sub-group would be constituted to make some proposals for the short-term with a view to a more considered decision being taken in the longer term. It was noted that these longer-term considerations should also take account of Recognised Prior Learning and articulation of DCU credits into other institutions.

It was noted that the decision to approve the undergraduate certificates under items 11.5, 11.7 and 11.8 at this time, would not necessarily guarantee future approvals at this level.

12. DCU Institute of Education: Exit award from the Bachelor of Education programme: BA in Education Studies

Approved, for implementation for the Bachelor of Education, legacy CICE for 2018-2109 and for the Bachelor of Education programme in its entirety from September 2019-2020

It was suggested that consideration would be given to an exit option after year three of the programme. The Executive Dean of the DCU Institute of Education indicated that this could be considered however, the extended practice placement was a factor to be considered.

13. AOB

There were no items of business.

Signed _____ Date _____

Date of next meeting:

Wednesday, 3 April 2019

at 2.00 in A204