

EDUCATION COMMITTEE

MINUTES

Wednesday 14 February 2018

2.00 – 3.30 pm in A204

Present: Dr Claire Bohan, Professor Mark Brown, Professor Michelle Butler, Professor John Doyle, Professor Eithne Guilfoyle (Chair), Ms Margaret Irwin-Bannon (Secretary), Mr Billy Kelly, Professor Lisa Looney, Dr Garrett McGuinness, Ms Aisling McKenna, Ms Pauline Mooney, Professor Anne Sinnott, Dr Joseph Stokes

Apologies: Ms Jennifer Bruton, Professor Greg Hughes, Dr Anne Looney

In attendance: Ms Karen Johnston

SECTION A: AGENDA, MINUTES AND MATTERS ARISING

1. Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

2. Minutes of the meeting of 17 January 2018

The minutes of the meeting of 17 January 2018 were approved and signed by the Chair.

It was noted that there were two changes to be made retrospectively to the approved minutes of Education Committee meeting of 13 December 2017 as follows:

Item 7, bullet point 2

- Those surveyed in DCU were campus-based students in the mid-years of study *and undergraduate Open Education students*.

Item 9, under AOB

- He noted that a key challenge contained in the strategy for the Higher Education sector will be the impact of the aim to increase the number of students in higher education studying a foreign language, in any capacity, as part of their course to 20%.

3. Matters arising from the minutes of 17 January 2018

3.1 Ms Aisling McKenna provided an update on the current status of discussions on Designated Award Bodies and linked providers. She outlined that at the recent meeting of IUA Quality Officers and Registrars the main discussion focused on establishing agreement on a common definition of a ‘linked provider’, however there remained quite a degree of variation between institutions. She noted that the IUA will seek legal advice on the interpretation of the ‘linked provider’ definition as contained in Qualifications and Quality Assurance Act 2012. She proposed waiting for the outcome of that advice before finalising DCU’s definition. However, should a sectoral decision not be forthcoming before March/April then she noted DCU may have to decide on its own interpretation of the definition (Item 3.3).

3.2 Dr C. Bohan and Ms P. Mooney provided an update on the impact of collaborative provision agreements and their impact on service provision to students. Having reviewed the data on existing student cohorts and related documentation, they concluded that there is value in having a discussion with colleagues in the External Affairs Office to request early consultation where elements of service provision are inherent in potential agreements.

They also indicated that there is a further complex element to be considered with respect to the definition of a DCU registered student, the categorisation of students already registered and the entitlements in terms of service provision DCU student registration brings under the different categories related to collaborative provision agreements.

It was proposed and agreed that work to articulate principles around what it is to be a registered DCU student and its consequent impact on service provision would be completed over the coming months and referred to the Vice-President Academic Affairs/Registrar (Item 3.4).

3.3 It was noted that work is ongoing with respect to preparation for the launch of the Irish Survey of Student Engagement (ISSE) (Item 3.1)

3.4 It was noted that work on the publication of an interim First Destination Survey outcomes report is ongoing (Item 3.2).

3.5 It was noted that the form to address collaborative provision type 11 will be drafted over the coming months (Item 3.5).

- 3.6 It was noted that work on the programme student survey, due to be completed by students at the end of semester two, is ongoing (Item 3.6).
- 3.7 It was noted that a meeting is to take place between the Finance Office and a sub-group of Education Committee to clarify issues with respect to the financial template summary used for the validation of programmes (Item 3.7).

SECTION B: STRATEGIC MATTERS FOR DISCUSSION/NOTING

4. Update on strategic activities undertaken within the Irish Universities Association (IUA)

The Chair provided an update on the meeting of the IUA Registrar's Group which met on 22 January 2017 as follows:

- It was confirmed that UK students entering into university 2018 – 2019 will be eligible for EU fees for the duration of their studies.
- The IUA is seeking legal advice on the recent decision to categorise examination scripts as personal data.
- The IUA Registrars plan to seek clarity from the HEA on the status of the National Forum for the Enhancement of Teaching and Learning in Higher Education.

Professor Stokes provided an update on the meeting of IUA Deans of Graduate Studies as follows:

- A discussion took place in the context of SFI-funded Research Centres and the proposed provision of graduate training elements for research students. Whilst SFI have made provision for such graduate support, the IUA Deans of Graduate Studies group has provided information on the graduate training elements currently supported by Graduate Studies Offices within each institution. Lists of core/general modules delivered by each institution have been provided to SFI. Professor Stokes will provide updates as the discussion continues.

5. Irish Survey of Student Engagement (ISSE)

There was no update.

6. Education Committee Goals/Teaching and Learning Strategy

Mr B. Kelly tabled the document ‘Teaching and Learning Strategy Development’. He outlined that the document identified specific actions to support strategic goals and represented the framework for the strategy, to which further detail would be added. The document recognises that at university level the actions identified in the Teaching and Learning Strategy will be enabling actions for faculties. The most important single item is Curriculum Reform which will enable faculties and the University to engage with addressing future needs.

Mr Kelly requested the views and endorsement of Education Committee on the Teaching and Learning framework as drafted to date.

In the discussion which followed the following points were made:

- In the context of the Student Information System project it is important that there is a clarity of vision of the ultimate goals of the Teaching and Learning Strategy e.g. what do we define as ‘flexible’ or ‘continuous’.
- ‘Continuous’ programmes have been in place for a considerable period of time, but they are resource intensive, as the systems do not directly support them.
- Consideration needs to be given to flexibility of choice in terms of the make-up of an award or pathway.
- It was suggested that other themes to explore when conducting the curriculum review would be e.g. globalisation, sustainability, creativity, entrepreneurship, workplace to learning.
- The approach of enabling faculties by calling on implementation supports was welcome.
- It would be important that the implementation support for the roll-out of the Teaching and Learning Strategy would be driven by faculties.
- It would be important that some time is built in for the embedding of the other eight strategies, particularly those which relate directly to Teaching and Learning e.g. Student Profile and Growth plan.

It was agreed that the draft Teaching and Learning Strategy document would be placed on the shared drive for further consultation at faculty level.

7. Overview of Formal Withdrawal from Study at DCU—2018

A report on all formal withdrawals from study and internal transfer data up to 1 February 2018 was presented by Ms K. Johnson. The following were noted from the report:

- The number of formal withdrawals is down by 9.6% on the same period last year. There are fewer withdrawals from second, third and fourth year undergraduate programmes.
- Trends in relation to the proportion of undergraduate entrants formally withdrawing during their first year of study remain relatively stable, when a full year of withdrawals is taken into account.
- Withdrawal of first year undergraduate entrants represents the majority of withdrawals in the university (63% in 2017-2018, compared to 54% on the same period last year). The change in percentage is due to a drop in withdrawals of undergraduates in years 2, 3 and 4.
- Internal transfers on the 1 Feb 2017 were at 95, whereas in 2018 the number is 80 for the same period (a reduction of 16% on last year). It was noted that the internal transfer code is not always used to identify a transfer student, which can have an impact on the figures.

In the discussion which followed the following were noted:

- That approximately 50% of students who withdrew did so for reasons related to the programme. It was suggested that it would be useful where a student has withdrawn to identify where on the CAO preference list that particular programme was.
- That further consideration should be given to allowing students to carry failed credits for more programmes than is currently permitted.

SECTION C: PROGRAMME AND MODULE-SPECIFIC ISSUES

8. Faculty of Science and Health validation proposal: MSc in Psychology (Conversion)

The revised proposal for the MSc in Psychology (Conversion) was considered. It was noted that the programme proposers had taken account of feedback provided previously by Education Committee with respect to the need for clearly articulated level 9 programme learning outcomes. The programme validation proposal was approved.

Some concern remained with respect to the practicality of delivery of modules at both level 8 and level 9 to undergraduate and master's students simultaneously and it was noted that it is crucial that this situation is well managed. It was noted too that as the MSc students would have undergraduate credits in psychology in this particular instance there was a greater degree of assurance.

9. Additional nominees for the Accreditation Board: MSc in International Accounting

Approved

10. Additional nominee for the Accreditation Board: MA in Creative Writing

Approved

11. Correction of title of MSc in Climate Change: Policy, Media and Society

Noted that the titles of MSc in Climate Change: Policy, Media and Society and MSc in Climate Change: Politics, Media and Society had been used interchangeably through the recent validation and accreditation process. The correct title was confirmed as MSc in Climate Change: Policy, Media and Society.

12. Change of programme title: from BA in Theology and Lifelong Education to BA in Theology and Religious Studies

This item was deferred to facilitate discussions between the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences and the DCU Institute of Education. It was agreed that the item would be circulated electronically for approval once discussions had taken place.

13. Any other business

There were no items of business.

Signed: _____ Date _____
Chair

Date of next meeting:

Wednesday, 14 March 2018
at 2.00 in A204