

EDUCATION COMMITTEE

MINUTES

Wednesday 14 March 2018

2.00 – 4.00 pm in A204

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

Apologies: Mr Billy Kelly, Professor Greg Hughes

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 14 February 2018

The minutes of the meeting of 14 February 2018 were approved, subject to an amendment under item 3.2 as follows ‘and referred to the Vice President for Academic Affairs/Registrar’.

3. Matters arising from the minutes of 14 February 2018

- 3.1 Ms Aisling McKenna provided an update on the current status of discussions on Designated Award Bodies and linked providers. She indicated that she and Ms P. Mooney had met with the Chief Operating Officer and discussed the linked provider definition considered by this Committee. It had also been discussed at a meeting of the Institutional

Review Steering Group and it was agreed that legal advice would be sought on the proposed definition (Item 3.1).

- 3.2 It was noted that in preparation for its launch, information on the ISSE survey had been provided in power point slide format to faculties (Item 3.2).
- 3.3 It was noted that work on the publication of an interim First Destination Survey outcomes report is ongoing (Item 3.4).
- 3.4 It was noted that the form to address collaborative provision type 11 will be drafted over the coming months (Item 3.5).
- 3.5 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).
- 3.6 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).
- 3.7 It was noted that the draft Teaching and Learning Strategy development document had been circulated to Education Committee (Item 6).
- 3.8 It was noted that following electronic circulation to Education Committee, the proposed change in title, from the BA in Theology and Lifelong Education to BA in Theology and Religious Studies had been approved on 22 February 2018 (Item 12).

SECTION B: STRATEGIC MATTERS FOR DISCUSSION/NOTING

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

The Chair noted that the next meeting of the IUA Registrar's Group will take place at the end of March 2018.

Dr Anne Looney provided an update on recent activity with respect to the IUA, HEA and the Department of Education and Skills with respect to addressing the shortage of post-primary teachers. She noted that a press release had been issued on 14 March 2018 indicating that the universities would be offering additional teacher training places, however contrary to the IUA's understanding and expectation, the DES had not indicated

that the universities would receive additional resources over and above normal provision to deal with the additional numbers.

5. Irish Survey of Student Engagement (ISSE)

It was noted that the field work for the Irish Survey of Student Engagement had commenced on Monday 12 March 2018. To date DCU students' response rate is at 11% which is largely in line with the same period last year. It was noted that participation from taught postgraduate students is below average currently and suggestions on how to increase their participation level were invited.

6. Education Committee Goals/Teaching and Learning Strategy

The Chair noted that a meeting of the Teaching and Learning Strategy Working Group had been held recently. The framework document is being elaborated to form a full strategy document and will be progressed over the coming weeks.

7. Review of first semester examination results and review of 'at risk' profile students, presentation by Ms K. Johnson

A review of first semester examination results and review of 'at risk' profile students was presented by Ms K. Johnson. The following were noted from the presentation:

- Average pass rates among first year entrants on 1st year modules is 93% which is almost a 2% increase on last year
- Module level pass rates are below 80% in only 10 of the 146 (13/138 in 2017) first year modules delivered in semester 1.
- In other study periods, 42 of the 627 modules delivered have a pass rate of lower than 75% which is down 30% on the previous year.
- Pass rates in the Institute of Education for years 2-4 do not fall below 80% in any module
- Students deemed 'at risk' number 188 after semester 1 which represents a drop from 261 at this time last year.
- Those who have been identified in the 'at risk' category have generally achieved 350-375 CAO points.
- There is a weak co-relation between those not attending writing centre or in class workshops offered by Student Support and Development and those 'at risk'
- The 'at risk' information has been provided to Student Support and Development and work to support 'at risk students' has commenced.

In the discussion which followed there was concern expressed on the upward trend of the median mark, with the statistics showing a clear ‘bunching’ at H2.1 and those who are awarded a first class honours mark or who are in the lower grades appearing much more at variance with the norm, as a result. It was noted that it would be useful to examine and analyse the various factors which impact on ‘bunching’ and to establish in the context of the Higher Education sector whether or not this should be an issue of concern.

In this context the Chair noted the intention to hold a review of DCU’s assessment practice in the longer term. Dr A Looney indicated that it was her intention, particularly in light of the DCU Institute of Education’s higher than average pass rates, to review its assessment practice. She noted that she would seek the advice of the Assessment Research Centre on methodology and would revert to Education Committee once the review had been completed.

It was noted that the information provided was very useful and it was confirmed that more detailed faculty specific information would be provided to faculties.

SECTION C: PROGRAMME AND MODULE-SPECIFIC ISSUES

8. Faculty of Science and Health: proposed new streams (Dementia) for the MSc in Health Care/ Nursing Practice

The proposed new streams on the MSc in Nursing/Health Care were approved. The streams approved were entitled as follows:

- MSc in Dementia Nursing Practice
- MSc in Dementia Health Care Practice

9. Spring Board Proposals

9.1 Graduate Certificate in Advanced Manufacturing

Approved

9.2 Graduate Certificate in Business Analytics

Approved

9.3 Graduate Certificate in Artificial Intelligence

Approved

9.4 Graduate Certificate in The Internet of Things

Approved

9.5 Graduate Certificate in Image Processing and Analysis

Approved

With respect to items 9.1- 9.5, it was noted that there were a number of minor items in the proposals which were not necessarily relevant to the proposal in question and were a consequence of the tight time turn-around of the documentation for funding application purposes. It was confirmed that these would be addressed.

9.6 Graduate Certificate in Plasma Technology, NFQ level 9

Approved, subject to addressing the following:

In the documentation provided the Graduate Certificate structure indicates that the modules have an ECTS credit weighting of 7.5 however the same modules on the MSc (provided in the appendix) have a 10 credit weighting. In addition, as the structure is currently presented the level 9 modules add up to 27.5. For a Graduate Certificate there must be 30 credits at level 9 for the award and this issue should be addressed.

9.7 Undergraduate Certificate in Plasma and Vacuum Technology, NFQ level 8

Approved

9.8 Higher Diploma in Science in Interaction Design

Approved, subject to an amendment to the programme title to conform to standard titles as outlined in Marks and Standards, as follows

Higher Diploma in Interaction Design

It was noted that the title change would be addressed once the outcome of the funding application was known.

10. Additional nominations for Accreditation Board: MSc in Diagnostics and Precision Medicine

Approved

11. Additional pathways to BEng/MEng in Mechanical and Manufacturing Engineering, and BEng/MEng in Biomedical Engineering

Approved, subject to the following amendments and clarifications being addressed in the roll-out of the programme:

- Those students who having followed the 5-year pathway but ultimately may chose/be advised to exit with a BEng will have to continue to a fifth year to complete the capstone project. It was suggested that students should be advised at an early stage of this potential additional registration period to complete the BEng, should they chose this pathway.
- Related to the point above, the fee and registration issues related to a fifth year for the award of a BEng programme will have to be addressed. It was suggested that the 4.5 year BSc in Children's and General Nursing might be a useful model to explore.
- It was suggested that the INTRA module, which is currently split over two years (albeit that it is an operational/progression cut-off rather than an actual split) should be linked rather than dividing the placement with 15 and 22.5 credit modules with similar learning outcomes, as it currently appears on the structure. It was suggested too that the linking of modules is explored with Registry to ascertain the possibilities from a system point of view.
- It was noted that the project modules in the old structure had 15 credits in year 4 and 30 credits in year 5, and the new structure as presented indicates a project of 15 credits. It was agreed that the link through the structure of the 7.5 credit Project Planning and Research module (carried out alongside the second INTRA module) via the Research Practice and Methodology module (also 7.5 credits) as a research project pathway, culminating in the final 15 credit project module should be more clearly highlighted.
- It was noted that the module MM500 is not published on Course Builder, as yet.
- It was agreed that this new pathway option could be offered to current second year students for year 3, 2018-2019.
- It was noted that the normal entry criteria for entry on the MEng pathway takes into consideration both year 1 and year 2 precision marks. It was agreed, in the initial introduction of this pathway, that the entry criterion will include only the consideration of the second year precision mark, to apply to the first year (2017/2018) cohort only.

12. Validation proposal: Bachelor of Education (initial teacher education programme for post-primary teachers)

The Education Committee was very positive in its response to the programme proposal noting the potential for replicating the concurrent four-year model elsewhere in the University. The Education Committee granted approval to the proposed programme for further development towards accreditation.

In its discussion on the proposal Education Committee noted the following issues with respect to the roll-out of the programme:

- The likelihood or otherwise of the Teaching Council accrediting a 240 credit programme (other 2nd level teacher training programmes in DCU have in excess of 240 credits for Teaching Council recognition)
- The feasibility of being able to timetable the proposed combination of subjects
- Relating to the resource model--whether or not the 60 students it is aimed to recruit will draw from the University's current pool of potential students, and the risk that there isn't a substantial increase in student numbers
- The programme is highly resource dependent in that it will require eight additional posts, on an incremental basis. This will need to be monitored on an ongoing basis in the context of programme numbers.

13. Any other business

There were no items of business.

Signed: _____ Date _____
Chair

Date of next meeting:
Wednesday, 4 April 2018
at 2.00 in A204