

## UNIVERSITY STANDARDS COMMITTEE

### MINUTES

Thursday 22 February 2018

9.30 am – 11.10 am in A204

**Present:** Mr Jonathan Begg, Dr Jennifer Bruen, Dr Lorraine Delaney, Dr Mark Glynn, Ms Margaret Irwin-Bannon (Secretary), Mr Billy Kelly (Chair), Ms Phylomena McMorrow, Dr Caroline McMullan, Dr Brien Nolan, Dr Justin Rami, Dr Joseph Stokes, Dr Blanaid White

**Apologies:** Ms. Barbara McConalogue, Dr Garrett McGuinness, Professor Eugene McNulty

### SECTION A: MINUTES AND RELATED ISSUES

The Chair opened the meeting and welcomed Dr Blanaid White to University Standards Committee in her capacity as Associate Dean for Teaching and Learning in the Faculty of Science and Health.

#### 1. Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

#### 2. Minutes of the meeting of 11 January 2018

The minutes of the meeting of 11 January 2018 were approved and signed by the Chair.

#### 3. Matters arising from the minutes of 11 January 2018

**3.1** It was noted that work on Akari is ongoing (Item 3.2).

**3.2** It was noted that the draft policy *Revocation of University Awards or Credits* is on the agenda of this meeting (Item 3.3).

- 3.3 It was noted that a process document to address legacy re-admission applications is currently being drafted (Item 3.4).
- 3.4 It was noted that clarification with respect to the advanced admission onto the Master's in Special Educational Needs of students who hold the DES funded Diploma is on the agenda on this meeting (Item 3.5).
- 3.5 It was noted that work is ongoing on consideration of recognition of awards/credits from other institutions contributing to a DCU award (Item 3.6).
- 3.6 It was noted that a procedure for the amendment of marks following online publication of semester one examination marks is currently under discussion with relevant stakeholders (Item 3.7).
- 3.7 It was noted that the Programme Regulation template is due for consideration at this meeting (Item 3.9).
- 3.8 It was noted that an application for legacy re-admission for a candidate onto the MA in International Security and Conflict Studies was approved by Chair's Action, 2 February 2018. It was noted that arising from a query with respect to the completion of the form, question four may require further elaboration.

## **B. Faculty issues**

### **4. External examiners for taught programmes**

#### **4.1 Nominations**

- 4.1.1 Associate Professor David Smith, Charles Sturt University, Australia  
Master's in Education and Training  
Approved
- 4.1.2 Dr Naomi McAreavey, University College Dublin  
Literature modules, Open Education  
Approved
- 4.1.3 Dr Ipshita Basu, University of Westminster  
MA in International Relations  
Approved

## **4.2 Renewal of appointment/changes to duties**

4.2.1 Professor Paul Jackson, University of Birmingham  
MA in International Security and Conflict Studies  
Approved

4.2.2 Dr Mary Rogan, TCD  
Modules in the School of Law and Government  
Approved

## **5. Other issues**

### **5.1 DCU Institute of Education**

5.1.1 Special case admissions, Master's in Special Educational Needs

Clarification provided by the DCU Institute of Education on the mapping of previously awarded credits (30) onto the existing Master's in Special Educational Needs was noted. Dr J. Rami indicated that it was anticipated that six to eight students per year would enter the programme carrying 30 credits.

In the discussion which followed on whether or not a deadline should be placed on DES funded Graduate Diploma graduates of other institutions registering for the DCU Master's programme, it was agreed that the process would be reviewed after three years of operation.

#### **Other issues (not Faculty-specific)**

## **6. Marks and Standards, 2018-2019**

6.1 Discussion on regulation 5.2—the role of Progression and Award Board in decision on extension to the maximum registration period (5.2.1 & 5.2.2)

The Chair outlined the background to this matter. It has arisen in response to a clarification sought around an appeal where a part-time master's student had reached the four-year maximum registration period allowed and the Progression and Award Board were advised that it was not permitted to grant an additional academic session.

The query raised was whether or not it is within the remit of the Progression and Award Board to extend the maximum registration period, and whether or not there should be conditions attaching to the granting of the extension i.e. if the PAB has already granted an additional academic session.

In the discussion which followed the following points were noted:

- Progression and Award Boards may not be aware of the option to advise the student to take a Leave of Absence which does not count towards the registration period and follows immediately from a deferral.
- It was queried whether the maximum registration period should be reviewed for part-time students
- The option is available for the PAB to request an additional repeat academic session, the request for which is referred to the Chair if University Standards Committee.

USC members were asked to consider their preferred outcome in this regard and whether or not the relevant paragraphs in Marks and Standards (5.2.1-5.2.2) require revision as a consequence.

#### **7. Policy for the Revocation of University Awards or Credits**

The Director of Registry provided the context for the development of the policy as circulated. It was recommended that a policy would be developed which would encompass both research and taught awards and credits. She was seeking feedback from USC on the policy and noted it would be submitted to Executive and Academic Council for approval.

Following discussion of the document the following changes were suggested:

- To title section 4: Appointment of Inquiry Committee
- To specify that there should be at least two senior academic staff on the Inquiry Committee
- To rephrase a sentence on page 2, under *Conducting the Investigation* as follows: In the event of unavoidable delays in gathering testimony and/or evidence the duration of the Committee's work *can be extended by the Chief Operating Officer on request.*

#### **8. Proposal for Programme Regulation's Template 2018-2019—Publication of re-sit category modules**

A proposal to provide a web-link to module resit categories, rather than listing category 2 and 3 modules on the Programme Regulations was agreed for the Programme Regulations template 2018-2019. It was noted that the web address provided will link directly to the structure of individual programmes on the DCU

website and would reflect the ITS record thereby avoiding the risk inherent in the duplication of information in two different locations.

It was noted that the Faculty of Science and Health, from whom the proposal had been received, would liaise with ISS to ensure that the additional information could be displayed online.

The Secretary indicated that she would write to faculties with respect to the change in template and the deadline for submission as soon as the online amendment to structure was in operation.

The inclusion of compensatable modules on the programme regulations template was queried also in the context of the programme regulations template. It was suggested that a single source of academic structure-based information should be provided to students. It was agreed that USC would give consideration to a proposal in this regard, once developed.

## **9. The approval of change of duties for External Examiners (EE2)**

The Secretary informed USC that it was planned to introduce online submission of the Nomination/Appointment of External Examiner form (EE1) for the April meeting of USC. She sought USC views on the need or otherwise to maintain the change to duties approval process (EE2). When the issue was considered originally it was felt that it would not be needed once the management of external examiners was fully managed through the Guru system. However, it was subsequently queried whether or not an approval process should be evidenced in the case of changes which needed approval for regulatory purposes e.g. appointing an existing External Examiner to examine Graduate Training Elements or CPD/Stand-alone modules.

It was agreed that the approval of amendments to External Examiner duties (EE2) should continue, however some guidance should be provided on the circumstances in which this is necessary. For example it was noted that where an external examiner is appointed to examine a programme but there is module change within the programme then this would not need to be approved by USC.

It was noted that the determination of the fee to be paid to External Examiners would also need to be reviewed and addressed.

The Secretary undertook to examine if it would be possible to have the change of duties (EE2) approval included in the Guru process over the longer term.

**10. Any other business***10.1 Special Case Admission and RPL*

Clarification was sought on the role of the Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) process where a student does not meet the programme admission requirements. It was clarified that the special admissions process is devolved to Faculty Teaching and Learning Committees however, in practice and due to the timing of the application process, it largely fell to the Associate Dean for Teaching and Learning/Education to approve by Chair's Action. It was clarified that the RPL process supports, and is the first stage of the special case admissions process.

In the discussion which followed it was noted that the operation of the approval process does not appear uniform and the Chair requested that the Associate Deans for Teaching and Learning/Education would undertake to ensure that there is a consistency of operation of the process.

It was clarified also that Registry will confirm the requirements from faculties when RPL or special case admission decisions are approved to enable Registry make an offer to these applicants.

*10.2 Provision of assessment feedback to students*

There was a general discussion on policy of provision of feedback to student via e-mail. It was noted in the context of General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) that feedback should be provided through Loop. This can be done by way of a written response or by provision of an audio file.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_  
Chair

**Date of next meeting:**

Thursday, 5 April 2018

9.30 a.m. in A204