

**EDUCATION COMMITTEE
MINUTES**

Wednesday 10 November 2021

2.00 p.m. – 4.20 p.m. via Zoom

Present: Dr Sarahjane Belton, Dr Claire Bohan, Professor Mark Brown, Ms Jennifer Bruton, Professor Michelle Butler, Ms Kate Goodman, Professor Derek Hand, Professor Greg Hughes, Ms Margaret Irwin-Bannon (Secretary), Mr Billy Kelly, Dr Anna Logan, Professor Lisa Looney (Chair), Ms Aisling McKenna, Ms Pauline Mooney, Professor Colm O’Gorman, Professor Joseph Stokes and Dr Blánaid White

Apologies: Prof Anne Looney

In attendance Dr Jing Burgi-Tian, Mr Peter McGorman (Item 7), Ms Laura Mahoney (Item 7)

SECTION A: AGENDA, MINUTES AND MATTERS ARISING

1. Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

2. Minutes of the meeting of Education Committee, 13 October 2021

The minutes of 13 October 2021 were approved and the formal minutes were signed.

3. Matters arising from the minutes of 13 October 2021

3.1 It was noted that the Chair had discussed how to progress the provision of feedback from DCU to Sport Ireland on the proposed Dual Career Accreditation Guiding Principles and criteria for student athlete Support with the Director of Sports and Wellbeing. They agreed that it would be most beneficial and productive to provide Education Committee feedback through informal channels. It was agreed that DCU’s wish to continue to engage with Sport Ireland would be communicated, however the means by which this would happen would require further exploration (Item 7).

3.2 It was noted that the Employability Statements proposal is on the agenda of this meeting (Item 3.6).

3.3 It was noted that a paper proposing Joint, Double (Multiple) and Dual Awards definitions and criteria is on the agenda of this meeting (Item 5).

- 3.4 It was noted that the resubmitted validation proposals for the MSc in Child and Family Health and Wellbeing and the MSc in Health and Social Inclusion are on the agenda of this meeting (Items 8 and 9).
- 3.5 It was noted that a minor amendment to the Strategic Learning Innovation Project Steering Group meeting minutes of 31 May 2021 had been made and they were re-submitted for the record (Item 4.2).
- 3.6 It was noted that the submission of proposed and completed PPRs to Education Committee for the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences was confirmed as the final version (Item 10).
- 3.7 It was noted that the Institutional Research and Analysis Officer, as proposed, had sought input from Faculties on data to be presented to the November 2021 meeting of Education Committee (Item 12).
- 3.8 It was noted that preparation of an alternative proposal for an exit award from the BEng in Electronic and Computer Engineering is ongoing (Item 3.9).
- 3.9 It was noted that work with regard to the provision of an overview of Education Committee/Vice-President for Academic Affairs/Registrar commitments and activities, and a proposed cycle for reporting to Education Committee, is ongoing (Item 3.10).

SECTION B: STRATEGIC MATTERS FOR DISCUSSION/NOTING

4. Joint, Double (Multiple) and Dual Awards – definitions and parameters

The Academic Secretary introduced this item and thanked colleagues in Registry, the Graduate Research Studies Board, the Graduate Studies Office and Faculties who had provided feedback on the original position paper.

She noted that the definitions provided in the circulated paper largely reflected the original definitions in the position paper but with some modification. She noted that the criteria and principle statements in the position paper did not receive as much feedback as the definitions and requested that Education Committee pay attention to those. She drew the Committee's attention in particular to the statement made on page six as follows, *where DCU enters into a joint programme its preference is that the resultant award will be a joint award, evidenced by a single parchment.*

She recommended, based on feedback provided through this process which also included feedback on collaborative provision as a whole, and subject to agreement of the definitions and criteria, that those definitions and criteria would provide a basis for DCU's future policy that will relate to collaborative provision in its entirety. This new policy would also subsume the approved collaborative provision protocols already in place.

Education Committee then considered each definition and agreed the following with respect to those proposed.

The definitions listed below were agreed. Where amendments were recommended during the meeting these are reflected in the final agreed definitions and highlighted in italics.

Joint Programme

An integrated programme that is jointly developed, delivered and assessed by DCU and one or more partner institutions leading to a single, joint or double (multiple) award.

Collaborative Programme

A programme that is underpinned by a formal arrangement between DCU and another organisation, most commonly another higher education provider, typically leading to an award of credit or qualification(s).

Joint Award

An award that is made by DCU and one or more partner institutions on completion of a Joint Programme, evidenced by a single parchment.

Double (Multiple) Award

Two or more awards *at the same level* that are made separately by DCU *and partner institution(s)* on completion of a Joint Programme, and that are evidenced by individual parchments, perhaps one from each participating partner institution (or their awarding body).

Dual Award Proposed

Two individual awards, attesting the successful completion of two separate curricula, with potential overlap and efficiencies in course-taking, and, if more than one institution is involved, each institution is primarily responsible for its own award.

It was noted that the approved definitions of Joint Programme, Collaborative Programme and Joint Award apply equally to taught and research contexts and that existing provisions relating to Joint Research Awards and Double Research Awards (as reflected in the Collaborative Provision Approval Protocols (revised; EC, 15 November 2017) and Implementation of the Policy on Research Supervision and Awards in Collaboration with Other Institutions (EC, 5 February 2014)) remain unchanged. It was further noted that when the policy paper is considered at a later meeting, these provisions might be considered as describing the characteristics of a joint research award rather than as part of the definition.

Joint programmes resulting in single, joint, double (multiple) awards: Proposed Principles and Criteria

The section recommended for approval was agreed (amendment in italics), as follows:

Where DCU enters into a joint programme *and a single award is not planned*, its preference is that the resultant award will be a joint award, evidenced by a single parchment.

Double (multiple) taught awards will only be considered in the context of strategically significant joint programmes where differing legal, regulatory and/or quality assurance requirements are impossible to reconcile and/or constrain the issuing of a joint award by one or more partners.

The contexts in which Joint Awards would be considered were agreed, subject to the following recommendations:

- It should be limited to major awards
- To move 'Enhance the reputation and standing of the University' into the section of the contexts under which Joint Awards 'shall' be considered
- It was agreed that there would be a differentiation under the criteria listing the contexts in which joint awards 'shall' and 'should' be considered. It was noted that the criteria applied to a variety of contexts and proposed collaborations may not necessarily meet all of the criteria
- With reference to the first criteria relating to MOUs, it was proposed to amend 'establishing' to 'commitment to explore establishment' and to include that the MOU is at institutional level.

The Chair thanked Ms Pauline Mooney, Academic Secretary, for her extensive work and also extended her thanks to colleagues who had provided input into the documentation. She noted it was an important foundation in terms of joint programmes and awards and DCU will be well placed to explore future opportunities.

5. Employability Statements

The Deputy Registrar/Dean of Teaching and Learning introduced this item noting that he was seeking approval of the approach to be taken in developing Employability Statements. He emphasised the broad range of audiences for these statements was an important factor in how they were presented to different stakeholders. He also emphasised the importance of regular updates and a dynamic presentation of data.

A digital format was proposed with the following structure for each employability statement:

1. Institutional statement
2. Discipline
3. Programme
4. External Focus and Internal Focus

In the discussion which followed it was noted that there was general consensus and support to the proposed approach. It was noted that in terms of graduate research students it is not necessarily a solution, as their experience is necessarily more individualised. It was emphasised this would have to be a dynamic process, particularly for the individual disciplines sections where narratives should be updated on a regular basis.

It was noted that as part of DCU's commitment under the Mission-based Performance Compacts with the HEA, DCU has committed to having employability statements in place for all disciplines and that ideally it should be completed as soon as possible. In addition, the data collected can be used, not only to provide DCU's narrative, but also as a tool for DCU to self-evaluate.

The Chair requested that colleagues would revert to the Deputy Registrar/Dean of Teaching and Learning on the proposed text on page 2 of the proposal and noted that the Deputy Registrar would progress the matter.

6. DCU Undergraduate Exam Results Analysis 2017-2021

This item was deferred and will be placed on the agenda of the 8 December 2021 meeting.

7. Strategic Academic Initiatives

7.1 ECIU University Update

The Chair and the Vice President of Research and Innovation made a presentation on the ECIU University initiative which provided a brief history of the context, and up to date information on the ECIU University project and the ECIU 2030 future vision.

The presentation focused on the following:

- 1 European and national context re EUIs
- 2 ECIU University Pilot (Erasmus plus)
- 3 Evolution of ECIU University

The following was highlighted with respect to the project:

ECIU University is moving, in particular in the last six months, toward a long term process to set up a sustainable ecosystem and organisation. A roadmap based on phased development is being elaborated. The vision of 2030 describes an eco-system and its values which are focused on personalised learning opportunities and co-creation with industries. The ECIU University will provide unique opportunities for DCU and aligns in particular with its vision in terms of Challenge Based Learning and Micro-credentials.

SECTION C: PROGRAMME AND MODULE-SPECIFIC ISSUES

8. Faculty of Science and Health: Validation proposal: MSc in Child and Family Health and Wellbeing

Education Committee noted that almost all of the issues raised at its meeting of 13 October 2021 had been addressed through the resubmitted proposal and granted the proposed

programme approval for further development towards accreditation. There was a clarification with respect to expectation in terms of the dissertation module, as follows:

- It was noted that the organisational development project issue raised was addressed but it was indicated that the feedback had also applied to the research dissertation. It was recommended that the level 9 learning outcomes e.g. analysis/critique etc. should be elaborated in the dissertation module description also. It was noted that this would be most appropriately addressed through the accreditation process.

9. Faculty of Science and Health: Validation proposal: MSc in Health and Social Inclusion

Education Committee noted that almost all of the issues raised at its meeting of 13 October 2021 had been addressed through the resubmitted proposal and granted the proposed programme approval for further development towards accreditation. There was a clarification with respect to expectation in terms of the dissertation module, as follows:

- It was noted that the organisational development project issue raised was addressed but it was indicated that the feedback had also applied to the research dissertation. It was recommended that the level 9 learning outcomes e.g. analysis/critique etc. should be elaborated in the dissertation module description also. It was noted that this would be most appropriately addressed through the accreditation process.

10. Faculty of Science and Health: Validation proposal: MSc in Nursing

The Dean of the Faculty of Science and Health introduced this item, noting that this programme will place an emphasis on the clinical nurse specialist. The Office of Nursing and Midwifery Services Directorate (ONMSD) has undertaken to fund students on the programme.

The following recommendations and observations were made in the discussion on the programme:

- The student numbers and potential specialisms are listed as follows on page 21 under the heading *Projected numbers*: 30 students in year one, 69 students in year two and 89 in year three, but in the finance template (page 43) it is indicated that there will be 30 students in year one, 89 in year two and 137 in year three. The difference in the projected numbers should be reconciled in the documentation.
- It was noted that the development of this programme has involved extensive discussions with the Office of Nursing and Midwifery Services Directorate (ONMSD). On page 22 it states: *Preceptors and mentors involved in the clinical supervision and mentoring of students must be educationally and experientially prepared for this role. DCU SNPCH should ensure the preceptor or mentor receives sufficient information about the specific programme or modules the student is enrolled in and how the experience they are sharing with the student relates to the programme learning outcomes and competencies (adapted from National Association of Clinical Nurse Specialists, 2011).* In addition, there is a requirement on applicants to be currently employed in the specialist area/setting and provide written evidence from their line manager that they will be supported in completing the minimum

required hours of practice, including the clinical practicum. In essence, DCU will be taking responsibility for the preparation/training of preceptors and mentors and the individual student will have to seek support in completing the minimum hours of practice. In this context, it was asked if this programme could be approached from a different perspective. Given that the Directorate will provide the student funding it may more beneficial for them to contract DCU directly to deliver the programme, and as part of this, build in agreements where they ensure the provision of these preceptors and mentors and provide training for them, and in addition, agree the delivery of the number of places over the number of years. It was suggested that this might also solve the problem of maintaining the number of specialisms and the specialisms in each cycle.

- It was felt that the optional modules (as listed on page 38) offered added an unnecessary level of complexity to the programme and it was not apparent how they could be taken e.g. if a student is taking a specialism in palliative care, can they also take an option in palliative care? It was suggested that possibly the programme team should look at the module such as Healthcare Legislation & Ethics and make it a core module and dispense with optional modules—to the extent that they are optional, they are not central to the award.
- It was felt that DCU Business School has the majority of the expertise to deliver the Leadership, Governance and Management in Modern Healthcare module and it would be more likely to be a 40/60 split between the SNPCH and Business School. If so it might follow that this module would be owned by the Business School.
- It was suggested that for the Healthcare Legislation and Ethics module there may be an opportunity to explore other areas across the university where there is ethics expertise and also to explore with the School of Law and Government, the relevant legal expertise that might be needed.
- It was commented that in the earlier narrative of the programme it talks about clinical nurse specialist credits however, in the programme design the amount of credits that are in the specialist areas appears light. It was felt that if the aim is to develop clinical nurse specialists in the various areas, it would be expected that a significant part of the programme design would be in the specialism and would then be supported by practice hours. It was felt that the strength of each of the specialisms might be impacted negatively by the level of choice woven into the programme.
- It was further noted with respect to the offering of such a range of specialisms that there would be logistical difficulties in determining if each specialism will run. It was noted that the minimum number per specialism is ten, however it is not clear at what point do incoming learners know whether their chosen specialism will run or not. For example, if a student chooses a specialism and it then does not run, what choice can they make? It was noted that there did not seem to be enough related specialisms for students to match what they want to do, if their chosen specialism is not running. It was suggested that students should know at the outset what specialisms would run.
- On pages 37 and 41, the programme structure description makes reference to: *The Specialist module has two stages each awarded 10 credits. Stage 1 occurs in Year 1 and Stage 2 occurs in the first semester of Year 2.* This would not be the norm in how DCU describes modules, usually where there are modules with a related theme they would be linked in terms of module title, e.g. French 1 and French II. It was suggested that the programme team would not call the specialist module a module per se but perhaps call it a specialist area or specialist theme which is covered by two modules.

It was requested that programme proposers would address the issues raised and that the proposal would be re-submitted for the consideration of Education Committee at a future meeting.

11. Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences: Validation proposal: MA i Léann na Gaeilge

The Dean of Humanities and Social Sciences introduced this proposal noting that it was a re-imagining of an existing programme. Having been considered by Education Committee at its February 2021 meeting, it had been recommended that the programme would go through the full validation and accreditation process.

There was discussion on the viability of the programme, the effective use of staff capacity and the number of students planned for the cohort. Some members of Education Committee expressed concern about the low ambition for numbers and the programme's resultant viability. However, there was also an appreciation of the restricted market for the programme and its strategic importance to the School

The Education Committee granted the proposed programme approval for further development towards re-accreditation, subject to the following recommendations/ considerations being addressed:

- It was requested that a statement of the ambition of the programme team with respect to student numbers would be submitted to the Education Committee meeting of 8 December 2021
- It was queried if the programme team would be assured of an applicant's competence in Irish if that applicant held an honours primary degree 'in which Irish is a subject' and whether or not that competence should be tested in advance of entry
- It was recommended that the entry under 'Are there disciplinary stipulations in terms of prior qualifications' would be deleted i.e. 'Primary degree (level 8) in Irish, or in which Irish is a subject' as this directly contradicts another listed minimum entry requirement i.e. Having a recognised honours primary degree (Level 8) in another discipline and providing supporting evidence of sufficient competence in Irish. Each case to be considered on its own merits by the Programme Board Standing Committee.

12. DCU Institute of Education: Revised Academic Offering for the Professional Diploma in Special and Inclusive Education

The Associate Dean for Teaching and Learning, DCU Institute of Education, introduced this item noting that the programme was being restructured and retitled to align with an existing Master's programme and to align more broadly with DCU structures. This programme has been a collaborative programme and the collaboration was coming to an end. It was noted that the programme would continue to be a fully online, part-time postgraduate programme.

The following points were noted in the discussion of the restructure of the programme:

- The proposal was a good rationalisation of the previous programme

- It was asked if the programme proposers would consider opening up entry to the certificate only, to those who are not qualified teachers e.g. SNAs
- Although not applicable to the approval of the Professional Diploma, it was queried if it made sense that on the basis of successfully completing a 5-credit module in the Professional Diploma SI421 (Understanding Autism), a student should be given exemption from 15 credits on the MEd in module in Autism, i.e. Understanding Autism SI601A (5 credits) and Autism: Assessment, Profiling and Planning SI602A (10 credits), (page 6 of the proposal)
- The following comment was not related to the approval however, it was noted that there will be significant body of work to develop fully on-line modules and the up-front resources required will be more considerable than those needed in continuing years. It was noted that the Faculty should ensure the resources and relevant expertise is in place.

In the context of the discussion on the development of a restructured, fully online programme it was noted that DCU is actively engaged, in parallel, in the consideration of provision to predominately off-campus learners in the university as a whole, including those pursuing programmes through Open Education. It is likely that Education Committee will be asked to give consideration to quality standards and the expectations for online delivery in the post-pandemic era.

It was noted that the data capture of programmes that are fully online is extremely important in terms of HEA returns and in the understanding of DCU's mode of delivery and its strategic plans in that regard.

The proposal for the Professional Certificate/Professional Diploma in Inclusive and Special Education (revised titled) was approved.

13. **Any other business**

There were no items of business.

Signed: _____ Date: _____

Date of next meeting:
Wednesday, 8 December 2021
at 2.00 pm via Zoom

