

**UNIVERSITY STANDARDS COMMITTEE
MINUTES**

Thursday 18 November 2021

9.30 a.m. – 11.00 a.m. via Zoom

Present: Dr Brad Anderson, Dr Lorraine Delaney, Dr Yseult Freney, Ms Kate Goodman, Ms Liza Gieroń, Ms Margaret Irwin-Bannon (Secretary), Mr Billy Kelly (Chair), Dr Anna Logan, Dr Ruth McManus, Dr Jennifer McManis, Ms Phylomena McMorro, Dr Niamh O’Sullivan and Prof Joseph Stokes

Apologies: Dr Mark Glynn and Mr Peter McGorman

The Chair opened the meeting and welcomed Professor Sharon O’Brien to her first meeting of USC, representing the Associate Deans for Research (ADR).

The Chair acknowledged the valued contribution of Dr Maura Coulter, outgoing ADR representative, to the business of the committee.

SECTION A: MINUTES RELATED ISSUES

1. Adoption of the agenda

The agenda as circulated was adopted.

2. Minutes of the meeting of 2 September 2021

The minutes of the meeting of 2 September 2021 were approved.

3. Matters arising from the minutes of 2 September 2021

- 3.1 It was noted that discussions were ongoing with respect to the operational arrangements related to the registration of students who return to complete their international placement having completed the 3-year programme for either the BA in Applied Languages and Translation (ALTS) Studies or the Bachelor of Business Studies International (INTB). It was noted that a practical solution for registration had been discussed by Registry, however it was not an ideal solution from a student record point of view and it was suggested that it might warrant further investigation into partner requirements in this specific context (registration prior to the year abroad). It was agreed that Registry and colleagues in DCU Business School would investigate further and report back to University Standards Committee at its January 2021 meeting (Item 5.2.1).

- 3.2 It was noted that an update on Academic Integrity and Plagiarism Policy in the context of the NAIN National Principles and Lexicon of Common Terms and Academic Integrity Guidelines is on the agenda of this meeting (Item 3.3).
- 3.3 It was noted that the proposed external examiner for the BSc in Enterprise and Computing was approved following provision of additional information on publications (Item 4.1.4)
- 3.4 It was noted that clarification was provided with respect to the legacy re-admission application of a candidate onto the MEng in Electronic and Computer Engineering, and the item was completed (Item 5.5.1).
- 3.5 It was noted that the exemption application for an applicant applying ab initio to the Professional Diploma in Special and Inclusive Education was approved by Chair's Action, 2 November 2021, following provision of additional information to support the application (Item 5.3.1).
- 3.6 It was noted that amended programme regulations for the BA in Social Science and Cultural Innovation were approved by Chair's Action, 15 September 2021.
- 3.7 It was noted that the extension of the use of the Duolingo test to meet DCU's entry requirements for both postgraduate taught and postgraduate research entry was approved for entry 2021-2022.
- 3.8 It was noted that a legacy re-admission applicant for direct entry into year two of the MEd in Autism was approved by Chair's Action 30 Sept 2021.
- 3.9 It was noted that minor amendments were made to the programme regulations for the MSc in Biomedical Sciences and these were published.

SECTION B: FACULTY ISSUES

B. Faculty issues

1. External examiners for taught programmes

4.1 Nominations

- 4.1.1 University of Leicester
BA in Communication Studies
Approved

4.1.2 Marino Institute of Education
Bachelor of Arts (Joint Honours)
Approved subject to the provision of additional information on the nominee's previous experience as an external examiner, and programme design/teaching and programme management

4.1.3 University of Limerick
Modules in School of Law & Government
Not approved.

There was insufficient information provided on the nomination form for University Standards Committee to make a decision. It was requested that additional information would be provided with respect to the programme design/teaching and programme management experience of the nominee. In addition, it was noted that it would not be possible for the nominee to cover all the modules listed and the range of disciplines therein. USC requested that the nomination would be resubmitted for its consideration.

4.1.4 Technological University Dublin
BSc in Biotechnology
Approved

4.1.5 University of Limerick
BSc in Computer Applications, BSc in Computer Science
Not approved.

There was insufficient information provided on the nomination form for University Standards Committee to make a decision. It was requested that additional information would be provided with respect to the nominee's external examiner experience and programme design/teaching and programme management experience. USC requested that the nomination would be resubmitted for its consideration.

4.1.6 University of Ulster (Jordanstown)
BEng in Mechanical and Sustainability Engineering, Graduate Certificate in Energy Systems and Decarbonisation, Graduate Diploma in Sustainable Energy Systems
Approved, subject to clarification on the average number of modules to be examined on an annual basis

4.1.7 University of Central Lancashire
Doctor of Psychotherapy, Professional Diploma in Clinical Supervision
Approved

4.1.8 Bristol University
MA in Ethics, MA in Ethics: Corporate Responsibility
Approved

4.1.9 University of Limerick

Grad Cert in Sexuality Education and Sexual Wellbeing

Not approved.

There was insufficient information provided on the nomination form for University Standards Committee to make a decision. It was requested that additional information would be provided with respect to the external examining experience and programme design/teaching and programme management experience of the nominee. In addition, it was noted that the nominee's background is in education and a justification for their appointment should also be submitted. USC requested that the nomination would be resubmitted.

4.2 Renewal of appointment/changes to duties**4.2.1 Eindhoven University of Technology**

MEng in Electronic and Computer Engineering

Approved

4.2.2 Maynooth University

BSc in Health & Society

Approved

4.2.3 Technological University Dublin

BEng/MEng in Mechatronics (Integrated)

Approved, subject to clarification of modules for which each of the external examiners will have responsibility (the same modules are listed as part of the duties for each external examiner, under 4.2.3 and 4.2.4).

4.2.4 Maynooth University

BEng/MEng in Mechatronics (Integrated)

Approved, subject to clarification of modules for which each of the external examiners will have responsibility (the same modules are listed as part of the duties for each external examiner, under 4.2.3 and 4.2.4).

5. Other issues: Faculty**5.1 DCU Institute of Education****5.1.1 Legacy readmission request: Certificate in Religious Studies**

Approved

5.1.2 Legacy readmission request: Professional Master of Education (Primary Teaching)

Approved

5.1.3 Legacy readmission request: Professional Certificate in Special and Inclusive Education

Approved

5.1.4 Legacy readmission request: Professional Certificate in Special and Inclusive Education (exit with Professional Certificate award)

Approved

5.1.5 Nomination of Periodic Programme Reviewer: School of Human Development

Noted

5.2 Faculty of Science and Health: Revised Programme Regulations

5.2.1 BSc in Actuarial Maths

Approved

5.2.2 BSc in Analytical Science

Approved

5.2.3 BSc in Biological Sciences General Entry

Approved

5.2.4 BSc in Biotechnology

Approved

5.2.5 BSc in Chemical and Pharmaceutical Sciences

Approved

5.2.6 BSc in Chemical Sciences General Entry

Approved

5.2.7 BSc in Environmental Science Technology

Approved

5.2.8 BSc in Physical Education with Biology

Approved

5.2.9 BSc in Physical Education with Maths

Approved

5.2.10 BSc in Psychology

Approved

5.2.11 BSc in Psychology with Maths

Approved

5.2.12 Common Entry into Actuarial and Financial Maths
Approved

5.2.13 Doctor of Psychotherapy
Approved

5.2.14 MSc in Elite Sport Performance
Approved

5.2.15 MSc in Financial Mathematics
Approved

5.2.16 MSc in Psychology and Wellbeing
Approved

5.2.17 Professional Doctorate in Elite Performance (Sport)
Approved

5.2.18 Professional Diploma in Clinical Supervision
Approved

5.3 Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences

5.3.1 Nomination of Periodic Programme Reviewer: BA in Economics, Politics and Law
Approved

5.3.2 Nomination of Periodic Programme Reviewers:

- BA in Applied Language and Translation Studies
- BCL (Law and Society)
- BA in International Relations
- Law (subject) on Bachelor of Arts: Joint Honours programme
- History (subject) on Bachelor of Arts: Joint Honours programme
- Geography (subject) on Bachelor of Arts Joint Honours programme
- MA in History

Noted

5.3.3 Nomination of Periodic Programme Reviewer

BA in Social Sciences and Cultural Innovation

Noted

5.4 Faculty of Science and Health

- 5.4.1 Proposed entry requirements to: Graduate Certificate in Sexuality Education and Sexual Wellbeing, and Graduate Certificate in Relationships and Sexuality Education

Proposed additional entry requirement

A minimum of two year's post primary degree experience. To apply from entry 2022-23.

The above change was noted.

5.5 DCU Business School

- 5.5.1 Module Exemption request: Re-admission *ab initio* to the MSc in Investment Treasury Banking

Decision deferred. It was noted that the modules completed by the applicant dated back a considerable period of time and the exemptions could not be granted on the basis of currency of learning. However, based on the candidate's relevant experience it was proposed that USC could give it further consideration. It was recommended that the application would be resubmitted with the rationale for granting exemptions based on the candidate's up-to-date, relevant and high level experience. It was agreed that the revised application would be considered by Chair's Action.

- 5.5.2 Module Exemption request: Re-admission *ab initio* to the MSc in Management (Business)

The exemptions were not approved as the exemptions were recommended on the basis of modules completed over ten years ago and it was felt an argument could not be made on the basis of currency of modules. It was noted that USC would require more detail in terms of relevant work experience of the student, and the additional detail contained in a previous legacy re-admission application. It was requested that the amended application would be re-submitted to USC for its next meeting in January 2022.

5.6 Faculty of Engineering and Computing

- 5.6.1 Legacy readmission request: MSc in Computing to exit with Grad Diploma

Approved

- 5.6.2 Proposed Aegrotat Award: BSc in Enterprise Computing

Approved, to be referred to Academic Council for approval.

C: Other issues (not Faculty-specific)

6. Academic Integrity Policy Update

The Chair provided an update on his work as Chair of the National Academic Integrity Network (NAIN). He noted that the network has developed National Principles and a Lexicon of Common Terms and Academic Integrity Guidelines. In essence, NAIN has looked at Academic Integrity in a much wider sense than previously.

He noted that an emerging and major threat to academic integrity is contract cheating and essay mills. It appears to be widespread and the companies appear to be targeting individual students, particularly more vulnerable students.

The Chair recommended that rather than reviewing DCU's existing policy in isolation, it should be reviewed in a broader context and follow the principles developed by NAIN. He indicated that he would circulate a paper which would set out an institutional approach to the issue. It was intended that USC would discuss it at its January 2022 meeting with a view to agreeing an action plan for the new academic year.

He indicated that learner education was vital so that students understand their obligations with respect to academic integrity. He also indicated that it would be important that there are targeted supports for vulnerable learners. He noted too that academic staff should be aware of the challenges which students face, and ensure that their teaching and learning design does not unwittingly contribute to student misconduct.

The recommended approach was agreed.

7. Programme Regulation Template and Guidelines proposed text changes, and possible amendment to Marks and Standards

The Secretary introduced this item, noting that there was a need to ensure that Programme Regulations were clearer with respect to the carry forward of modules. She highlighted that there were some anomalies in existing regulations which should be corrected. She indicated that she would write to the Faculties to highlight this and to provide additional guidance in this regard.

She also highlighted that Marks and Standards does not specifically mention the carry-forward of failed modules except as follows:

7.2.1.5 *Where a Progression and Award Board has permitted a student to progress into the next year carrying a failed module(s) (as outlined in the Programme Regulations), the failed module (s) can only be carried for one academic year.*

The Secretary proposed a form of words for discussion and sought the views of University Standards Committee on its entry into Marks and Standards.

In the discussion which followed the following points were noted:

- That Marks and Standards should point students to Programme Regulations, in terms of what their programme allows
- Marks and Standards should empower programme regulations and facilitate the Progression and Award Board to act in the best interests of students.

It was agreed that an entry on carry-forward should be added to Marks and Standards for the 2022-2023 document to provide greater clarity, and a proposed wording would be submitted for the consideration of University Standards Committee at its 6 January 2022 meeting.

8. Periodic Programme Reviews, completed in 2020-2021 and planned for 2021-2022

The periodic programme reviews completed in 2020-2021 and planned for 2021-2022 for each Faculty/Unit were noted.

9. Any other business

It was noted that this was Dr Yseult Freaney's last meeting as DCU Business School Associate Dean for Teaching and Learning. The Chair extended his thanks to her for her wise and valuable contributions to USC.

Signed: _____ Date: _____

Date of next meeting:

Thursday, 6 January 2022 9.30 a.m. Via Zoom
