

UNIVERSITY STANDARDS COMMITTEE

MINUTES

Thursday 4 December 2008

9.30 -11.00 a.m. in A204

Present: Professor Maria Slowey (Chair), Mr Jonathan Begg,
Dr Françoise Blin, Ms Olivia Bree, Dr Pat Brereton,
Ms Jennifer Bruton, Professor Martin Henry, Ms Susan Hurley,
Ms Louise McDermott (Secretary), Ms Phylomena McMorrow,
Mr Paul Sheehan, Dr Anne Sinnott, Ms Annabella Stover

Apologies: Professor Saleem Hashmi, Ms Morag Munro,
Professor Gary Murphy, Dr Ann Wickham, Ms Sheelagh Wickham

SECTION A: MINUTES AND RELATED ISSUES

1. Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted subject to the inclusion of one submission under Item 10 and the renaming of Items 7.1.1.6 and 7.1.1.7 as Items 7.2.1.2 and 7.2.1.3 respectively.

2. Minutes of the meeting of 2 October 2008

Confirmed and signed by the Chair.

3. Matters arising from the minutes

3.1 Follow-up actions from the last meeting were reported.

3.2 Noted that the draft policy document on plagiarism is under discussion by Faculty Teaching and Learning/Education Committees. Agreed that a summary of the

- discussions to date would be made available to the 5 February 2009 meeting of the USC and that a revised draft policy document would be submitted to the 2 April 2009 meeting. (Item 3.2)
- 3.3** Noted that a submission in relation to a derogation from *Marks and Standards* which had previously been applied to the BSc in Computer Applications would be made to the 5 February 2009 meeting of the USC. (Item 3.4)
- 3.4** Noted that procedural issues relating to the interface between the USC and the Faculty Teaching and Learning/Education Committees had been resolved. (Item 3.5)
- 3.5** Noted that the proposed new procedure and form relating to external examiners' reports were under discussion by the Faculty Teaching and Learning/Education Committees. Agreed that the outcome of these discussions would be made available to the 5 February 2009 meeting of the USC. (Item 3.6)
- 3.6** Noted that it had been reported to the 15 October 2008 meeting of Academic Council that anonymous marking would be implemented across all examinations with effect from Semester 1 2008/09. (Item 3.7)
- 3.7** Noted that, notwithstanding some cutbacks undertaken in the context of the current adverse economic climate, significant amounts of the SIF funding for 2008 and 2009, to cover commitments already entered into, would be made available. Of the four strands originally approved for funding, the university has decided to prioritise two: Enhancement of Learning and Graduate Education. Information is not yet available about funding for a new management information system. (Items 3.9 and 3.11)
- 3.8** Noted that difficulties attach to the fact that both Graduate Diploma and Master's awards are major awards at Level 9 on the National Framework of Qualifications and that one outcome of this is that it is difficult to determine best practice in terms of credit transfer from one institution to another (e.g. where a student completes part or all of a Graduate Diploma programme in one institution and wishes to complete a cognate taught Master's programme in another institution). Agreed, none the less, that the university would benefit from having a policy on this. Agreed also that the Chair would raise the issues with the IUA Registrars' Group. The information on practice in UK universities in this regard which Professor Saleem Hashmi had made available was noted, and thanks were expressed to Professor Hashmi for having undertaken the necessary research. (Item 3.13)

- 3.9** Noted that information had been obtained about the proposed length of term of office in relation to two nominated external examiners, and the nominations had been approved. (Items 7.1.3.8 and 7.1.3.9)
- 3.10** Noted that forms EE1 (nomination of an external examiner) and EE2 (renewal of appointment or changes to duties) would be reviewed to determine whether or not improvements could be made to the layout. (Item 7)
- 3.11** Noted that regulations for ‘cotutelle’ arrangements with other institutions were being drafted by the working group set up to revise *Academic Regulations for Postgraduate Degrees by Research and Thesis*. (Item 11)

4. Minutes of the meeting of the Graduate Studies Board of 6 November 2008

Approved. Noted, in relation to Item 8.1, that the GSB had specified that a revised proposal on an issue would need to be submitted for approval to the USC as well as the GSB. Agreed that electronic consideration of the matter would be undertaken by the USC if necessary.

SECTION B: FACULTY ISSUES

5. Derogations from *Marks and Standards*

5.1 Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences

Approved.

Noted that all approved derogations from all Faculties would be available on line.

6. Changes to examination regulations

No items.

7. Nominations/renewals/changes to duties of external examiners for taught programmes

7.1 Appointment of external examiners

7.1.1 Dublin City University Business School

7.1.1.1 Professor Nicholas O'Regan, University of the West of England
MBA programme

Approved.

7.1.1.2 Professor William Dutton, University of Oxford
MSc in E-Commerce (Technical)

Approved.

7.1.1.3 Dr Carol Atkinson, University of Bradford
Modules in Human Resource Management

Approved.

7.1.1.4 Professor Jo Silvester, City University London
MSc in Work and Organisational Psychology

Approved.

7.1.1.5 Professor Dominic Elliot, University of Liverpool
MSc in Emergency Management

Approved.

7.1.2 Faculty of Engineering and Computing

7.1.2.1 Dr David Linton, Queen's University Belfast
School of Electronic Engineering

Approved.

7.1.3 Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences

7.1.3.1 Dr Honor Fagan, National University of Ireland, Maynooth
School of Applied Language and Intercultural Studies

Approved.

7.1.4 Faculty of Science and Health

7.1.4.1 Professor Gary Walsh, University of Limerick
School of Biotechnology

Approved.

7.1.4.2 Professor Stephen John Allen, Queen's University Belfast
School of Biotechnology

Approved.

7.1.4.3 Professor Mary Meegan, Trinity College Dublin
School of Chemical Sciences

Approved.

7.1.4.4 Dr Russell Gerrard, City University London
School of Mathematical Sciences

Approved.

7.1.4.5 Ms Margaret McCann, Trinity College Dublin
School of Nursing

Approved.

7.1.4.6 Dr George McClelland, University of Limerick
School of Physical Sciences

Approved.

7.1.4.7 Dr Denis Dowling, University College Dublin
School of Physical Sciences

Approved.

7.1.5 Oscail

7.1.5.1 Professor Thomas Bartlett, University of Aberdeen
Modules in History

Approved.

7.1.5.2 Ms Debbie Harris, London South Bank University
Bachelor of Nursing Studies and Access programme

Approved.

7.1.6 Linked Colleges

7.1.6.1 Dr Maria Duffy, Milltown Institute
Modules in Moral Theology, All Hallows College

Approved.

7.1.6.2 Dr Michael Shevlin, Trinity College Dublin
Modules in Education, Mater Dei Institute of Education

Approved.

7.1.6.3 Dr Frank M Flanagan, Mary Immaculate College, University of Limerick
MA in Religious Education (Primary), Mater Dei Institute of Education and
St Patrick's College

Approved.

7.2 Renewal of appointment of external examiners, and/or changes to duties**7.2.1 Dublin City University Business School**

7.2.1.1 Professor Graeme Currie, University of Nottingham
MBS in Human Resource Strategies
Approved.

7.2.1.2 Professor Thomas Boylan, National University of Ireland, Galway
Modules in Economics and Entrepreneurship
Approved.

7.2.1.3 Professor John Goddard, Bangor University
Modules in Finance
Approved.

7.2.2 Faculty of Engineering and Computing

No items.

7.2.3 Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences

No items.

7.2.4 Faculty of Science and Health

7.2.4.1 Professor Alan Dobson, University College Cork
School of Biotechnology
Approved.

7.2.4.2 Professor Nicholas St John Braithwaite, The Open University
School of Physical Sciences
Approved.

7.2.5 Oscail

7.2.5.1 Professor Madeleine Leonard, Queen's University Belfast
Modules in Sociology
Approved.

7.2.5.2 Dr Harry Bunting, University of Ulster
Modules in Philosophy
Approved.

7.2.5.3 Professor Michael Eysenck, Royal Holloway, University of London
Modules in Psychology
Approved.

7.2.6 Linked Colleges

- 7.2.6.1 Professor Mike Cronin, Boston College
Modules in Irish Studies, Mater Dei Institute of Education
Approved.

8. Regulatory issues as highlighted in external examiners' reports

Noted that discussions about revised procedures for disseminating the contents of reports were nearing conclusion (see Item 3.5 above). Agreed that it was important to emphasise positive comments in reports as well as problems that had been identified.

9. Stand-alone modules

No items.

10. Other issues (from Faculties)

10.1. Faculty of Engineering and Computing

A proposal to issue revised transcripts and parchments to three students on taught Master's programmes who had graduated on 11 November 2008 was approved. The originals had contained errors in terms of the degree and to be awarded or the major specialism completed. A further proposal was approved, i.e. that, with effect from 2008/09 and to obviate any future difficulties, the relevant Programme Chairs would contact each student to ask for confirmation of the area of major specialism he/she intended to select.

Noted that the matter provided an interesting and helpful example of the issues that will need to be addressed in the context of the full development of the Academic Framework for Innovation.

Agreed that consistency was needed across the university in terms of the extent, if any, to which specialisms/majors/pathways are specified on parchments and that this issue would be discussed at a future meeting of the USC.

SECTION C: OTHER ISSUES (NOT FACULTY SPECIFIC)**11. Report on the Academic Framework for Innovation**

11.1 Professor Henry noted that the developmental work in relation to AFI was focussed on two main areas: the implementation of the National Framework of Qualifications and the provision of more a flexible progression system. Very significant work had taken place in relation to the revision of programme learning outcomes, and the verification process had provided valuable feedback. The work in relation to programme learning outcomes is shortly to be completed, and the next priority will be the revision of module learning outcomes. It is emerging that Moodle would not be the most helpful tool for this next process; a software package which would facilitate the work of aligning programme and module outcomes much more effectively has been identified, and a submission for funding for it has been made to Budget Committee. The importance of ensuring compatibility between any new system and existing systems, particularly ITS, was noted.

11.2 Professor Henry also noted that the submission on AFI to be made to Academic Council at its meeting of 10 December 2008 would include some general principles intended to underpin the forthcoming revisions to *Marks and Standards*.

11.3 It was also noted that the revision of programme learning outcomes had accomplished much of the work associated with the strategic objective of reviewing all programmes which had been articulated in *Leadership through Foresight*, the university's strategic plan 2005-2008.

12. *Marks and Standards* 2008/09, St Patrick's College

Approved subject to the correction of two minor typographical errors.

13. End of term of office of Vice-President for Learning Innovation/Registrar

The Chair said that, as her term of office as Vice-President for Learning Innovation/Registrar was coming to a close, the present meeting of the USC was the last that she would chair. She thanked the members of the USC for their support and co-operation since the inception of the Committee.

Date of next meeting:

**5 February 2009
9.30 a.m. in A204**

Signed: _____
Chair

Date: _____