

**UNIVERSITY STANDARDS COMMITTEE**

**MINUTES**

Thursday 4 April 2013

9.00-11.15 a.m. in A204

**Present:** Mr Billy Kelly (Chair), Dr Malcolm Brady, Ms Olivia Bree, Ms Sinéad Ní Chruaí, Professor Barbara Flood, Dr Lisa Looney, Ms Louise McDermott (Secretary), Ms Mairéad Nic Giolla Mhichíl, Ms Phylomena McMorrow, Mr Paul Sheehan, Ms Annabella Stover, Dr Sheelagh Wickham

**Apologies:** Mr Aaron Clogher, Dr Mark Glynn, Dr Enda McGlynn, Dr Anne Morrissey, Mr Ronan Tobin, Mr Ray Walshe

**In attendance:** Professor Patrick McNally (for Item 6.1)

**SECTION A: MINUTES AND RELATED ISSUES**

**1. Adoption of the agenda**

The agenda was adopted subject to the inclusion of one submission under Item 11.

**2. Minutes of the meeting of 28 February 2013**

The minutes were confirmed subject to the rewording of the first bullet point in Item 3.10 so that it reads:

Discussions are in progress with respect to admission and entry to programmes in the Faculty of Engineering and Computing for candidates whose native language is not English. Information on the progression rate of students on the pre-Master's Foundation Programme has informed these discussions.

They were signed by the Chair.

**3. Matters arising from the minutes**

- 3.1** It was noted that the policy on assessment was under development. (Item 3.3)
- 3.2** It was noted that discussions were in progress about Marks and Standards issues relating to continuing professional development programmes in St Patrick's College and that relevant recommendations would be made to the USC as soon as possible. (Item 3.5)
- 3.3** It was noted that an issue relating to NARIC required further discussion with the International Office and that it would be submitted again for the consideration of the USC as soon as possible. (Item 3.7)
- 3.4** It was noted that a reworded proposal in respect of the precision mark would be considered by the USC at its meeting of 30 May 2013, along with other issues relating to Marks and Standards. (Item 3.8)
- 3.5** It was noted that a set of guidelines in respect of examinations held in remote locations, taking into account the experience gained from the two sets of such examinations that had been held in February 2013, would be submitted to the USC for its consideration as soon as possible. (Item 3.9)
- 3.6** It was noted that, with respect to a number of ongoing items, updated information would be provided to the USC as and when possible and appropriate. (Item 3.10)
- 3.7** It was noted that relevant Schools had been contacted to highlight the undesirability of late submission of external examiner nomination forms. (Item 5)
- 3.8** It was noted that issues with respect to prior experience, duration of nomination and possible sharing of duties had been clarified with respect to two nominated external examiners, and the nominations had therefore been deemed approved. (Items 5.1.1 and 5.1.2)
- 3.9** It was noted that an issue with respect to nomination dates had been clarified with respect to a nominated external examiner, and the nomination had therefore been deemed approved. (Item 5.1.4)
- 3.10** It was noted that an issue relating to Tables 3 and 4 in Marks and Standards would be discussed by the USC at its meeting of 30 May 2013, along with other issues relating to Marks and Standards. (Item 7.1)

- 3.11** It was noted that the proposed FAQ on the calculation of the precision mark had been approved by the USC, on an electronic basis, on 7 March 2013. (Item 7.2)
- 3.12** It was noted that the Chair had communicated with Faculties about two issues: calculation of the precision mark (with respect to inclusion of relevant references in Programme Regulations) and provision of resit opportunities. (Items 7.2 and 7.3)
- 3.13** With respect to Programme Regulations 2013/14, it was noted that those for the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences would, on a pilot basis, include a section covering resit categories and that consideration was being given in the Faculty to the development of new mechanisms for encouraging student engagement with modules that do not have continuous assessment resit opportunities. The effectiveness of the inclusion of resit categories in the Programme Regulations will be reported to the USC in due course. With respect to Programme Regulations 2013/14 more generally, it was noted that discussions about approval arrangements were in train and that it was hoped the USC would be in a position to complete the approval process prior to its next meeting (30 May 2013), though it was possible that a slightly longer timeframe might be required. It was noted also that updated versions of two sets of Programme Regulations 2012/13 in the Faculty of Science and Health (for the MSc in Psychotherapy and the MSc in Integrative Counselling and Psychotherapy) would shortly be made available on line. (Item 7.3)
- 3.14** It was noted that the revised USC terms of reference had been made available electronically to the USC and would be submitted for the consideration of Academic Council at its meeting of 5 June 2013. (Item 8.1)
- 3.15** It was noted that the Graduate Studies Board had, at its meeting of 7 March 2013, agreed that it should be renamed ‘Graduate Research Studies Board’ with a view to reflecting its remit more accurately than is the case at present. The revised title will form part of the revised terms of reference of the Board, to be submitted for the consideration of Academic Council at its meeting of 5 June 2013. (Item 8.2)

#### **4. Minutes of the Graduate Studies Board meeting of 2 January 2013**

Approved. Dr Looney noted that the document on the roles and responsibilities of those involved in postgraduate research supervision, support and examination (Item 4) would form the basis of a series of proposed changes to *Academic Regulations for Postgraduate Degrees by Research and Thesis* which would be

submitted for the consideration of the GSB at its meeting of 18 April 2013 and the USC at its meeting of 30 May 2013.

## **SECTION B: FACULTY ISSUES**

### **5.1 Appointment of external examiners**

- 5.1.1 Professor Breda Sweeney, National University of Ireland, Galway  
Modules in Accounting, Dublin City University Business School  
Approved.
- 5.1.2 Professor Brian Donnellan, National University of Ireland, Maynooth  
MSc in Electronic Commerce (Business)  
Approved. Noted that the nominee will be a module and not a programme examiner.
- 5.1.3 Dr Niall Ó Cíosáin, National University of Ireland, Galway  
BA in Humanities and BA in English and History, Oscail  
Approved.
- 5.1.4 Dr Marie Clarke, University College Dublin  
BSc in Physical Education with Biology; BSc in Physical Education with Mathematics  
Approved subject to confirmation that the nomination is within regulations in terms of prior appointments.
- 5.1.5 Dr Margaret Landers, University College Cork  
BSc in Nursing (General)  
Approved.

### **5.2 Renewal of appointment of external examiners, and/or changes to duties**

- 5.2.1 Dr John Kullman, Canterbury Christ Church University  
Modules in Intercultural Studies, School of Applied Language and Intercultural Studies  
Approved.
- 5.2.1 Ms Martina O'Brien, Irish Taxation Institute  
Modules in Taxation, Dublin City University Business School  
Approved.
- 5.2.1 Professor Anne-Marie Ward, University of Ulster  
Modules in Accounting, Dublin City University Business School  
Approved.

- 5.2.1 Professor Liam Murphy, University College Dublin  
Modules in Intercultural Studies, School of Applied Language and Intercultural Studies  
Approved.

## **6. Other issues**

### **6.1 Faculty of Engineering and Computing**

#### **6.1.1 Request for approval of alteration to English-language requirements for taught Master's programmes**

The request was approved subject to the following:

- the proposed revised requirements are for implementation with respect to taught Master's programmes in the following two Schools: School of Electronic Engineering and School of Mechanical and Manufacturing Engineering
- the proposed revised requirements are for implementation on a pilot basis over two years, 2013/14 and 2014/15
- detailed records of the progress of candidates entering with English-language qualifications between the existing threshold and the revised threshold are to be kept, with trends being identified as appropriate
- an interim report on the above is to be made to the USC after one year, i.e. at the end of the academic year 2013/14
- specific pastoral and English-language support mechanisms are to be put in place for candidates entering with English-language qualifications between the existing threshold and the revised threshold (these to be in addition to the supports that already exist for non-native speakers of English)
- in no circumstances are candidates to be considered for admission who do not reach the revised requirements.

It was agreed that the revised requirements, and the associated conditions, would be submitted for the consideration of Academic Council at its meeting of 10 April 2013 and that the Education Committee would be informed, prior to this meeting, of what is proposed.

## **6.2 Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences**

### **6.2.1 Proposed programme-specific regulation for 2012/13**

Approved.

## **SECTION C: OTHER ISSUES (NOT FACULTY SPECIFIC)**

### **7. Marks and Standards issues**

None.

### **8. Recommendations of the working group on legacy awards**

The recommendations were approved subject to the substitution of ‘Details of Approval Processes’ for ‘Details of Programme Board’ on page 2 and the inclusion of a tick-box as a means of confirming that the candidate’s transcript accompanies the form. It was noted that (as per Marks and Standards FAQ no. 18), the marks used to calculate the precision mark would in all cases be the marks achieved at the first attempt at each module. It was noted that the fact that a revised form now exists would be indicated to Academic Council with a view to approval at its meeting of 10 April 2013 so that the revised form could be used with immediate effect, as legacy re-admission requests are not dependent on the academic cycle. Programme Chairs and the range of other stakeholders will be informed following Academic Council and will be encouraged to avail of their local policies on legacy re-admission requests, where these exist, when using the form to submit such requests to the USC. On behalf of the USC, the Chair expressed appreciation to Ms McDermott and the other members of the working group for their work on the legacy re-admission issue.

### **9. Proposed changes to *Regulations and Guidelines: External Examiners for Taught Programmes/Modules***

**9.1** The Chair noted that the working group on external examiner issues was meeting on an ongoing basis with a view to making recommendations on a range of issues but that, in the immediate term, it was proposing some changes to the *Regulations and Guidelines* so that these, if approved, could be submitted for the consideration of Academic Council at its meeting of 10 April 2013. If approved there, they have the

potential to be useful to those involved in nominating external examiners for 2013/14 and the following years.

- 9.2** The changes to the *Regulations and Guidelines* were approved subject to the following:
- the inclusion of a footnote to clarify the references to School, Department and Group
  - the rewording of Section 1.1(v) to make it clear that external examiners participate in programme (re-)accreditation exercises for professional recognition purposes only as appropriate and possible and upon request
  - the transfer to a footnote of the words ‘desirable, though not essential’ in the second bullet point under Section 2.1
  - the inclusion of the words ‘(in the same role and with the same duties)’ in the sentence at the first bullet point under Section 2.4
  - the rewording of the first sentence under Section 4 to clarify the distinction between formal and informal feedback.

## **10. Draft revised policy on plagiarism/academic integrity**

- 10.1** The draft revised policy was noted as being a very comprehensive document which was likely to be of considerable benefit to staff and students. It was approved subject to the following:
- the rewording of the text at the bullet points in Section 6.2 to provide for consistency
  - the substitution of ‘recorded’ for ‘noted’ in the box within the flowchart that currently reads ‘local sanction applied and noted’
  - the deletion of the first line in the table under Section B of Appendix C.
- 10.2** It was agreed that, once the policy had been approved by Academic Council (which is due to consider it at its meeting of 5 June 2013), it would be important to ensure that all stakeholders were made aware of it as appropriate and to maintain dialogue with staff members with a view to ascertaining the workload involved for them in sourcing evidence that plagiarism had occurred, following initial detection. On behalf of the USC, the Chair expressed appreciation to Dr Wickham and the other members of the working group for their work in drawing up the policy.

**11. Any other business**

The Chair noted that Dr Malcolm Brady was shortly due to step down from his position as Associate Dean for Teaching and Learning in Dublin City University Business School; on behalf of the USC, he expressed appreciation to Dr Brady for his contribution to the work of the USC during his term of office. He similarly expressed appreciation to Ms Sinéad Ní Chrualaoi of the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, who will be on temporary leave and who will be replaced during this time, as representative of Faculty Administration on the USC, by Ms Michele Pringle of the Faculty of Engineering and Computing.

**Date of next meeting:**

**30 May 2013  
9.00 a.m. in A204**

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

Date: \_\_\_\_\_