

UNIVERSITY STANDARDS COMMITTEE

MINUTES

Thursday 12 September 2013

9.00 a.m.-11.35 p.m. in A204

Present: Mr Billy Kelly (Chair), Mr Eamon Costello, Dr Barbara Flood, Ms Mairéad Nic Giolla Mhichíl, Dr Mark Glynn, Dr Lisa Looney, Professor Barbara McConalogue, Ms Louise McDermott (Secretary), Dr Enda McGlynn, Ms Phylomena McMorrow, Dr Caroline McMullan, Mr Ciarán O'Connor, Dr Pádraig Ó Duibhir, Ms Michele Pringle, Mr Ronan Tobin, Dr Sheelagh Wickham

Apologies: Ms Annabella Stover, Mr Ray Walshe

The Chair, on behalf of the University Standards Committee, welcomed to their first meeting Dr Pádraig Ó Duibhir, newly-appointed Registrar of St Patrick's College, and Mr Ciarán O'Connor, incoming Vice-President – Education Officer of the Students' Union. He welcomed Ms Barbara McConalogue back to the USC in her capacity as representative of the Directors of Information Systems and Services and the Library.

SECTION A: MINUTES AND RELATED ISSUES

1. Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

2. Minutes of the meeting of 30 May 2013

The minutes, which had been confirmed electronically on 17 June 2013, were noted. They were signed by the Chair.

3. Matters arising from the minutes

- 3.1** Noted that the PAC application fee had been agreed sectorally. (Item 3.2 from the meeting of 26 January 2012)
- 3.2** Noted, with respect to the MSc in Plasma and Vacuum Technology offered jointly with Queen's University, Belfast, that the compromise Marks and Standards currently in use would remain in place. (Item 3.2 from the meeting of 26 January 2012)
- 3.3** Noted that marks for previous years' contributions were now included on broadsheets. (Item 3.2 from the meeting of 26 January 2013)
- 3.4** Noted, with respect to the placing of historical qualifications on the National Framework of Qualifications, that the work was ongoing and that the Chair and Ms McMorrow were in discussion with a view to having it completed as soon as possible with respect to both DCU and the linked colleges. (Item 3.10 from the meeting of 28 February 2013)
- 3.5** Noted, with respect to the policy on the Recognition of Prior Learning, that the Chair would consult the Associate Deans for Teaching and Learning/Education about the effectiveness of its implementation in Faculties and report on this to the USC at its meeting of 16 January 2014. Noted that the RPL policy in respect of research candidates would be placed on the Graduate Studies Office web page. (Item 3.10 from the meeting of 28 February 2013)
- 3.6** Noted that the policy on assessment, having been slightly revised at the request of the Education Committee, had been approved by Academic Council at its meeting of 24 June 2013, and that a number of related issues would be discussed by the Education Committee at its meeting of 2 October 2013. (Item 3.1)
- 3.7** Noted that, with respect to a number of ongoing issues, updated information would be provided to the USC as and when possible and appropriate. (Item 3.3)
- 3.8** Noted that the revised USC and Graduate Research Studies Board¹ terms of reference had been approved by Academic Council at its meeting of 5 June 2013 and would come into effect in 2013/14. (Items 3.6 and 3.7)

¹ The renaming of the Graduate Studies Board to 'Graduate Research Studies Board' was indicated in the revised terms of reference.

- 3.9** Noted that the working group on external examiners was due to be reconstituted with a view to completing outstanding tasks. Noted that a request had been submitted by the Office of the Chief Operating Officer that reference be made in the letter of appointment to external examiners to the importance of adhering to the Data Protection Policy. Agreed that this would be included in letters of appointment henceforth (along with the existing references to the Equality and Access Policy and the Conflict of Interest Policy and Guidelines). Agreed to amend *Regulations and guidelines: external examiners for taught programmes* as follows: the wording in Section 1.2 ‘...adherence to the University's Equality and Access Policy and adherence to the University's Conflict of Interest Policy and Guidelines.’ to be replaced by ‘...adherence to all relevant University policies.’. The reason for this is to allow for appropriate flexibility in terms of references to policies in the regulations (with specific policies being referred to in the appointment letters). Noted that it was intended that the University website would contain a page listing all policies, and that when this became available it would be appropriate to direct the attention of external examiners to it. (Item 3.10)
- 3.10** Noted that the revised policy on academic integrity and plagiarism had been approved by Academic Council at its meeting of 5 June 2013. Noted that, with respect to documentation such as this, it is important to find a balance between ease of reading and necessary directiveness and detail. Agreed that the Chair would review the policy for comprehensibility. In this connection, it was suggested that a group of students might be invited to read it. Agreed that Dr Wickham would send the approved policy to Ms McMorrow so that it could be placed on the Registry web page. (Item 3.11)
- 3.11** Noted that revisions to the EE1 and EE2 forms were ongoing. (Item 5.1)
- 3.12** Noted that the approval in respect of EE1 and EE2 forms from All Hallows College had been confirmed.
(Items 5.1.14, 5.1.15, 5.1.16, 5.2.17, 5.2.18 and 5.2.19)
- 3.13** Noted that an external examiner appointment had been scheduled to conclude at the end of the 2014/15 academic year so as not to exceed the maximum permissible number of years. (Item 5.2.3)
- 3.14** Noted that satisfactory transcripts had been provided to accompany a legacy readmission request and the request had therefore been deemed approved.
(Item 6.1.2)

- 3.15** Noted, in the case of three legacy readmission requests, that appropriate detail had been provided, including detail about the local approval process, and the requests had therefore been deemed approved. (Items 6.3.1, 6.3.2 and 6.3.3)
- 3.16** Noted, in the case of a legacy readmission request, that appropriate detail had been provided, including detail about the local approval process, and that the modules to be taken by the candidate had been identified: the request had therefore been deemed approved. (Item 6.3.4)
- 3.17** Noted, in the case of a legacy readmission request, that a stipulation had been included that the maximum completion time be one year, and the request had therefore been deemed approved. (Item 6.4.1)
- 3.18** Noted that amendments had been made to Marks and Standards as requested by the USC and that the revised version had been approved by Academic Council at its meeting on 24 June 2013 for implementation in 2013/14. (Item 7.1)
- 3.19** Noted that a derogation from Marks and Standards in respect of the Professional Diploma in Taxation had been approved by the USC on an electronic basis on 28 June 2013. (Item 7.4)
- 3.20** Noted that a derogation from Marks and Standards in respect of the 3U Partnership MEng in Healthcare Technologies had been approved by the USC on an electronic basis on 18 June 2013 and had been approved by Academic Council at its meeting of 24 June 2013. (Item 7.6)
- 3.21** Noted that the majority of Programme Regulations 2013/14 had been approved on an electronic basis on 5 July 2013, that the USC had been requested to approve one final set on an electronic basis by 13 September 2013 and that the Programme Regulations for the Master's in Education programme 2012/13 had been approved on an electronic basis on 28 June 2013. (Item 7.7)
- 3.22** Noted that the revised *Academic Regulations for Postgraduate Degrees by Research and Thesis* had been approved by Academic Council at its meeting of 24 June 2013 and would be implemented in 2013/14. (Item 8)
- 3.23** Noted that the Chair was in ongoing discussion with Faculties about the arrangements for Periodic Programme Review for 2013/14. Noted that a form would be made available on which to indicate the details of the external experts nominated for participation in PPR. (Item 10)

- 3.24** Noted that a derogation from Marks and Standards in respect of the BSc in Physical Education with Biology had been approved by means of USC Chair's action on 14 June 2013 and had been approved by Academic Council at its meeting of 24 June 2013.
- 3.25** Noted that two requests for readmission on a legacy basis to the MSc in Safety and Health at Work had been approved by USC Chair's action on 4 July 2013.
- 3.26** Noted that a request for a derogation from standard English-language requirements (from IELTS minimum 6.5 to minimum 5.5) for the students at Princess Noura University, Saudi Arabia, had been approved by the USC on an electronic basis on 11 July 2013. The approval is to be revisited in one year's time, at which point evidence will be available of (i) the numbers of students who have been admitted to DCU programmes with English language proficiency levels at or above IELTS 5.5 and below IELTS 6.5, and (ii) the English language proficiency of any such students at the end of the first year of their studies.

SECTION B: FACULTY ISSUES

4.1 Appointment of external examiners

- 4.1.1 Dr Ian Pitt, University College Cork
BSc in Computer Applications (Software Engineering)
Approved.
- 4.1.2 Dr Donncha Kavanagh, University College Cork
BA Gnó agus Gaeilge (Business stream)
Agreed to request a revised nomination form which would be subject to consideration on the basis of Chair's action.
- 4.1.3 Dr Elaine Uí Dhonnchadha, Trinity College Dublin
MSc i nGnó agus i dTeicneolaíocht an Eolais
Agreed to request a revised nomination form which would be subject to consideration on the basis of Chair's action.
- 4.1.4 Dr Neil Buttimer, University College Cork
Modules in Fiontar
Agreed to request a revised nomination form which would be subject to consideration on the basis of Chair's action.
- 4.1.5 Dr Sara Fovargue, Lancaster University
Modules in the School of Law and Government
Approved.

- 4.1.6 Professor Cristina Archetti, University of Salford
BA in International Relations
Approved.
- 4.1.7 Dr Paul O'Connell, SOAS, University of London
Modules in the School of Law and Government
Approved.
- 4.1.8 Dr William Smith, University College Dublin
BEng/MEng in Mechanical and Manufacturing Engineering
Approved.
- 4.1.9 Dr Patrick Ibbotson, University of Ulster
Modules in Oscail
Approved.
- 4.1.10 Dr Patricia Daly, Mary Immaculate College, University of Limerick
Master's in Special Educational Needs, St Patrick's College
Approved.
- 4.1.11 Dr David Ross Preece, University of Northampton
Graduate Certificate in the Education of Pupils with Autistic Spectrum Disorders,
St Patrick's College
Approved.
- 4.1.12 Professor Alejandra Boni, Universitat Politècnica de València
Modules in Human Development on the BA in Humanities and the Bachelor of
Education programme, St Patrick's College
Approved.
- 4.1.13 Dr Philip O'Regan, University of Limerick
Modules in Accounting in Dublin City University Business School
Approved.
- 4.1.14 Professor Peter Morell, Cranfield University
Modules on the BSc in Aviation Management
Approved.
- 4.1.15 Professor Prasanta Kumar Dey, Aston University
Modules in Operations and Supply Chain Management in Dublin City University
Business School
Approved.
- 4.1.16 Dr Eric Jensen, University of Warwick
MSc in Science Communication
Approved.

Noted that it would be helpful for the USC to see (yearly) the list of external examiners whose terms of office had expired, and agreed that such a list would be made available. Noted that the Chair intended to mention to the Heads' and Deans' meeting of 19 September 2013 the importance of ensuring that replacement external examiners were nominated, where necessary, and that this would be likely to form a useful complement to the standard reminders issued to Heads by the Office of the Vice-President Academic Affairs (Registrar).

4.2 Changes to duties of external examiners

4.2.1 Dr Gráinne McKeever, University of Ulster
Modules in the School of Law and Government
Approved.

5. Other issues

5.1 Faculty of Science and Health

5.1.1 Request to approve external expert for Periodic Programme Review: School of Physical Sciences

Approved.

5.2 Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences

5.2.1 Request for readmission of legacy candidate: MSc in Education and Training Management

Approved.

5.2.2 Issue in respect of readmission of legacy candidate: MSc in Education and Training Management

Noted that the candidate had been offered readmission to the programme without recourse to standard procedures and that this matter would be raised with the School. The readmission request was approved on a retrospective basis and with the (usual) stipulation that current Marks and Standards would apply.

5.3 Dublin City University Business School

5.3.1 Request for readmission of legacy candidate: MSc in Investment, Treasury and Banking

Noted that this matter had been submitted to the USC too late for a meaningful decision to be made. Noted that it would be important for the candidate not to incur an undue fee liability. Agreed that the School would be requested to submit a revised form, completed in accordance with procedures, and that upon receipt of this the decision as to readmission would be taken on the basis of Chair's action.

5.4 Faculty of Engineering and Computing

5.4.1 Request for readmission of legacy candidate: BSc in Computer Applications (Software Engineering)

Approved.

SECTION C: OTHER ISSUES (NOT FACULTY SPECIFIC)

6. Marks and Standards issues

6.1 Proposal from the School of Mathematical Sciences

Agreed that the issues referred to in the proposal merited detailed discussion. Agreed to reconvene the *ad hoc* Working Group on Marks and Standards² to do this. Agreed that the Chair would circulate the USC with respect to the proposed membership of this Group for this purpose.

6.2 New procedure at PABs relating to additional repeat year

Noted that a number of considerations were involved in this issue, including the question of whether students should be allowed one additional repeat year at a time or a maximum of one only, and the relationship with maximum registration period for research students. Noted that the numbers of students being permitted an additional repeat year would be likely to remain small. Noted that the reporting on this issue to the USC (by the Chair) would involve overall numbers only rather than details of cases. Agreed that the Chair would bring detailed proposals on the issue to the 14 November 2013 meeting of the USC.

² Item 7.4 of the minutes of the USC of 12 April 2012 refers.

7. Proposal on issues in respect of remote examinations

Noted that the experiences, in 2012/13, of holding examinations in remote locations had been positive but that the numbers involved had been very small. Agreed to run the pilot system in 2013/14, as required, and to cost it. Noted that the requirement to organise examinations in remote locations is likely to increase significantly in future with the result that very stringent and detailed procedures for larger-scale activity than has been the case to date will be required. Agreed that, for the present, all forthcoming proposals to organise examinations in remote locations must be submitted for the approval of the USC. Noted that the member of staff who travels to the remote location may be an academic member of staff but that this responsibility may also be undertaken by other members of staff. Noted that the practice of scanning examination scripts is not ideal, but agreed that it would continue to be used for the present, pending review. The Chair, on behalf of the USC, expressed appreciation to Ms McMorrow and her colleagues in Registry for their work in relation to this issue.

8. Any other business

None.

Date of next meeting:

**14 November 2013
9.00 a.m. in A204**

Signed: _____
Chair

Date: _____