

EDUCATION COMMITTEE**MINUTES**

Wednesday, 14 December 2022

2.00 p.m. – 4.10 p.m. in F327, St. Patrick's Campus

- Present:** Professor Mark Brown, Ms Jennifer Bruton, Dr Jing Burgi-Tian, Professor Michelle Butler, Dr Rachel Keegan (Secretary), Professor Anne Looney, Ms Aisling McKenna, Dr Jennifer McManis, Ms Pauline Mooney, Professor Colm O’Gorman, Ms Annabella Stover, Dr Monica Ward and Professor Blánaid White (Chair).
- Apologies:** Dr Sarahjane Belton, Professor Brian Corcoran, Mr Eoin Crossen, Professor John Doyle, Professor Derek Hand, Professor Lisa Looney and Professor Joseph Stokes.
- In attendance:** Dr John Quinn (item 5).

SECTION A: AGENDA, MINUTES AND MATTERS ARISING**1. Adoption of the agenda**

The agenda was adopted.

2. Minutes of the meeting of the Education Committee of 16 November 2022

The minutes of the meeting of 16 November 2022 were approved.

3. Matters arising from the minutes of 16 November 2022

- 3.1 It was noted that the policy statement on collaborative provision would be considered under item 7 of the agenda (item 3.3).
- 3.2 It was noted that revisions to the MSc in Diagnostic and Precision Medicine were approved by Chair’s action on 8 December 2022 (item 6).
- 3.3 It was noted that revisions to the DCUBS aviation programmes and associated modules were currently under review by the Faculty (item 3.5).
- 3.4 It was noted that a validation proposal for the MSc in Athletic Therapy was currently under review by the Faculty (item 8).

SECTION B: STRATEGIC MATTERS

4. Strategic Academic Initiatives

4.1 Stronger Connections with Further Education, Steering Committee update

Professor A. Looney provided members with an update on the work of the Steering Committee, and developments in the sector more broadly. The following points were noted:

- Several important developments are currently underway in the sector including:
 - a series of capital investments in further education, including Cavan Institute of Education, Drogheda Institute of Further Education and a new further education college in Fingal;
 - the consolidation of several existing further education centres including in Kerry and Cavan; and
 - the announcement of a number of new FE to HE programmes, with a further announcement expected in January.
- The initial focus of the Steering Committee was on FET learners coming into first year and the numbers entering DCU through this mechanism increased by 18% this year.
- Focus has now moved to advanced entry whereby FET learners enter into the second or third year of a degree. Registry recently undertook a significant piece of work, engaging with Faculties to encourage advanced entry. The application process was also integrated into the CAO for the first time this year. This work has resulted in a 17% increase in advanced entry applicants for 2022-23 and 70% of programmes now have an advanced entry route. It was noted that advanced entry is not the RPL process but is based on a recognition of study undertaken in another institution.
- Currently, the University has a high number of incomplete or unsuccessful advanced entry applications. It is not clear why this is the case and Registry is currently gathering data on these applications for discussion at the next meeting of the Steering Committee.
- Work has been completed on improving the presentation of FET entry routes on DCU's online prospectus.
- Consideration is being given to the possibility of holding an FET open afternoon, which could coincide with the launch of a national CampusConnect report in DCU.

The alignment and possible overlaps between the processes for advanced and direct entry, transfers and RPL was noted as something that needs to be reviewed.

It was noted that the University has yet to establish targets for direct and advanced entry applicants.

The importance of data on FET students was noted, in enabling the University to track the success of this cohort through the HE system.

SECTION C: PROGRAMME AND MODULE-SPECIFIC MATTERS**5. Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences: Revised academic offering, Master of Laws (LLM)**

The Education Committee considered the documentation and the merits of the proposal were noted. The value of rebranding and packaging the programme in a way which meets the demands of the profession while minimising the resource implications was recognised. A decision was deferred and it was requested that the following items would be addressed

and the proposal resubmitted for consideration at the next meeting of the Education Committee:

- It was not clear if what is being proposed is three new programmes and awards or three new specialisms within the existing LLM programme. Consideration should be given to the most suitable approach, bearing in mind the following:
 - It may be most feasible to promote and market the LLM with specialisms without creating separate awards. Three new awards will necessitate the creation of separate programme codes, programme boards, academic structures, etc., and there may be significant administrative overhead implications with this approach. The feasibility of this given the intended intake needs careful consideration.
 - Given the significant overlap of modules across the LLM and the specialisms, it would be possible for two students to take the same modules and get two different awards. This would be problematic if separate awards are required, and so would need to be addressed in the resubmitted proposal.
 - Regardless of whether new programmes or new specialisms are being proposed, it would be expected that there should be core elements that must be taken by students in that area of study, to ensure that sufficient discipline depth in that specialism is achieved by students.
 - If the proposal is to create new specialisms within the existing programme, then this will result in the retention of one award title (i.e. LLM), with specialisms being named on the transcript.
 - If the proposal is to create three new awards then each would require its own set of programme learning outcomes and these would need to be provided in the resubmitted proposal.
- Entry requirements should be reviewed to ensure transparency in the competitive selection process.
- Module descriptors should be reviewed to ensure that the appropriate workload convention is applied (i.e. 10 ECTS should equate to 250 workload hours).
- The implications of new specialisms on the existing LLM should be kept under review, should the resubmitted proposal be approved.
- If approved, consideration should be given to student identity and experience across the specialisms, especially in instances where there are particularly small cohorts.

It was noted that a body of work needs to be progressed at the institutional level to develop a framework for award titles and to define what we mean by pathways, majors, specialisms, streams, etc. This exercise is particularly important in the context of related work currently underway in the SIS project.

SECTION D: OTHER MATTERS

6. Forward planning: key statistical indicators

The Chair introduced the item noting that, while we have built up significant data over time, that data is not necessarily being translated into prioritised actions. She advised members that today's focus is on an initial discussion on the types of data we currently get and what might be most useful in the future.

Ms A. McKenna noted that DCU is moving to a new data environment and it is an opportune time to consider what Power BI can provide to support the strategic decisions of the Education Committee. Dr J. Burgi-Tian summarised for members the current analysis produced by the Quality Promotion Office routinely each year, which tracks the student life cycle from the point of application through to graduation and beyond.

The Education Committee gave initial consideration to existing data and what other data might be provided to support strategic decisions. Several areas were suggested including an analysis of:

- direct and advanced entry students, including where they are coming from and how they perform in their programmes;
- the number of students fully or partially online;
- the mix of international students;
- other markers for possible at-risk students, for example, students who did not engage in the orientation programme;
- the reasons for non-uptake of offers;
- student commuting times;
- comparisons between prior academic achievement and degree performance;
- the tracking of taught postgraduate students who come from areas or universities that we are not familiar with;
- more sophisticated graduate outcomes data;

- more detailed information on student mobilities;
- the number of students transferring between programmes;
- Eircode data which is particularly important as this is used to determine our contribution to socio-economic diversity;
- the volume and quality of online offerings;
- module-level evaluation data; and
- the differences between 100% CA and exam-based modules.

The Chair indicated to members that this was just an initial discussion and further consideration would be given to how the Education Committee would like to receive and use data, and what the most appropriate indicators might be.

It was agreed that it would be important to align data to the new DCU Strategy so that decision-making can be evidence-informed. It was agreed that any decision on prioritising areas of focus should not be made until the new Strategy is finalised. It was suggested that a sub-group might be convened to look at prioritising areas for focus.

7. Policy Statement on Collaborative Provision

Ms P. Mooney briefed members on the *Policy Statement on Collaborative Provision*, which brings together all the decisions previously made by the Education Committee. She informed members that the next phase involves mapping the document into a policy template and publishing it on the OVPAA website in an accessible format. She noted that the policy would also be reflected in other OPVAA guidance documents and forms.

Ms P. Mooney informed Education Committee that the policy statement would be used as the basis for further engagement with faculties who may be considering entering into collaborative arrangements. She noted that the policy would continue to be developed as we gain further experience in this area.

Ms A. McKenna noted that it would be important to tag collaborative arrangements in the new SIS for IRQ and SRS returns. Ms P. Mooney informed members that it would be difficult to categorise collaborative arrangements that go beyond the level of award.

The *Policy Statement on Collaborative Provision* was noted.

8. Any other business

The Chair informed members that this was Ms A. Stover's last meeting and she thanked her on behalf of all members for her engagement and contributions to the Education Committee.

Signed: _____ Date: _____

Date of next meeting:
Wednesday, 25 January 2023
at 2.00 pm
Zoom meeting