

EDUCATION COMMITTEE**MINUTES**

Wednesday 16 November 2022

2.00 - 3:50 p.m.

AG01 Glasnevin Campus

Present: Professor Mark Brown, Ms Jennifer Bruton, Dr Jing Burgi-Tian, Professor Brian Corcoran, Mr Eoin Crossen, Professor John Doyle, Professor Derek Hand, Dr Rachel Keegan (Secretary), Professor Lisa Looney (Chair), Ms Aisling McKenna, Dr Jennifer McManis, Ms Pauline Mooney, Professor Colm O’Gorman, Professor Joseph Stokes, Dr Monica Ward and Professor Blánaid White.

Apologies: Dr Sarahjane Belton, Professor Michelle Butler, Professor Anne Looney and Ms Annabella Stover.

The Chair welcomed Dr Monica Ward to her first meeting of the Education Committee as the new Dean for Teaching and Learning.

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 12 October 2022

The minutes of the meeting of 12 October 2022 were approved.

3. Matters arising from the minutes of 12 October 2022

3.1 It was noted that work on a revised financial framework for online and micro-credential content is near completion, pending clarification on a couple of outstanding matters. The Chair noted that the financial models for the MSc in Strategic Learning and Development and the Graduate Certificate in Financial Intelligence and Technology would be run through the new framework as test cases (items 4.12 and 4.13).

3.2 It was clarified that the Psychology Society of Ireland CPD reaccreditation of DCUBS HR programmes was completed in place of the internal PPR process. It was noted that professional accreditation processes may not address all aspects of the PPR process. It was agreed that a mapping exercise would be undertaken by DCUBS to identify any gaps. It was noted that a similar mapping exercise is currently underway in the Faculty of Engineering and Computing (item 6).

Prof. C. O’Gorman drew attention to the PPR report circulated at the previous meeting of the Education Committee. He informed members that a revised plan for PPR activity for 2022/23 had been agreed upon for DCUBS. He noted that the revised plan includes a review of the BSc in Marketing, Innovation and Technology and the MSc in Work and Organisational Psychology/Behaviour.

- 3.3 It was noted that the policy statement on collaborative provision would be deferred until the next meeting of the Education Committee (item 4.11).
- 3.4 It was noted that a revised validation proposal for the MSc in Biotherapeutics was on the agenda (item 7).
- 3.5 It was noted that a memorandum relating to the DCUBS aviation modules and associated awards would be deferred to a later meeting (item 9).
- 3.6 It was noted that work on a revised validation proposal for the MSc in Athletic Therapy was ongoing (item 8).

SECTION B: STRATEGIC MATTERS

4. Strategy - transformative student experience pillar

The Chair led a discussion on the development of the new DCU Strategy, as it relates to teaching and learning activities. Her presentation and discussion focused on two aspects of the pillar of the Strategy focused on “Pioneering a transformative Student Experience”, namely; excellent, distinctive teaching and learning, and flexibility. The following points were noted:

- It was suggested at the August meeting of the Education Committee that additional input would be useful on several activities including placements, micro-credentials and the ECIU University initiative. Since then a number of presentations have been made to Heads and Deans, Senior Management Group and the Education Committee by relevant colleagues. The Chair indicated that work continues on refining and clarifying the remit of central supports for teaching and learning across all modes of delivery.
- In line with the approach to considering the impact of strategy previously discussed, the Chair presented two draft scenarios to members; a default future and one achieved through strategic actions. The Chair noted that these scenarios were intended as a tool to initiate discussion in the Faculties and relevant units. It was noted that the scenarios may be more relevant to some areas than others and that they adopt a specific lens, i.e. that of demand for programmes and graduates. It was suggested that it may be useful to adopt other lenses e.g. what do our students/graduates look like now and how might they look in five years.
- It was suggested that the default future could also include an impact of the cost of living and housing crisis on student engagement and overall experience.

- It was noted that while DCU has particular strengths in teaching and supporting our students, we do not have an objective way of measuring or demonstrating this. It was agreed that it would be important that we identify ways to benchmark where we are now and measure our progress going forward.
- It was suggested that student partnership is a distinctive feature of DCU and this should be made more visible in the Strategic Plan.

The Chair suggested a template for identifying actions under the Strategy. She requested that the Faculties indicate the actions they plan on taking under each of the headings. Collating this input will ensure that the sum of actions adds up to what is needed to deliver on the institutional plan, and to inform a discussion on the best KPIs to adopt.

SECTION C: PROGRAMME AND MODULE-SPECIFIC MATTERS

5. Faculty of Science and Health, updated validation proposal: MSc in Biotherapeutics

Education Committee noted that almost all of the issues raised at its meeting of 12 October 2022 had been addressed through the resubmitted proposal. The Education Committee granted the proposed programme approval for further development towards accreditation, subject to the following matters being addressed:

- It is indicated in the proposal that part-time students cannot start the lab-based or computation portion of the Research Design and Methodology Project or MasterClass in Biotherapeutics module before completing the taught components. It is not clear how this will impact the timeframes for completion.
- It is not clear why a student would choose the MasterClass in Biotherapeutics module in place of the Research Design and Methodology Project. The rationale and distinctiveness of the masterclass module should be clearly articulated in the descriptor.
- The allocation of learning hours across the MasterClass in Biotherapeutics module and Research Design and Methodology Project should be considered. In particular, a justification should be provided for the difference in laboratory time across the two modules, and the bearing this may have on learning outcomes.

6. Faculty of Science and Health, revised academic offering: MSc in Diagnostic and Precision Medicine

The revised academic offering for the MSc in Diagnostic and Precision Medicine was considered. A decision was deferred pending the following matters being addressed:

- It is not clear why a student would choose the MasterClass in Precision Medicine module in place of the Research Design and Methodology Project. The module descriptor describes the module as an alternative to the research project. The rationale and distinctiveness of the masterclass module should be more clearly articulated in the descriptor.

- The allocation of learning hours across the MasterClass in Precision Medicine module and Research Design and Methodology Project should be reviewed. In particular, a justification should be provided for the substantial difference in laboratory time across the two modules, and the bearing this may have on learning outcomes.

It was agreed that the revised module descriptor could be submitted for consideration as a Chair's action item.

7. DCU Business School, memo in relation to aviation modules and awards

Item deferred.

8. Collaborative provision, statement of policy

Item deferred.

9. NFQ professional award-type descriptors

Dr M. Ward briefed members on the request from QQI to provide feedback on the professional award-type descriptors paper, which was drafted in response to ongoing queries relating to descriptors and the appropriate use of 'professional' as part of award titles. She informed members that feedback had been sought from colleagues across the University and the paper was considered at the most recent meeting of the University Standards Committee. She informed members that a number of queries were raised around the exclusion of Level 10 awards and in relation to dual awards and certificates, and these would be fed back to QQI. It was suggested that the University might also include in the response a note regarding expectations for sectoral-level consistency.

10. Any other business

The Chair informed members that the Office of the Vice-President Academic Affairs is scheduled to undergo a quality review in 2023 and that work on the self-assessment phase has just commenced.

Signed: _____ Date: _____

Date of next meeting:
Wednesday, 14 December 2022
at 2.00 pm
F327, St. Patrick's Campus