

**UNIVERSITY STANDARDS COMMITTEE  
MINUTES**

Thursday 23 February 2023

10.00 a.m. – 10.45 a.m.

Zoom

**Present:** Mr Eoin Crossen, Ms Liza Gieron, Ms Margaret Irwin-Bannon (Secretary), Dr Pascal Landais, Dr Anna Logan, Dr Siobhain McGovern, Dr Jennifer McManis, Dr Ruth McManus, Dr Mark O'Brien, Dr Niamh O'Sullivan, Professor Joseph Stokes and Dr Monica Ward (Chair)

**Apologies:** Ms Phylomena McMorrow and Mr John McDonough

**A: Minutes and related issues**

**1. Adoption of the agenda**

The agenda as circulated was adopted, subject to the addition of one item under AOB as follows:

- Marks and Standards 2023-2024

**2. Minutes of the USC meeting 12 January 2023**

The minutes of the meeting of 12 January 2023 were approved and signed by the Chair.

**3. Matters arising from the minutes of 12 January 2023**

- 3.1 It was noted that meetings had taken place with various stakeholders on the current procedures for dealing with academic misconduct. The feedback from colleagues was currently being collated and it was intended to call a meeting of USC sub-committee over the coming weeks. The Chair noted that the process for dealing with academic misconduct was working, in the main, but that there were areas of improvement needed in terms of communication and transparency (Item 7).

**B: Faculty issues****4. External examiners for taught programmes**

There were no nominations for consideration.

**4.2 Renewal of appointment/changes to duties**

- 4.2.1 University College Dublin  
School of Nursing, Psychotherapy and Community Health  
Approved
- 4.2.2 Swansea University (*previously appointed for a one-year substitution for 2020/2021—3-year appointment*) MA in Translation Studies, MSc in Translation Technology  
Approved

**Other issues: Faculty****5. Other issues: Faculty****5.1 Faculty of Science and Health**

- 5.1.1 Nomination form for the appointment of an External Reviewer for Periodic Programme Review for the BSc in Environmental Science and Technology  
Approved

**5.2 DCU Business School**

- 5.2.1 Confirmation of current external examiner to serve as External Reviewer for Periodic Programme Review for the BA in Marketing, Innovation and Technology

Noted

- 5.2.2 Composition of DCU Business School Summer Progression and Award Boards

(This item was discussed in tandem with item 8, Review and approval of results for taught programmes)

The Chair indicated that she is in discussion with the Vice President for Academic Affairs (Registrar) on issues relating to the membership of summer Progression and Award Boards. Consequently, she is considering the document, *Review and approval of results for taught programmes* with a post-pandemic lens. She noted that she would be deferring a decision on this proposal, subject to further discussions.

She noted that it would be important that the Examination Review Committees would function effectively and that the Progression and Award Boards would continue to be as efficient as they can be.

She noted that discussion was ongoing as to whether external examiners should visit the DCU campus in person in the first year of their term.

The Chair requested views from USC members on the current *Review and Approval of Results for Taught Programmes* process.

A few issues were raised and some clarifications sought:

- It was queried if the external examiner's discretion to attend the Progression and Award Board related to attending in person or Zoom, or both. It was noted that this could cause issues where there are two external examiners and one wishes to attend in person and the other wants to attend by Zoom.
- It was noted that the proposal that the external examiner attend in person in the first year of their term would not necessarily be for the Progression and Award Board and could be at another time in the year.
- It was noted, in the context of the difficulty of finding external examiners, that their attendance in the second year might be an easier proposition.
- The issue of non-engagement of external examiners was discussed and it was noted that there is a process in place to manage this situation.
- It was suggested that adding additional members to the Progression and Award Board could be considered if it was done in a controlled way and with the view of maintaining the current PAB efficiencies.

The consensus was that the current process was working well.

The Chair indicated that she would explore the process further and follow-up with the Associate Deans for Teaching and Learning in this regard.

**C: Other issues (not Faculty-specific)**

**6 Recognition of Prior Learning Update**

There was no update on this item, since the last meeting.

There was a brief discussion on a proposal to note the minutes of the RPL Working Group at USC. Having clarified the governance structure during the meeting it was noted that these minutes are sent to DCU Strategic Learning Innovation Projects Steering Group and subsequently to Education Committee.

**7 Review and Approval of Results for Taught Programmes**

This item was briefly discussed in the context of item 5.2.2. The item was deferred subject to further discussion with the Vice-President for Academic Affairs (Registrar).

**8 AI-generated Assessment Submissions – A Brief Overview (January 2023)**

The Chair briefed USC on the document as originally circulated in January 2023. She noted that it was written to ensure that all staff were aware of the emergence of ChatGPT and its implications. She had suggested at the time of writing the document, if it were feasible that module co-ordinators would consider a redesign or a re-orientation of their assessments for semester 2. However, it was recognised at that point that the timeline was tight as the semester was about to commence.

The Chair noted that she had recently made a presentation to the Heads and Deans Group on ChatGPT and indicated there were other QQI resources that she would circulate.

It was noted that the Loop sign-off by students that their work is original might require an update to reflect ChatGPT.

It was noted at a TEU seminar recently that where academic staff use detection tools other than the University sanctioned URKUND, it poses data protection risks. It was noted that some guidance on this would be appreciated.

9 **Any other business**

The Secretary noted that Marks and Standards for the next academic year 2023-2024 would be due for final approval in May 2023 and she indicated she would write to colleagues seeking information on any proposed updates in advance of the April 2023 meeting of University Standards Committee.

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

**Date of next meeting:**

Thursday, 6 April 2023 10.00 a.m. Room G401, St. Patrick's Campus
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