

**UNIVERSITY STANDARDS COMMITTEE
MINUTES**

Thursday 31 August 2023

10.00 a.m. – 12.00 pm.

Room A204

Present: Mr Eoin Crossen, Ms Margaret Irwin-Bannon (Secretary), Dr Anna Logan, Dr Siobhain McGovern, Dr Jennifer McManis, Dr Ruth McManus, Ms Phylomena McMorrow, and Dr Monica Ward (Chair)

Apologies: Martina Crehan, Professor Joseph Stokes, Dr Mark O'Brien, Dr Pascal Landais, Mr John McDonough and Dr Niamh O'Sullivan

In attendance: Ms Aedin Whelan

The Chair opened the meeting and welcomed Ms Aedin Whelan to her first meeting of University Standards Committee. She noted that Ms Whelan had recently joined Academic Affairs and would be taking over from Ms Irwin-Bannon as secretary to the Committee from November 2023

She extended her thanks to Ms Liza Gieron, Faculty Administrative Peer Group representative for her valued contribution to USC and the Academic Integrity sub-committee.

A: Minutes and related issues**1. Adoption of the agenda**

The agenda was adopted subject to the addition of three items under AOB.

2. Minutes**2.1 The minutes of the meeting of the University Standards Committee, 11 May 2023**

The minutes, which had been approved electronically were signed by the Chair.

2.2 The minutes of the meeting of USC Academic Integrity sub-committee of 21 April 2023

The minutes of the USC Academic Integrity sub-committee were approved.

3. Matters arising from the minutes of 11 May 2023

3.1 It was noted that the Review and approval of Result for Taught programmes document is on the agenda of this meeting (Item 3.1).

3.2 It was noted that preparation of a proposal from DCU Business School to propose a change to the approval of Result for Taught programmes document is ongoing (Item 3.2).

3.3 It was noted that a nomination for an external reviewer for the periodic programme review World Religions and Theology on the BAJH Programme was approved by Chair's Action, 15 May 2023.

- 3.4 It was noted that resubmitted legacy re-admission for a candidate onto the BA in Jazz and Contemporary Music for entry 2023-2024 was approved by Chair's Action, 22 May 2023.
- 3.5 It was noted that two legacy re-admission applications for candidates onto the DISE programme from the SIE programme were approved by Chair's Action 5 July 2023.
- 3.6 It was noted that External Examiner for the MEd programme was approved by Chair's Action, 11 August 2023.

B: Faculty issues

4. External examiners for taught programmes

4.1 Nominations

- 4.1.1 University College Dublin City University
BSc in Genetics and Cell Biology
Approved
- 4.1.2 University of Aberdeen
MSc in International Accounting and Business
Approved
- 4.1.3 Durham University
Modules in the School of Law and Government
Approved
- 4.1.4 University of Galway
Modules in the School of Law and Government
Approved

- 4.1.5 University of Birmingham
Modules in the School of Theology, Philosophy, and Music
Approved
- 4.1.6 Technological University Dublin
Modules in the School of Law and Government
Approved
- 4.1.7 Edge Hill University
Professional Master of Education
Approved, subject to confirmation that there was another experienced serving external examiner for this programme
- 4.1.8 University of Limerick
MSc in Bioprocess Engineering
Approved
- 4.1.9 Guy's and St Thomas' NHS Foundation Trust
Modules in the School of Nursing, Psychotherapy and Community Health
Approved
- 4.1.10 Bath Spa University
Med in Specific Learning Difficulties and Special Education (Dyslexia)
Approved
- 4.1.11 Dundalk Institute of Technology
MSc in Bioprocess Engineering
Approved
- 4.1.12 Munster Technological University
Modules for the MSc in Accounting and the MSc in Management (Business)
Approved

- 4.1.13 University of Stirling
Modules in BSc Science Education
Approved
- 4.1.14 Maynooth University
MSc in Biotherapeutics
Not Approved
- 4.1.15 Kingston University
Modules in the School of Applied Language and Intercultural Studies
Approved

4.2 Renewal of appointment/changes to duties

There were no items for consideration.

Other issues: Faculty

5. Other issues: Faculty

5.1 DCU Institute of Education

5.1.1 Legacy Readmission Request: Bachelor of Religious Education and History

Approved to exit with the lesser award of BA in Religious Education and History

5.1.2 Legacy Readmission Request: Bachelor of Religious Education & Music

Approved to exit with the lesser award of Diploma in Religious Education and Music

5.1.3 Legacy Readmission Request: MSc in Education and Training Management (Leadership)

Approved. It was noted under question 12 of the application that the proposed maximum completion time for the programme is June 2024. It was recommended that the student would be provided with a potential repeat year, if applicable.

5.1.4 Programme regulation approval: Master's in Special Education Needs (MSEN) 2023-2024

Approved

5.1.5 Memo to Request an exception to allow two students to register on two programmes

Approved. The decision to approve was made in the context of the very specific set of circumstances under which this arose and following very detailed discussions.

The Committee expressed serious reservations in approving this very unusual recommendation as the proposed dual registration represented an excessive workload for the students in question, and this was of major concern for members. The Committee strongly recommended that the relevant academic staff would maintain regular liaison with the students in question to ensure their welfare, due to workload involved. USC were assured that this had been discussed with the students in advance of the programme recommendation. As indicated in the submission, USC also noted that this would apply for one semester only.

5.2 Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences**5.2.1 Programme regulation approval**

5.2.1.1 Graduate Certificate in Climate Change (GCCD)
Approved

5.2.1.2 Micro-credential Modules (MCMHSS)
Approved

5.2.1.3 MSc in Climate Change: Policy, Media and Society (MCC) – Full Time
Approved

5.2.1.4 MSc in Climate Change: Policy, Media and Society (MCC) – Part Time
Approved

5.3 Faculty of Science and Health**5.3.1 Programme regulation approval**

5.3.1.1 BSc in Bioprocess
Approved

5.3.1.2 MSc in Bioprocess Engineering
Approved

5.3.1.3 MSc in Biotherapeutics
Approved

5.3.1.4 BSc in Athletic Therapy and Training
Approved

5.3.1.5 BSc in Athletic Therapy and Training (Integrated)
Approved

- 5.3.1.6 BSc in Physical Education with Biology
Approved
- 5.3.1.7 BSc in Physical Education with Mathematics
Approved
- 5.3.1.8 BSc in Actuarial Mathematics
Approved
- 5.3.1.9 Common Entry in Actuarial & Financial Mathematics
Approved
- 5.3.1.10 BSc in Psychology
Approved
- 5.3.1.11 BSc in Psychology and Disruptive Technologies
Approved
- 5.3.1.12 BSc in Psychology with Mathematics
Approved
- 5.3.1.13 MSc in Psychotherapy
Approved

There was a general discussion on how the carry-forward of modules, and the different approaches within Schools and Faculties and how it is articulated and interpreted. It was suggested that some work would be completed on the articulation of 'carry forward' in the context of the programme regulations template to provide more clarity in this regard. It was also noted that experience has shown where permission to carry forward module (s) has been granted that it is not always in the best interests of the student.

5.4 Faculty of Engineering and Computing

5.4.1 Exceptional Readmission Request: BSc in Computer Applications

Not approved. It was noted that the student was asked to withdraw from the university only in the last year and that the usual period of waiting should be three years. It was noted too that the documentation to support the student's extenuating circumstances remains outstanding. It was recommended that the programme chair awaits the submission of the supporting documentation, and should it be forthcoming, that the advice of the Registrar should then be sought on his possible re-admission.

5.4.2 Legacy Readmission Request: BEng in Electronic and Computer Engineering
Approved5.4.3 Legacy Readmission Request: BEng in Electronic Engineering
Approved**5.5 DCU Business School**

5.5.1a DCUBS Memo Amendment of Programmes

It was noted that the carrying of modules is not permitted under the programme regulations of either MSc in Aviation Leadership 2022-2023 or MSc in Investment, Treasury and Banking. The request to change both sets of regulations was being made in the context of decisions on the future delivery of these programmes. This specific request was to accommodate deferred students to progress to the second year of their programme and give them the opportunity to complete their degree.

5.5.1b Programme Regulations for MSc in Aviation Leadership 2022-2023
Approved

- 5.5.1c Programme Regulations for MSc in Investment, Treasury and Banking 2022-2023
Approved

C: Other issues (not Faculty-specific)

6. Recognition of Prior Learning Update

The Chair provided an update to USC as follows:

- A DCU RPL website has been developed and designed and is currently being reviewed. Where the page is hosted is currently under consideration.
- A meeting of the DCU RPL Working Group is planned for September 2023 and the DCU PRL process is still under consideration.
- The Chair noted that she had attended a number of meetings related to the RPL Digital Badge organised by the National Forum for the Enhancement of Teaching and Learning in Higher Education. She noted that there is a variety of approaches in existence in the different institutions, but that the key is to develop a clear DCU-specific process.

7. Review and Approval of Results for Taught Programmes

It was noted that there was one proposed minor change to the existing document approved previously by the Vice President for Academic Affairs (Registrar) in 2022-2023. Following discussion, it was agreed that the proposed amendment would not be included, and the document was noted.

It was noted that the timeframe for consideration of examination results in advance of the Progression and Award Boards was very restricted and it was felt this was a matter that should be considered in light of the current Academic Calendar.

8. Regulations and Guidelines – External Examiners for Taught Programmes and Modules

The Secretary introduced this item noting that the proposed amendments to the *Regulations and Guidelines for External Examiner for Taught programmes and modules* had been made to reflect the changes to external examiner duties as reflected in the *Review and Approval of Results for Taught Programmes*. This document reflected changes to the examination results approval process that had been introduced during the pandemic period. She highlighted that there was a change to the patterns of visiting of external examiners as per paragraph 3.4.1 as follows:

External examiners are encouraged to attend, if possible, in the first year of their four-year term and at least once during the four-year term, at a minimum.

The *Regulations and Guidelines—External Examiners for Taught Programme and Modules* document was approved.

9. Taught External Examiner Handbook

The handbook which reflects the changes made to the *Regulations and Guidelines for External Examiner for Taught programmes and modules* document was approved.

10. English language entry requirements for international applicants to postgraduate taught programmes (renewal of the pilot)

The proposal made to USC was to extend the timeframe of the proposal approved by Academic Council in February 2020 to modify the English language requirements for international (both EU and Non-EU) applicants to Postgraduate Taught programmes offered by DCU. These changes will apply to applicants who can demonstrate good levels of English either through their degree or because

they have lived and worked in an English-speaking country for a minimum period.

The proposal was approved.

It was agreed that at the end of the new two-year period (end of academic year 2025) a review would be completed by Registry (International Admissions has been incorporated into the Registry) and a decision would be made on the continuation or otherwise of the scheme, which would be submitted to Academic Council for approval.

11. Proposal for new entry pathway for international students (Unihaven)

The Director of Registry introduced this item, noting that DCU is currently in discussions with Unihaven about an agreement to accept students from their International Foundation Studies programme for an initial period of three years commencing in Autumn 2023. This new pathway is being considered to assist meeting DCU targets for recruiting and registering undergraduate international students. The International Foundation Studies Certificate offered by Unihaven is an NFQ Level 5 Specific Purpose Certificate. The Director of Registry noted that she had incorporated the feedback received from the Associate Deans for Teaching and Learning following initial circulation of the proposal.

Following discussion of the document, the following minimum entry requirements were agreed:

- Five distinctions -one of the five distinctions must include English.
- The applicant must meet the additional programme specific requirements.

The sample list of proposed entry programmes as circulated on the paper was not approved, however it was agreed that following USC, Faculties would confirm to Registry and Student Recruitment colleagues the programmes which would accept these candidates, and the programme specific entry requirements.

12. Any other business

12.1 Programme Regulations

It was noted that the programme regulations would be published in a more accessible format using html for 2023-2024. It was noted that this would necessitate a slightly different submission process for the next round of programme regulations and that the secretary would get in touch with Faculty administrators in this regard.

12.2 Meeting venues

It was noted that two meetings of USC would take place on St Patrick's Campus and one on zoom over the coming year. It was agreed that google calendar invitations would be circulated over the coming week.

12.3 *Change to membership*

Dr Anna Logan announced informally that she would be stepping down as DCU Institute of Education Associate Dean of Teaching and Learning. The Chair thanked her for her very valued contribution to USC.

Signed: _____ Date: _____

Date of next meeting:

Thursday, 2 November 2023 10.00 a.m. Room G401, St. Patrick's Campus
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