

EDUCATION COMMITTEE

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**MINUTES**

Wednesday 12 October 2022

2.00 p.m. – 4.15 p.m. in D404, Glasnevin Campus

**Present:** Professor Mark Brown, Ms Jennifer Burton, Dr Jing Burgi-Tian, Professor Brian Corcoran, Mr Eoin Crossen, 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 and Dr Blánaid White.

**Apologies:** Dr Sarahjane Belton, Professor Michelle Butler, Professor John Doyle, Professor Anne Looney, Ms Annabella Stover and Dr Monica Ward.

**In attendance:** Dr Niamh O’Sullivan (for items 7 and 8)

The Chair welcomed Professor Brian Corcoran to his first meeting of the Education Committee as Deputy Registrar.

The Chair welcomed Dr Jennifer McManis to her first meeting of the Education Committee as the representative for the Associate Deans 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 31 August 2022**

The minutes of the meeting of 31 August 2022 were approved.

**3. Matters arising from the minutes of 31 August 2022**

3.1 It was noted that work on employability statements was progressing well and that no further input from the Education Committee would be required at this time (item 4.10).

3.2 The Chair informed members that a financial framework for the development of online and micro-credential content had been developed, in consultation with Finance and DCU Studio. The draft framework takes into account both development costs and appropriate pricing structures. The draft framework will be forwarded to relevant colleagues in Senior Management for consideration before being implemented in Education Committee processes. It was noted that the framework would be kept under review as initial proposals come through the Education Committee (items 4.12 and 4.13).

- 3.3 It was noted that the matter relating to the use of colons on parchment titles had been referred to University Standards Committee for consideration (item 4.14).
- 3.4 It was noted that feedback from the Education Committee in relation to the MSc in Public Policy had been addressed (item 4.15).
- 3.5 It was noted that feedback from the Education Committee in relation to the MA in European Law and Policy had been addressed (item 4.16).
- 3.6 It was noted that a Graduate Certificate in History exit award for the MA in History was approved by Chair's action on 22 September 2022.
- 3.7 It was noted that work on a policy paper for collaborative provision is ongoing (item 4.11).

#### **4. Minutes of the meeting of the Strategic Learning Innovation Project Steering Group of 30 May 2022**

The minutes of the meeting of 30 May 2022 were approved.

### **SECTION B: STRATEGIC MATTERS**

#### **5. Strategic Academic Initiatives**

##### **5.1 ECIU update**

The Chair presented an ECIU update to members and the following key points were noted:

- ECIU University is one of 44 funded European University alliances. The ECIU University is built upon a well-established network and there continues to be significant network engagement across the partner institutions.
- The HEA has provided some additional funding to Irish institutions involved in European University alliances. The Chair noted that there is still a significant cost to the University and so it is important that we take benefit from the network on an ongoing basis.
- The ECIU University initiative is coming to the end of a three-year pilot phase and work is commencing on the next phase of the project. It is important that DCU establishes a structure for maintaining oversight of our activities and involvement in ECIU. The Chair and Academic Secretary are currently exploring an appropriate structure and a proposal will be brought back to the Education Committee in due course.
- The Chair summarised DCU's progress in the ECIU University alliance over the three-year pilot phase. The following key areas of activity were particularly noted:
  - DCU colleagues led out on two challenges in 2021/22 and two further challenges are planned for 2022/23. The Teaching Enhancement Unit (TEU) has been significantly involved in challenge based learning activities and TEU colleagues have built up significant expertise and resources.
  - DCU has more than 15 micro-credentials in the pipeline for 2022/23. Dr Mairéad Nic Giolla Mhichíl and DCU Studio colleagues have been heavily involved in ECIU micro-credential activities and have produced an ECIU

- University white paper on micro-credentials. Professor Mark Brown has also made significant contributions to policy discussions at the European level.
- Professor Greg Hughes led Work Package 2, related to challenge-based research. Intel and two Irish start-ups (Positive Carbon and 2GoCup) have been involved with DCU in ECIU research activities. The ECIU researcher mobility fund was also launched in late 2021 and 16 researchers were funded to travel to ECIU partner institutions.
  - The Chair also briefed members on the next phase of the project:
    - The project will run for four years with a possibility of a two-year extension and is being coordinated by the University of Twente.
    - The current theme for the project remains SDG11 (making cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient, and sustainable). The Chair noted that while the theme is broad it is not universal and that the project will look beyond SDG11 in the future. She noted, however, the partner institutions had done significant work in developing SDG11 competency frameworks and would like time to put these into practice.
    - The focus for this next start-up phase is on challenge-based learning, micro-credentials, and flexible learning pathways and the funding instrument only accommodates an overall focus on teaching and learning. DCU will lead Work Package 4, related to micro-credentials.
    - DCU is committed to specific learner numbers engaging in challenges, starting at 60 students in 2023/24. A number of programmes that can accommodate challenges as part of their structure will need to be identified across the Faculties.

Dr B. White informed members that two workshops are planned with the CBL Working Group and the Futures Innovations Group to look at how challenge based learning will work for DCU, how it will look across years one to four of a programme, and how it might work for online delivery.

## **6. Faculty Periodic Programme Review Report: Activities undertaken in 2021/22 and planned for 2022/23**

The report was noted. The Chair suggested that it would be more useful for the Education Committee to have a five-year overview.

The Chair queried if the PPR process was completed for the HR programmes in DCUBS. It was agreed that this would be clarified.

Ms A. McKenna informed members there are challenges in providing data to programme chairpersons for the BA Joint Honours programme, particularly for individual subjects.

## **SECTION C: PROGRAMME AND MODULE-SPECIFIC MATTERS**

### **7. Faculty of Science and Health, validation proposal: MSc in Biotherapeutics**

Dr N. O'Sullivan summarised the proposal noting that biotherapeutics represents one of the fastest-growing industries in Ireland and worldwide. She informed members that the programme proposers had consulted widely with industry to ascertain demand for the

proposed programme. She also noted that the proposers hope to have significant industry input into the programme.

The validation document for the proposed MSc in Biotherapeutics was considered and the merits of the proposal were noted. It was requested that the following items would be addressed in the documentation and the proposal resubmitted for consideration at the next meeting of the Education Committee:

#### Programme Structure

- An updated programme structure should be provided for the full-time and part-time options, and the Graduate Certificate exit award:
  - From the outline structure provided in the proposal, there appears to be an imbalance in the distribution of credits with a heavier burden in Semester 2. The distribution of credits should be revisited to ensure there is sufficient spread across the programme.
  - Given the number of optional modules in the Graduate Certificate structure, It appears that this may also lead to an imbalance in the distribution of credits.
- It is indicated in the proposal that progression for taught modules is required prior to the commencement of the research project. It is not clear from the proposal how or when this will take place and whether this will have an implication for the commencement of the project.
- Consideration should be given to whether the introductory level modules are necessary at level 9.
- Consideration should be given to whether an existing regulatory affairs module might be appropriately used in place of the planned new module.

#### Financial Modelling

- The financial model should be revisited to ensure the viability of the proposed programme:
  - The addition of one academic staff member may be insufficient given the number of new modules to be developed. Clarity should be provided on any currently existing capacity within the School.
  - The projected student numbers appear to be low, particularly in light of the demand for the School's existing Master's programmes.
  - It is unclear if any costs associated with industry engagement in the modules 'Case Studies in Biotherapeutics Development', 'Biotherapeutics Pipeline', and 'Regulatory Affairs of Biotherapeutics' have been taken into account in the financial model.
  - It is unclear if any costs associated with access to facilities such as NIBRT have been taken into account in the financial mode, or those related to development of online resources.

#### Programme Delivery

- The intended delivery mode should be clarified. The document refers to flexibility in delivery, registration and exit routes but it is not clear what this means.
- Section 11 of the proposal refers to a launch in late Spring 2023. It is assumed that this relates to a marketing launch and that the planned programme launch date is September 2023. This should be clarified in the proposal.

### Proposed Accreditation Board Members

- It was noted that a number of former School of Biotechnology staff members are included in the list of proposed board members (but have not been employed by the University in the past five years, in line with current External Examiner regulations). It is recommended that in selecting the final panel that the overall mix be taken into consideration.

## **8. Faculty of Science and Health, validation proposal: MSc in Athletic Therapy**

Dr N. O'Sullivan provided an overview of the proposal noting that this is a pre-registration, conversion-type programme with the intention that graduates would be qualified as athletic therapists. She informed members that this programme would not compete with the recently accredited integrated MSc in Athletic Therapy and Strength and Conditioning which is only open to BSc in Athletic Therapy students. She noted that the projected numbers are small but this is to take into account the number of clinical placements that would need to be managed.

The validation documentation for the proposed MSc in Athletic Therapy was considered and the merits of the proposal were noted. It was requested that the following items would be addressed in the documentation and the proposal resubmitted for consideration at the next meeting of the Education Committee:

- The academic structure table should be updated to provide the following additional information: the assessment type, the delivery mode, whether each module is new or existing, and which modules, if any, are Level 8.
- The financial model should be revisited to ensure the programme will be sufficiently resourced, particularly in the context of 120 new credits. Clarity should also be provided on the high administrative costs.
- Consideration should be given to the inclusion of exit awards for the programme.
- There is a significant focus on the recognition of prior learning (RPL) in the proposal. Clarification should be provided as to whether the proposers feel this will be a significant feature.
- The proposal refers to an old version of DCU's RPL policy. This should be updated to reflect the most recent 2019 version.
- The document refers to graduates being able to apply for accreditation by the professional governing body for Athletic Therapists in Ireland. Given the programme is not yet ARTI accredited, this should be clarified throughout the document.
- The proposal refers to a blended mode of delivery. Further information on the intended mode of delivery should be provided in the proposal.
- The programme learning outcomes should be revisited to ensure they are set at a level appropriate for a Level 9 award.
- The dissertation includes submission to a journal. Consideration should be given to whether this is practicable within a 10-credit module.
- Clarity should be provided early on in Section 1 that the programme is not intended for graduates with a BSc in Athletic Therapy.

**9. DCU Business School, memo relating to micro-credential module: Leadership for aviation managers**

The standalone micro-credential module 'Leadership for aviation managers' was noted. A number of points were raised by the Committee:

- It is unclear from the memo if the other three modules in the associated Graduate Certificate are also being developed as micro-credentials, leading ultimately to the combining of them into an already approved award.
- It is unclear if the micro-credential is also being offered as part of the MSc in Aviation Leadership, and how this impacts on the approved delivery mode for that award.
- It is unclear if the stand-alone Graduate Certificate is also being embedded into the existing MSc in Aviation Leadership as an exit award. If so, this will require Education Committee approval.
- It was noted that no reading list has been provided in the module descriptor.

It was agreed that a memo would be submitted to the next Education Committee to provide clarity in relation to these queries.

It was noted that the approval mechanism for micro-credentials needs to be reviewed, particularly concerning the entry requirements for stackable micro-credentials.

**10. DCU Business School, memo relating to student mobility provisions on the INTB (Business Studies International)**

Prof. C. O’Gorman summarised the DCUBS proposal to extend the previously approved Covid student mobility provisions for the Business Studies International programme in light of online travel restrictions and related issues. The Education Committee approved the extension of this provision for 2022/23.

**11. DCU Institute of Education, memo relating to proposed Erasmus Mundus Joint Masters in Integrated Early Childhood Systems and Policies**

The proposal was noted. The Chair recorded her thanks to the proposers for the early sight of the Erasmus Mundus Joint Masters proposal.

It was noted that the memo references a dissertation worth 40 ECTS but that DCU Marks and Standards permit a maximum of 30 ECTS credits for a dissertation/practicum.

**12. Any other business**

There was no other business.

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

**Date of next meeting:**

Wednesday, 16 November 2022

at 2.00 pm

Location AG01