EDUCATION COMMITTEE

MINUTES

Wednesday 11 May 2022

2.00 p.m. – 4.25 p.m. via Zoom

Present:	Dr Sarahjane Belton, Ms Jennifer Bruton, Professor Michelle Butler, Professor Derek Hand, Dr Rachel Keegan (Secretary), Dr Anna Logan, Professor Anne Looney, Professor Lisa Looney (Chair), Ms Aisling McKenna, Ms Pauline Mooney, Professor Colm O'Gorman, Professor Joseph Stokes, Ms Annabella Stover and Dr Blánaid White.
Apologies:	Professor Mark Brown, Dr Jing Burgi-Tian and Ms Kate Goodman.
In attendance:	Ms Valerie Cooke

SECTION A: AGENDA, MINUTES AND MATTERS ARISING

1.   Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was <u>adopted</u>.

2.   Minutes of the meeting of Education Committee, 13 April 2022

The minutes of the meeting of 13 April 2022 were <u>approved</u>.

3.   Matters arising from the minutes of 13 April 2022

3.1   It was <u>noted</u> that feedback provided by the Education Committee in relation to the proposed Business Analytics specialism on the existing Bachelor of Business Studies had been addressed (item 3.6).

3.2   It was <u>noted</u> that feedback provided by the Education Committee had been incorporated into the paper on blended delivery in undergraduate programmes, and the final document has been circulated to Faculties (item 5).

3.3   It was <u>noted</u> that feedback provided by the Education Committee in relation to the proposed Graduate Certificate in Data Protection (Law and Computing) had been addressed (item 7).

3.4   It was <u>noted</u> that a proposal to change the delivery mode of the part-time MSc in Public Policy is on the agenda of today's meeting (item 8).

3.5   It was <u>noted</u> that work on the development of employability statement templates is ongoing (item 3.3).

3.6   It was <u>noted</u> that work on a policy paper on collaborative provision is ongoing (item 3.4).

3.7   It was <u>noted</u> that work on the provision of an overview of OVPAA and the Education Committee strategic commitments and activities is ongoing (item 3.5).

3.8   It was <u>noted</u> that the provision of a revised financial statement for the proposed MSc in Strategic Learning and Development is ongoing (item 3.7).

3.9   It was <u>noted</u> that the provision of a revised financial statement for the proposed Graduate Certificate in Financial Intelligence and Technology is ongoing (item 3.8).

3.10   It was <u>noted</u> that feedback provided by the Education Committee in relation to the proposed education policy pathway on the existing MSc in Public Policy had been addressed (item 8).

SECTION B: STRATEGIC MATTERS FOR DISCUSSION/NOTING

4.   Strategic Academic Initiatives

4.1   Stronger connections with further education: Steering Committee update

Professor A. Looney briefed members on progress made in four key areas as follows:

-   The University issued a press release in March, outlining DCU's intention to take a leading role in developing stronger connections between the higher education (HE) and further education and training (FET) sectors. This was welcomed across the sectors and by Government. Professor A. Looney informed members that DCU received several approaches from FET institutions on foot of this communication; however, these would not be progressed until the establishment of a framework for engagement.

-   The University is preparing for the 2022-23 intake from FET settings. Professor A. Looney noted some challenges with ramping up activity this year, resulting from the pandemic and recent labour market activity.

-   A review of the use of terminology and the communication of options to FET students is underway. Professor A. Looney briefed members on plans to develop a single point of information for FET students who are considering coming to DCU. She noted that this was an important development in aiming to improve the conversion rate of offers to acceptances.

-   Advanced entry is also being reviewed. Professor A. Looney informed members that 70% of DCU's undergraduate programmes have provision for advanced entry; however, the information on this route is complex with FET students applying through the same mechanism as students looking to transfer between HE institutions.

-   Prof. A. Looney noted a significant increase in the number of applications this year, most likely due to the additional attention on DCU, a streamlining of requirements,

increase in the number of programmes involved and the significant work of Registry colleagues in making the information more accessible to applicants.

Professor A. Looney also provided an update on the Steering Committee, which had its first meeting on 10 May 2022. Discussions at this first meeting focused on several significant areas including a sector-wide strategy to support the conversion of offers to acceptances, issues of guidance and advice for FET students and awareness of progression routes more generally, the importance of data and tracking of FET students through the HE system, a framework for advanced entry, the role of PRL in advance entry, progression routes in nursing and 2 plus 2 awards. She informed members that the Steering Committee would initially focus on developing a whitepaper outlining a proposed framework for advanced entry and this work would be advanced through June.

5. **Annual Programme Review reports**

5.1 **Faculty of Engineering and Computing**

Noted

5.2 **Faculty of Science and Health**

Noted

5.3 **DCU Institute of Education**

Noted

5.4 **DCU Business School**

Noted

5.5 **Open Education**

Noted

5.6 **Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences**

Noted. It was noted that two updates included in this report were not listed in the report on devolved decisions (item 15). It was agreed that it would be clarified if these items should be included under item 15.

The Annual Programme Review (APR) Reports from each Faculty/Unit were reviewed. It was agreed that a list of common themes that may require further consideration at the university level would be compiled and reported to Executive Committee.

Ms McKenna queried if the APR templates were still fit for purpose or if it was timely that they are reviewed. The Chair noted that key matters currently being considered by the Education Committee could usefully be captured in the APR templates. It was noted, however, that a substantial re-engineering of the process was not feasible at this time, given current work on the new curriculum model and QA framework. It was agreed that ADTL input would be sought on an updated template that would identify specific cross-faculty

themes. It was noted that key professional colleagues and at least one experienced programme chairperson might also usefully input into an updated template.

SECTION C: PROGRAMME AND MODULE-SPECIFIC ISSUES

6.   **Developments in initial teacher education programmes following Teaching Council re-accreditation**

Professor A. Looney briefed members on a number of necessary changes to existing initial teacher education programmes to bring them in line with the revised Céim standards. She informed members that these programmes previously carried additional credit to the more usual 240 ECTS for a 4-year degree, but that this would no longer be permitted by the Teaching Council. She also drew attention to the reduced credit requirement in some subjects and the removal of the requirement to accumulate credits in all three science subjects for teaching Junior Cycle Science.

6.1   **Revised overarching conceptual framework (for noting)**

<u>Noted</u>

6.2   **Summary of academic structure changes (for noting)**

<u>Noted</u>

6.3   **Proposed amendments to the BSc in Physical Education with Biology**

The proposed amendments to the BSc in Physical Education with Biology and the BSc in Physical Education with Mathematics were summarised by Dr Belton. She informed members that the most significant change was the reduction of physical education credits from 90 to 60 ECTS, which had been largely achieved through finding synergies and merging content into other modules. She also noted the unfortunate loss of physics and chemistry content from these programmes.

Dr Belton noted that there was also some inevitable reduction in research modules which was regrettable given the strong performance of graduates who go on to pursue research studies and careers. Dr Belton indicated that the School was considering the possibility of a voluntary summer programme for students who might be considering a research path.

The proposed amendments were <u>approved.</u>

6.4   **Proposed amendments to the BSc in Physical Education with Mathematics**

The proposed amendments were <u>approved</u>.

6.5   **Proposed amendments to the BSc in Science Education**

A summary of the proposed amendments was provided to the Education Committee and Professor Butler provided a brief overview noting that the changes would bring the programme in line with the 240-credit requirement. It was noted that the revised academic offering paperwork for this programme was in development and would be submitted by the

end of May. Given the Education Committee will not meet again until 31 August, it was agreed that this item could be considered by Chair's action.

7. **Faculty of Engineering and Computing: proposal for an integrated BEng/MEng in Electronic and Computer Engineering**

Ms Bruton summarised the proposal, noting that Engineers Ireland now requires graduates to hold a Master's degree for Chartered Engineer status. The proposal was <u>approved</u> subject to the following items being addressed:

- It was recognised that there is a need to differentiate from the current MSc in Electronic and Computer Engineering, however, it was agreed that the use of 'integrated' was not appropriate for the award title. It was requested that an alternative title be considered.

- It was noted that some students who chose the integrated MSc may subsequently decide to exit after year four with the BSc. It was requested that the documentation clarify the additional requirements for any student seeking to exit the integrated programme at the end of year four.

- It was suggested that the optional and core modules be re-visited to ensure that each major contains sufficient core content. For example, it was queried if EE521, Future Network Architectures, should be a core module in the Advanced Data Networks Major and if EE5001, Security for IoT Networks, should be a core module in the Internet of Things Major.

8. **Faculty of Engineering and Computing: proposal for an integrated BEng/MEng in Mechanical and Sustainability Engineering**

Ms Bruton summarised the proposal noting that it builds on the newly established DCU Futures programme which launched this year. The proposal was <u>approved</u> subject to the following items being addressed:

- It was requested that the documentation be updated to reflect that this is a DCU Futures programme. It was noted that the proposal should make particular reference to the core element of Futures, i.e. the commitment to innovative pedagogy and assessment, the adoption of the DCU transversal skills framework and ongoing and meaningful industry engagement.

- It was requested that clarity be provided on what additional sustainability content is proposed for the integrated programme. It was noted that additional sustainability modules should be developed rather than a 'stretching out' of existing modules across the five years.

- It was noted that the ECTS credits for two of the modules (MM410 and MM4XU) differ in Course Builder from the submitted structure document. These should be amended as appropriate.

9. **Faculty of Engineering and Computing: proposed amendments to the collaborative MEng in Electronic and Computer Engineering with Wuhan University**

Ms Bruton summarised the proposal, highlighting that this builds upon an existing relationship with Wuhan University (WHU), which dates back to 2006. It was noted that the proposal would see the continuation of the existing MEng, in partnership with the School of Electronic Information. It was noted that this proposal constitutes a dual award, as per the recently approved DCU definitions.

Ms Bruton outlined a number of changes to the programme structure aimed at ensuring a better balance of workload over the two years. She noted that, in the new structure, DCU would recognise 15 ECTS delivered by WHU, WHU would recognise 22.5 ECTS delivered by DCU and 5 ECTS would contribute towards both awards. She also noted that changes to the project would create opportunities for joint supervision, something that was not possible in the previous programme structure.

It was noted that the key consideration for DCU is the quality assurance of the two modules being delivered by WHU which would contribute to the DCU award. It was noted that much of WHU's QA arrangements are embedded in the process of cyclical review and approval by the Chinese Ministry and that WHU has indicated a willingness to provide DCU with any relevant information that might emerge from these reviews. It was agreed that sufficient detail had been provided in the proposal to address any concerns.

Members gave due consideration to the proposal noting, in particular, the benefits of continuing with the partnership, the overlap of credits, the academic reputation of WHU, and negative media attention relating to Chinese universities. It was agreed that the proposal represents a relatively low overlap in credits and that the potential risks were reasonable in the context of the existing partnership with WHU and i's strong academic reputation. The proposal was <u>approved</u>.

10. **Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences: proposal to change the mode of delivery for the MSc in Public Policy**

The item was deferred to the next meeting of the Education Committee Standing Committee, scheduled for 17 May 2022, to allow additional time for the necessary paperwork to be submitted and reviewed.

11. **Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences: proposal to change the mode of delivery for the MA in European Law and Policy**

The item was deferred to the next meeting of the Education Committee Standing Committee, scheduled for 17 May 2022, to allow additional time for the necessary paperwork to be submitted and reviewed.

12. **Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences: proposal to extend the existing Memorandum of Agreement with Ballyfermot College of Further Education**

Professor Hand noted that the proposal to extend the existing MOA with Ballyfermot College of Further Education was to allow for the necessary time needed to explore possible further

collaborative opportunities. He noted that the pandemic had significantly delayed progress in this regard. The extension of the existing MOA for one year was <u>approved.</u>

13.   **Faculty of Science and Health: proposal to change the mode of delivery for the Graduate Certificate in Sexuality Education and Sexual Wellbeing**

The item was deferred to the next meeting of the Education Committee Standing Committee, scheduled for 17 May 2022, to allow additional time for the necessary paperwork to be reviewed.

14.   **Faculty of Science and Health: proposal to change the mode of delivery for the Graduate Certificate in Relationships and Sexuality Education for People with Intellectual Disability**

The item was deferred to the next meeting of the Education Committee Standing Committee, scheduled for 17 May 2022, to allow additional time for the necessary paperwork to be reviewed.

15.   **Report on devolved decisions, 2021-22**

The reports were <u>noted</u>. The Chair drew attention to a query regarding the use of colons in award titles, as presented in the report. She noted that this would be looked at offline and a response would be provided to the relevant Faculty in due course.

16.   **Any other business**

The Chair drew attention to a recent query regarding the mode of delivery for two full-time postgraduate programmes. She informed members that a proposed new approach was described as face-to-face lectures that would be delivered in a Zoom-enabled classroom to facilitate students who want to attend remotely. It would also facilitate accessing a recording of the lecture on Loop.

It was emphasised by members that this approach is not in keeping with the approved Principles for Quality Assurance of DCU E-learning and Blended Provision. Members raised a number of concerns regarding the challenges for learning design, the quality of the learning experience, and the possible implications for lecture attendance. It was noted that this was never the intended use of zoom-enabled rooms and that to leverage their affordances properly generally requires more than one lecturer to be present. Members also noted that learnings from the pandemic have made clear that any move to online delivery requires significant preparation and that remote attendance and/or recorded lecturers are not a suitable substitute for face-to-face delivery. It was agreed that this feedback would be communicated to the relevant Faculty.

Signed: _____ Date: _____

Date of next meeting:
Wednesday, 31 August 2022
at 2.00 pm
Location TBC