EDUCATION COMMITTEE

MINUTES

Wednesday 9 February 2022

2.00 p.m. – 3.30 p.m. via Zoom

Present: Dr Sarahjane Belton, Professor Mark Brown, Ms Jennifer Bruton, Professor Michelle Butler, Professor Derek Hand, Ms Margaret Irwin-Bannon (Secretary), Mr Billy Kelly (Chair), Dr Anna Logan, Professor Anne Looney, Professor Lisa Looney*, Ms Aisling McKenna, Ms Pauline Mooney, Professor Colm O'Gorman, Professor Joseph Stokes and Dr Blánaid White

Apologies: Dr Claire Bohan and Ms Kate Goodman

In attendance   Dr Jing Burgi-Tian

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, 8 December 2021

The minutes of 8 December 2021 were <u>approved</u>.

3.   Matters arising from the minutes of 8 December 2021

3.1   It was <u>noted</u> that a proposal with respect to exit awards from BEng programmes is on the agenda (Item 3.4).

3.2   It was <u>noted</u> that work with respect to the provision of an overview of Education Committee/Vice-President for Academic Affairs/Registrar commitments and activities, and a proposed cycle for reporting to Education Committee is on the agenda of this meeting (Item 3.5).

3.3   It was <u>noted</u> that updates to the Quality Assurance of DCU E-Learning and Blended Provision document have been made and the final document has been submitted (Item 7).

* Professor Lisa Looney joined the meeting at 15:25 and provided a brief update on strategic related matters under item 7.

3.4   It was <u>noted</u> that an alternative nominee for the Graduate Certificate in Financial Intelligence and Technology Accreditation Board was approved by Chair's Action, 18 January 2022.

3.5   It was <u>noted</u> that alternative nominees for the BSc in Global Challenges Accreditation Board was approved by Chair's Action, 18 January 2022. In addition, it was noted that the industry expert was approved by Chair's Action, 7 February 2022.

3.6   It was <u>noted</u> that work on Employability Statements is ongoing (Item 3.1).

3.7   It was <u>noted</u> that a policy paper on Collaborative Provision and Joint, Double (multiple) and Dual Awards would be prepared over the coming months (Item 3.6).

3.8   It was <u>noted</u> that a section of questions on Quality Assurance of DCU E-Learning and Blended Provision was prepared for the accreditation proposal of the Graduate Certificate in Financial Intelligence and Technology and the development of a similar section for programmes changing to online or blended delivery and those undergoing validation were in development (Item 7).

3.9   It was <u>noted</u> that a change to the *high level allocation of Open Education programmes to Faculties* document would be made. The Diploma in the Management of Information Technology which comprise 55 credits of Business modules and 15 credits of Maths/Statistics will be re-allocated to DCU Business School as it continues into its second year of funding. DCU Business School will also take responsibility for any new submission for funding in 2022. It was agreed that a retrospective change to the original document (appended to the minutes of 8 December 2021 of Education Committee) would be made.

4.   Minutes of the meeting of Education Committee Standing Committee of 13 December 2021

        The minutes of the Education Committee Standing Committee of 13 December 2021 were <u>approved</u>.

5.   Matters arising from the minutes of ECSC, 13 December 2021

5.1   It was <u>noted</u> that the sub-group to consider the finalised BSc in Global Challenges accreditation documentation would meet over the coming week (Item 1).

5.2   It was <u>noted</u> that a finalised financial statement with respect to the MSc in Specialist Nursing for Future Healthcare (reflecting delivery of Leadership, Governance and Management in Modern Healthcare) was awaited (Item 2).

5.3   It was <u>noted</u> that a finalised financial statement with respect to the Graduate Certificate in Financial Intelligence and Technology (reflecting the development costs of learning design/module development for online delivery) was awaited (Item 3).

SECTION B: STRATEGIC MATTERS FOR DISCUSSION/NOTING

6. **Strategic Academic Initiatives**

6.1 **Minutes of Strategic Learning Innovation Project Steering, 4 October 2021**

The minutes of the Strategic Learning Innovation Project Steering of 4 October 2021 were approved.

7. **Academic-Related Strategic Activities and Horizon Scan**

Professor Lisa Looney* noted that this item was not yet in a format suitable for presentation and would be deferred until the 9 March 2022 meeting of Education Committee.

She also briefed Education Committee on her presentation to Governing Authority (9 February 2022) which outlined a high-level view of academic related strategic priorities. She reported that Governing Authority was very positive about the range of ongoing activities, and expressed interest in particular in DCU Futures, flexible delivery, Further Education connections and the European dimension.

SECTION C: PROGRAMME AND MODULE-SPECIFIC ISSUES

8. **Faculty of Science and Health: Validation proposal: BSc in Athletic Therapy and Training/ MSc in Athletic Therapy and Strength and Conditioning**

The Education Committee approved the proposed BSc in Athletic Therapy and Training/ MSc in Athletic Therapy and Strength and Conditioning for further development towards accreditation subject to the following recommendations being addressed in advance of accreditation:

- It would be made clear in the marketing and promotion of the programme that it includes two awards, and students would be able to avail of undergraduate funding for the first 4 years, but not for the master's level in the fifth year;
- An additional nomination for a female academic accreditation member would be made to facilitate a better gender mix on the Accreditation Board.

It was noted that the first intake of students onto the MSc pathway (4th year) would be in September 2023, therefore students who are current students of the BSc in Athletic Therapy and Training programme would have the opportunity to choose the MSc pathway.

9. **Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences: Validation proposal: MA in Documentary Practice**

The Education Committee approved the proposed MA in Documentary Practice for further development towards accreditation subject to the following recommendations and considerations being addressed in the accreditation proposal:

- The Education Committee noted that the programme team were best placed to make a decision on mode of delivery, however there were reservations and concerns expressed in relation to offering the programme in the first instance as a full-time, traditionally delivered, master's programme. It was asked if a more flexible delivery approach might be considered to enable the recruitment of sufficient numbers of students;
- It was queried if consideration had been given to creating the exit routes of Graduate Certificate and Graduate Diploma from the Master's programme?
- It was noted that the minimum entry requirements are very specific in the documentation and it was queried if it meant that anyone with any level 8 degree with a minimum of H2.2 would be eligible for entry. In addition, it is stated that 'ideally students who begin the course will have production expertise', if this is the ideal then it was suggested it should be built into the minimum entry requirements section;
- It was noted that it appeared that the thrust of the programme was very much about video production however it proved a little confusing when there are also references to audio production and other media, and it was queried if the documentation fully reflected the intended thrust of the programme. On a related point, it was noted that two of the accreditation board nominees are in the field of photography, which further adds to the confusion about the programme in terms of its intention;
- It was recommended that all the programme outcomes would be reviewed and amended to address the particular learning outcome categories. Learning outcome 8 was mentioned in particular in that the programme learning outcome does not address 'competence and insight' rather it is 'situational' and does not describe what is required of a learning outcome. It was noted too that learning outcome 7 was also particularly problematic;
- It was noted that the distribution of credits between semesters was uneven for a full-time programme and it was suggested that consideration would be given to addressing the imbalance;
- Programme proposers were asked to give consideration to the fact that this cohort will be embedded with other programmes, and if they would be able to identify as a particular cohort in their journey as documentary practitioners;
- It was noted that in the RPL section it states 'provide evidence of any prior accredited learning, either formal or informal', and it was clarified that all accredited learning is 'formal';

10. **DCU Business School: request for approval for the continuation of the previously approved Covid related student mobility provisions on the (Business Studies International) and BSE (Bachelor of Business Studies Exchange) programmes for an additional academic year.**

The proposal as set out below was <u>approved</u>. It was clarified that the continued arrangement would apply to the 2022-2023 academic year. The detailed proposal was as follows:

The continuation of the previously approved COVID student mobility provisions on the INTB (Business Studies International) and BSE (Bachelor of Business Studies Exchange) programmes for an additional academic year. These provisions allow for both a 180 credit alternative version of INTB and the reversal of years 3 and 4 on the four year versions of INTB and BSE to allow students to complete their final year modules in advance of undertaking a year abroad. This extension was requested to facilitate scenarios where students are unable to travel due to Covid restrictions and related issues. This was particularly the case in 2021- 2022 year for students who were required to do their year abroad in China and Japan. The continuing unpredictability of Covid requires that these provisions are kept in place.

11.   Proposed BSc Exit Awards from BEng Programmes

The Dean of the Faculty of Engineering and Computing provided the background to the proposal noting that these exit awards would not be advertised and would be a mechanism for the Progression and Award Board to use in exceptional circumstances and under strict conditions.

There was a general discussion on the principle of an exit award from the undergraduate programmes as proposed (Items 11.1-11.5). The following points were noted with respect to the proposals:

- It was clarified, if approved, that it was intended the exit awards would be applied retrospectively, with the suggestion this might apply to students who were withdrawn from the programme up to three years ago (from 2019-2020);
- The view was expressed that using the BSc nomenclature for an exit award with 180 ECTS credits from a BEng programme might devalue the existing 240 ECTS credit BSc programmes. In response to this point, it was suggested that the award title of Bachelor of Technology might also be considered, however currently this is not permitted under current Marks and Standards;
- It was clarified that although the INTRA credits would not be included in the award, that students would have evidence of completion of INTRA on their transcripts;
- It was mooted that this proposal for exits at undergraduate level could be explored across all Faculties but it was noted it would need to be considered on an individual basis by each programme;
- It was suggested that it would be useful to review the statistics of students who do not manage to complete their fourth year, to establish the actual need for undergraduate exits.

It was agreed that as the decision on exit awards from undergraduate programmes would represent a precedent and because the proposed Bachelor of Technology does not exist as an award currently, Education Committee would revisit it at its next meeting and would consider the decision in a University context. The Deputy Registrar/Dean of Teaching and Learning indicated that he would liaise with the Institutional Research and Analysis Officer to establish how many students are withdrawing in fourth year, and he would also solicit feedback from the other faculties on what their views would be in this regard. In addition, consideration would be given to a proposed new Bachelor of Technology award.

11.1   BEng in Electronic and Computer Engineering

A decision on the proposed exit award of BSc in Electronic and Computer Technology from the BEng in Electronic and Computer Engineering was <u>deferred</u>.

11.2   BEng in Mechatronic Engineering

A decision on the proposed exit BSc in Mechatronic Technology from the BEng in Mechatronic Engineering was <u>deferred</u>.

11.3   BEng in Mechanical and Manufacturing Engineering

A decision on the proposed exit award of BSc in Mechanical and Manufacturing Technology from the BEng in Mechanical and Manufacturing Engineering was <u>deferred.</u>

11.4   BEng in Biomedical Engineering

A decision on the proposed exit award of BSc in Biomedical Technology from the BEng in Biomedical Engineering was <u>deferred.</u>

11.5   BEng in Mechanical and Sustainability Engineering

A decision on the proposed exit award of BSc in Mechanical and Sustainability Technology was <u>deferred</u>.

12.   Any other business

12.1   Blended/online Delivery at Undergraduate Level

Noting the recent approval of the *Considerations for Quality Assurance of DCU E-learning & Blended Provision*, the Dean of DCU Institute of Education indicated that academic staff have been raising the issue of online/blended delivery for undergraduate programmes   She suggested that there was a need for discussion on a university framework for online and blended delivery at undergraduate level. She noted that there is already a model in DCU Futures which has a one sixth/five sixth balance of online to face-to-face delivery. She indicated that the issue is particularly prompted as we exit the pandemic, where staff are continuing to work in a hybrid way, and are also listening to feedback from students on their concerns in the context of commuting and accommodation costs etc.

In the discussion which followed the following points were noted:

- As programme boards meetings are about to take place a statement of direction in relation to online and blended delivery would be timely to facilitate decision-making;
- The key consideration for changing from traditional to online/blended delivery is the coherence of the programme overall, rather than individual module delivery modes;

- It was noted that a glossary of terms offering a shared understanding of the terms associated with online and blended learning should be developed;
- There is no universal agreed definition for blended learning; it is more about intentional blending and adding an active dimension i.e. what's the experience we want the students to have as an outcome of blended learning;
- It should be considered that in terms of student experience, the literature points to the fact that blended learning often means more work for learners;
- The Dean of Strategic Learning Innovation indicated that she would be prepared to collate learnings to this point from DCU Futures and the challenges that have arisen and suggested this might assist in informing the Committee's decision-making.

12.2   Bachelor of Business Studies, Business Analytics specialism

It was noted that the DCU Futures programme team for the Bachelor of Business Studies Business Analytics specialism is currently engaged in dialogue with the external examiner and it was anticipated that the proposal for the new pathway would be on the agenda of the next meeting of Education Committee.

12.3   Allocation of Open Education programmes to Faculties

The Dean of the Faculty of Engineering and Computing clarified that the *high level allocation of Open Education programmes to Faculties* document had not reflected the allocation of the Certificate in User Experience as the document represented 2021-2022 intake only. As there was no intake to the programme in 2021-2022 she wanted to flag that, if funded and offered in the future, responsibility for this programme should follow responsibility for the 'parent' programmes. Therefore, the Certificate in User Experience would be included with the Springboard+ programmes that are linked to Faculty of Engineering and Computing programmes.

Signed: _____ Date: _____

Date of next meeting:
Wednesday, 9 March 2022
at 2.00 pm via Zoom