

UNIVERSITY STANDARDS COMMITTEE

MINUTES

Thursday 25 August 2022

10.00 a.m. – 11.15 a.m. via Zoom

Present: Mr Eoin Crossen, Ms Liza Gieroń, Dr Anna Logan (Chair), Dr Jennifer McManis, Ms Phylomena McMorrow, Professor Sharon O'Brien and Professor Joseph Stokes

Apologies: Dr Brad Anderson and Ms Margaret Irwin-Bannon

In Attendance: Ms Valerie Cooke, Dr David Mc Carthy (Secretary) and Dr Monica Ward

The Chair noted that, since the last meeting of the University Standards Committee, Dr Mark Glynn has left DCU. The Chair also noted that Dr Brad Anderson's membership, as representative of Heads of School will conclude after today's meeting. The Chair formally recorded her thanks to both Dr Glynn and Dr Anderson for their huge service to the committee. The Chair welcomed Mr Eoin Crossen to the Committee as the Students' Union Vice President for Academic Life.

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

The agenda was adopted.

2. Minutes of the meeting of 12 May 2022

Noted. The minutes of the meeting of 12 May 2022 were approved electronically to facilitate approval by Academic Council on 23 May 2022.

3. Matters arising from the minutes

3.1 It was noted that the revision of DCU's Academic Integrity and Plagiarism policy is ongoing.

3.2 It was noted that the DCUSU Vice President for Academic Life is completing a proposal for paperless assessment submissions following feedback from the University Standards Committee.

3.3 It was noted that the following changes were approved by Chair's Action (17 May 2022) in advance of submission to the May 2022 meeting of Academic Council.

Section 2.5: Insertion of a specific reference to the Academic Integrity and Plagiarism Policy

Section 3.1: Amended to reflect the scenario where some online exams are conducted in an invigilated lab on campus and a standard exam hall breach of exam regulations is identified:

3.1 In line with DCU [Examination Regulations](#), any alleged breach of examination regulations identified in the exam hall during an online examination will be brought to the attention of the Registry. The candidate will be contacted by the Registry Student Awards Manager with details of the contents of the reported breach of Examination Regulations. The Registry Student Awards Manager will then report the matter to the DCU Disciplinary Committee as outlined in the [Examination Regulations](#) section 10.4 – 10.9.

Section 3.2: Amended to allow Integrity issues identified with an online exam to be processed in accordance with the Academic Integrity and plagiarism policy:

3.2 All submissions of student work during online examinations are subject to the Academic Integrity and Plagiarism Policy as indicated in Section 2.5 of this appendix. Students have a right to be assessed on the quality of their own work, and have the corresponding duty to present only their own work for assessment. Any alleged breaches of this policy detected during the assessment of an online examination will follow the protocol outlined in the [Academic Integrity and Plagiarism Policy](#).

3.4 It was noted that amendments to the programme regulations for Biological Sciences General Entry (BGE) and Chemical Sciences General Entry (CGE) programmes for 2022-23, were approved by Chair's Action, 20 May 2022:

3.5 It was noted that a legacy re-admission application for a student re-entering the MSc in Public Policy programme was approved by Chair's Action, 30 June 2022

B. Faculty issues

4. External examiners for taught programmes

4.1 Nominations

4.1.1 University College Cork
Masters in Special Educational Needs
Approved

4.1.2 University of Warwick
MSc in Education and Training Management (eLearning)
Approved

4.1.3 University of Limerick
Modules in the School of Nursing, Psychotherapy and Community Health
Approved

4.1.4 University College Dublin
Certificate in Peer Support Working in Mental Health
Approved

4.1.5 Lebanon Valley College
BSc in Athletic Therapy and Training
Approved

4.1.6 University College Cork
BSc in Environmental Science and Technology
Approved

4.2 Renewal of appointment/changes to duties

4.2.1 Trinity College Dublin
Professional Diploma in Inclusive and Special Education
Approved

5. Other issues: Faculty

5.1 Faculty of Science and Health

5.1.1 Programme Regulations

5.1.1.1 MSc in Specialist Nursing/Midwifery for Future Healthcare
Approved

5.1.1.2 MSc in Child and Family Health and Wellbeing
Approved

5.1.1.3 MSc in Health and Social Inclusion
Approved

5.1.1.4 BSc in Physical Education with Biology
Not Approved – Clarification of the credits to be completed by each cohort by year of entry is required.

5.1.1.5 BSc in Physical Education with Mathematics
Not Approved – Clarification of the credits to be completed by each cohort by year of entry is required.

5.1.1.6 BSc in Science Education
Approved

5.2 Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences

5.2.1 Programme Regulations

5.2.1.1 MSc in Public Policy
Approved

5.2.1.2 European Master in Law, Data and Artificial Intelligence
Approved.

5.2.1.3 BA in English and History
Approved

5.2.1.4 BA in Humanities
Approved

5.2.1.5 BA Single Module
Approved

5.2.2 Legacy Readmission

5.2.2.1 BA in Jazz and Contemporary Music Performance

Approved – It was noted that the student is permitted advanced entry to Year 3 rather than Year 4 of the programme.

5.3 DCU Institute of Education

5.3.1 Readmission – Direct Application

5.3.1.1 Master of Education

Approved – It was noted that, in addition to completing the contemporary issues and thesis modules, the student must also complete a module in quantitative research methods.

5.3.2 Legacy readmission

5.3.2.1 MSc in Education and Training Management (Leadership)

Approved – It was noted that USC advised that the programme chair would inform the student of the maximum completion period and the consequences of not completing the programme within this period.

C: Other issues (not Faculty-specific)

6. Amendment to the USC Terms of Reference

Approved

7. Amendment to Marks and Standards 2022-2023

The following proposed amendment was approved.

Amendment to Section 6.3.6 as follows:

Deferral of an overall module mark will be considered where extenuating circumstances are presented ~~with a request to postpone continuous assessment and/or examination~~. A module is then deferred to the next available opportunity; this is determined by the academic structure of the programme.

This change is proposed because, according to agreed extenuating circumstances procedures, a student does not request a module to be deferred to the next available opportunity as part of the extenuating circumstances process. Instead, a Progression and Award Board (PAB) makes this decision based on the extenuating circumstances presented and the module mark.

8. Use of Duolingo for Entry in 2023/24 academic year

Approved. It was noted that an analysis of academic attainment by international students who gain entry to their programme of study using the Duolingo test will be conducted toward the end of Semester 2 in the 2022-23 academic year. This analysis will be presented to the University Standards Committee before it decides on whether or not the Duolingo test will be accepted for applicants who intend to commence their studies in the 2024-25 academic year.

The Secretary provided clarification regarding the minutes of the meeting of University Standards Committee on 18 November 2021 when the use of the Duolingo test to meet DCU's entry requirements for both postgraduate taught and postgraduate research entry was last considered. The minutes record that its use was approved for entry in 2021-22. However, the intention of the decision was for applications that would be processed in 2021-22 for students commencing their studies in the 2022-23 academic year.

9. Application for Advanced Entry to Professional Doctorate in Elite Performance (Sport)--referred from Graduate Research Studies Board (GRSB)

Professor Joseph Stokes informed members that GRSB was asked to consider a request from the School of Health and Human Performance for a DCU student to transfer from Year 1 of the MSc in Elite Sport Performance to Year 2 of the Professional Doctorate in Elite Performance. He also informed members that while the Chairs of both programmes and the

Head of School approve the request, there is no evidence of approval from the Faculty of Science and Health's Faculty Research Committee or Faculty Teaching and Learning Committee.

It was noted that GRSB expressed a number of objections to the request, primarily that it would set a precedent that would impact on other programmes in the University, i.e. the Doctorate in Psychotherapy and the Doctor of Education; it would constitute a significant divergence from sectoral norms; and it would potentially undermine the academic standards of the Professional Doctorate by allowing advanced entry to a research programme based on credits earned and learning outcomes achieved as part of a taught programme.

It was noted that the University Standards Committee does not support this request, as the MSc in Elite Sport Performance and the Professional Doctorate in Elite Performance are entirely distinct, with a clear difference between the admission criteria for the Level 9 and the Level 10 programmes, respectively, and lead to two different awards. It was further noted that permitting this request would set a substantial precedent for other programmes in the University and would constitute a significant divergence from sectoral practices and regulations.

It was noted that there is alignment between University Standards Committee and Graduate Research Studies Board regarding this request. It was further noted that the document, *Academic Regulations for Postgraduate Degrees by Research and Thesis* would be reviewed during the 2022-23 academic year and amended as necessary. It was intended that it would clarify that advanced entry to a Level 10 research programme based on credits earned and learning outcomes achieved as part of a Level 9 taught programme, is not permitted.

10. International Foundation Year – Math's Syllabus (Ordinary Level)

Decision Deferred. The Chair removed this item from the agenda, as members of the committee did not have sufficient time to review the proposal due to the late submission of the relevant documentation to the Secretary. It was noted that the Chair will consult with the Vice President for Academic Affairs/Registrar and consider this item under Chairs Action before the next meeting of University Standards Committee.

11. Any other business

There were no items of business.

Date of next meeting:

Thursday, 3 November 2022

10.00 a.m.