EDUCATION COMMITTEE STANDING COMMITTEE

**MINUTES**

**Tuesday 16 March 2021**

**3.30 p.m. – 6.30 p.m.**

**Present:** Dr Claire Bohan, Professor Mark Brown, Professor Michelle Butler, Dr Brian Corcoran, Dr Derek Hand, Ms Margaret Irwin-Bannon, Mr Billy Kelly, Professor Lisa Looney (Chair) Dr Ken McDonagh, Ms Pauline Mooney, Professor Colm O’Gorman, Professor Joseph Stokes and Dr Blánaid White

**Programmes and programme teams**

**BSc in Digital Business and Innovation and Bachelor of Business Studies (new pathway in Business Analytics):** Dr Brian Harney

**BEng in Sustainable Systems and Energy:** DrLorna Fitzsimons and Professor Harry Esmonde

**BSc in Global Challenges**: Ms Jennifer Bruton, Dr Shirley Coyle and Prof Iain McMenimen

**BSc in Psychology and Disruptive Technologies and BSc in Psychology and Mathematics**, Dr Lorraine Boran, Louise Hopper Pamela Gallagher, Prof Brien Nolan and Dr Monica Ward

**BA in Climate and Environmental Sustainability**: Dr Darren Clarke, Dr Susan Hegarty and Professor James Kelly

**Introduction**

The progress updates reports submitted by the DCU Futures teams were considered by Education Committee at its meeting of 10 March 2021. Having discussed the project and the submissions as a whole, the Committee decided to refer the exploration of the progress updates to Education Committee Standing Committee in advance of submission of the programme proposals for Accreditation in April and May 2021. Programme teams were provided with general feedback from the Education Committee of 10 March 2021, in advance of the meeting of Education Committee Standing Committee.

Each programme was considered in turn and each team was provided with an outline of the DCU vision for the Futures project by the Deputy Registrar/Dean of Teaching and Learning as follows:

The DCU proposal to HCI committed us to transforming the student experience and reconceptualising learning opportunities. We talk about ‘authentic connections between the classroom and enterprise’ and we use this phrase that a ‘traditional lecture would no longer be the primary mechanism of learning for DCU undergraduate students’.

There are 4 principles underlining these programmes:

1. There is a radical transformation of the student learning experience
2. Deep industry involvement
3. Incorporation of transversal skills pathway—it is important to note that the scale and scope of what’s involved is not yet known.
4. The 15% online delivery

In terms of the commitment we have made there is implicit recognition that *the way we do things at present is not necessarily the perfect way to do things*. So we have committed to explore what could work better and what would give an improved student learning experience. This is a pilot and it is about what will work and what won’t work and what we have now may not be what we will end up with. What we really want programme leads to do is push the boundaries in this. They are ‘pathfinders’ for DCU—we are a starting point at the moment and there is no certainty of where we will end up. Think about how students learn and how we can transform their learning experience to make it better.

When Education Committee looked at the content of programmes they are not really fundamentally new—they are variants or natural evolutions of existing degrees. It is important to note that this is in no way a criticism of the programmes. However, it is important to acknowledge that what is going to be radically different is **how** we do things rather than **what** we do.

At the outset the Chair commended each team on the extent of the work that had been completed to date and on what had been achieved in such a short time. She also outlined how this would be a 4-year pilot and that there would be input and evaluation as the project progressed.

Each programme was then explored in the context of the outline above.

1. **BSc in Digital Business and Innovation and Bachelor of Business Studies (new pathway in Business Analytics):** Dr Brian Harney

The following areas were raised for further consideration:

* The input from the DCU Business School Advisory Board and the connection of the classroom and enterprise, but alignment of this with the DCU Futures Industry Forum engagements.
* How INTRA will be transformed
* How the development of this programme was part of a larger development with the University
* How the programme learning outcomes reflect the framework and pillars of DCU Futures and how the conceptual framework should permeate the documentation and learning outcomes
* How challenge-based learning would be incorporated into learning
* Opportunities to provide deeper knowledge and understanding on the technical side for this graduates, and leveraging the appropriate expertise in DCU to deliver this.

The proposed Accreditation Board nominees were approved.

1. **BEng in Sustainable Systems and Energy:** DrLorna Fitzsimons, Professor Harry Esmonde

The following areas were raised for further consideration:

* Radical Transformation—innovative pedagogies and a different learning experience for students
* Engagement with Industry and alignment of this with the DCU Futures Industry Forum engagements
* The documentation should reflect the broader perspective reflected in the programme title
* The different Student Experience
* The content of the 4-year and 5-year programme, BEng/MEng

The proposed Accreditation Board nominees were approved.

1. **BSc in Global Challenges**: Ms Jennifer Bruton, Dr Shirley Coyle and Prof Iain McMenimen

The following areas were raised for further consideration:

* The general vision for the programme
* The detail of the plans for the connectedness of the classroom and enterprise
* Ensuring the cross-disciplinary nature of the programme
* An inconsistency between the programme learning outcomes and the detail of the programme
* Embedding other disciplines

A number of queries were raised with respect to the nominations for the Accreditation Board membership. ECSC requested that consideration would be given to finding an international nominee in the field of Global Challenges and also to maintain the gender mix. It was agreed that the Chair could approve the nominees by Chair’s Action.

1. **BSc in Psychology and Disruptive Technologies and BSc in Psychology and Mathematics**, Dr Lorraine Boran, Louise Hopper Pamela Gallagher, Prof Brien Nolan and Dr Monica Ward

The following areas were raised for further consideration:

* The Disruptive Technologies content
* The nature of disruption and the critical perspective
* How the delivery of mathematics content would change
* Pushing the boundaries and potential constraints
* The vision of the connected classroom and enterprise
* Synergies with DCU Futures

It was recommended that there should be a nomination across the expanded discipline rather than psychology only and the team were asked to nominate an additional nominee for the Accreditation Board.

1. **BA in Climate and Environmental Sustainability**: Dr Darren Clarke, Dr Susan Hegarty and Prof James Kelly

The following areas were raised for further consideration:

* Opportunities to collaborate with the DCU Futures team more widely
* The programme as a separate entity from the joint honours programme and an increased level of flexibility for the programme development
* The need for broad School support for the programme development
* The need for more emphasis on sustainability to be reflected in the documentation
* The programme vision for stakeholder engagement and input into the co-design and co-delivery of the programmes

The proposed Accreditation Board nominees were approved.

It was noted that each team would be provided with notes of the discussion with Education Committee Standing Committee. It was clarified that the next step for the programmes would be accreditation. The support that the DCU Futures project team would be providing was also outlined.

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

Chair