EDUCATION COMMITTEE

MINUTES

Wednesday 13 December 2017

2.00–3.50 pm in A204

Present: Dr Claire Bohan, Ms Jennifer Bruton, Professor Mark Brown,
Professor Michelle Butler, Professor John Doyle, Ms Margaret Irwin-Bannon
(Secretary), Mr Billy Kelly (Chair), Dr Anne Looney, Professor Lisa Looney,
Dr Garrett McGuinness, Ms Aisling McKenna**,** Ms Pauline Mooney, Professor
Anne Sinnott

Apologies: Professor Eithne Guilfoyle, Professor Greg Hughes, Dr Joseph Stokes

In attendance: Ms Karen Johnston

SECTION A: AGENDA, MINUTES AND MATTERS ARISING

1.   Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

2.   Minutes of the meeting of 15 November 2017

The minutes were approved and signed by the Chair.

3.   Matters arising from the minutes of 15 November 2017

3.1   It was noted that due to the change of format of the First Destination Survey from next year
the investment of time on a very detailed online report was not now envisaged, however it
is planned for a brief report to be published online (Item 3.1).

3.2   Ms A. McKenna and Ms P. Mooney provided a briefing on the current status of the considerations of DCU as a Designated Awarding Body (DAB).

The following proposed course of action was outlined as follows:

- In the context of the institutional review, it will be important to develop a narrative around DCU's responsibilities/process and procedures as a DAB. It is proposed that a paper will be submitted for the consideration of the January 2018 meeting of Education Committee which will provide an outline of the legislative framework for Designated Awarding Bodies and, in the absence of a categorical definition at national level, will propose a definition for DCU to adopt. The paper will also give consideration to the decision-making structure subsequent to consideration by Education Committee.
- In parallel with the discussion being undertaken at Education Committee a dialogue will be initiated with the Vice President External Affairs and the Chief Operating Officer with respect to governance and decision-making.
- It is further proposed that Education Committee has a final discussion in February 2018 and agree a final definition of 'linked provider', the principles of initial engagement with linked providers, and broader governance structures
- It was noted that existing DCU external relationships (DkIT and Ballyfermot Senior College) are being reviewed currently. As the existing relationships do not necessarily align with the working definition of 'linked provider' they are being reviewed with a view to aligning them with the DCU Collaborative Provision framework.
- In the context of collaborative provision agreements in general, Dr Bohan noted that there is a lack of clarity about service provision to students and its impact on central units, particularly where agreements are signed at local level and potential resource requirements are not notified. Dr Bohan indicated that she had collated some data and had sought clarification in this regard previously. It was suggested that a set of principles should be devised to provide guidance to those entering into such agreements, however it was noted that adjudication on a case-by-case basis may also need to be accommodated. It was noted that Dr Bohan would share the data gathered to date with Ms. Mooney and further consultation would take place in this regard.

3.3   It was noted that the form to address collaborative provision type 11 will be drafted over the coming months (Item 7.3).

3.4   It was noted that the restructure of the BSc in Nursing programme had been approved at the November 2017 meeting of Education Committee, subject to clarification of a number of items. It was confirmed that clarification had been provided and the proposal was now formally approved.

3.5   It was <u>noted</u> that the programme student survey due to be completed at the end of semester two will be drafted for agreement in the New Year (Item 11).

3.6   It was <u>noted</u> that university-wide issues, raised in the context of the Faculty Annual Programme Review process, and not addressed in the response document considered by Education Committee, have been referred to Executive and Senior Management.

3.7   It was <u>noted</u> that the collaborative form AA2 was finalised and agreed electronically by Education Committee (Item 7.3).

3.8   It was <u>noted</u> that communication had been sent to each faculty regarding the devolution of approval of stand-alone modules and related processes. It was <u>noted</u> too that due to the change in process, faculties were requested to provide an annual report on the stand-alone modules approved each year (Item 10).

3.9   It was <u>noted</u> that due to the change in process for the approval of stand-alone modules, the form 'Approval of Revised Academic Offerings' had been amended (Item 10).

3.10   It was <u>noted</u> that a communication had issued to faculties on the Student Survey of Teaching (SSOT) for dissemination at the end of semester one 2017 (Item 11).

SECTION B: STRATEGIC MATTERS FOR DISCUSSION/NOTING

4.   Update on strategic activities undertaken within the IUA

It was <u>noted</u> that no meetings of the IUA Registrars, Quality Officers or Deans of Graduate Studies had taken place since the October 2017 meeting of Education Committee.

5.   Irish Survey of Student Engagement (ISSE)

It was <u>noted</u> that the ISSE national data for 2017 will be online and available to the public from 14 December 2017. The data published this year will enable institutions to compare themselves directly with other institutions.

In a discussion on improvement of the quality of responses from students, it was noted that some preparatory work should be done with students to ensure that there is an understanding of the language of the criteria on which the ISSE survey is based, in advance of the completion of the survey.

6.   Education Committee Goals/Teaching and Learning Strategy

The Chair noted that the Vice President Academic Affairs (Registrar) is forming a working group for the drafting of a Teaching and Learning Strategy but is awaiting some further nominees from faculties. It is anticipated that the working group will meet early in the New Year.

7   The Jisc Digital Experience Tracker Survey, presentation by Ms Aisling McKenna

Ms A. McKenna presented on the Jisc Digital Experience Tracker Survey summary results and the following points were noted from the presentation and the discussion which followed:

- The UK-based Jisc survey aims to provide an understanding of: how students and learners are using digital tools, the environment and support to enable digital learning and provides an opportunity to benchmark provision.
- Those surveyed in DCU were campus-based students in the mid-years of study and undergraduate Open Education students.
- The initial summary findings were as follows:
  - A wide range of digital resources are being used by students to support their independent learning
  - There is a perceived importance of digital skills within future careers by students
  - There is a lack of clarity for students on how their personal data is being used
  - Students perceive the quality of digital teaching and learning to be high, 80% consider it 'good' or 'better'.
- As more Irish institutions participate in the survey, it will provide opportunities for benchmarking against peers
- How DCU involves students as stakeholders in their engagement with digital technologies for learning, and having an awareness of potential gaps in digital technology skills for students are important factors.

It was noted that the next steps arising from the survey analysis will be as follows:

- Sharing of initial results on enabling technologies within ISS
- Additional analysis and benchmarking of DCU digital experience
- Deciding on future sharing of results.

SECTION C: PROGRAMME AND MODULE-SPECIFIC ISSUES

8   Validation proposal: Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences: MA in Creative Writing

Education Committee <u>approved</u> the validation proposal subject to the following recommendations:

- Consideration of the fixed curriculum and if it will attract students who are looking for more specialised forms of writing
- The programme entry requirements should be more specific to the discipline and reflect the description on page two of the validation proposal which describes the kind of student the programme wants to attract e.g. *the kind of student is one who already thinks of him/herself as a writer, they may have published already*. To this end it recommended that the programme proposers consider including evidence of writing or a portfolio as a standard entry requirement
- Related to point one above, the list of those to whom the programme would be attractive is quite extensive and does not necessarily match with the aims of the programme as listed on page 5. It is recommended that there is a greater reconciliation of the aims of the programme with those at whom the programme is aimed.
- To explore with colleagues in the DCU Institute of Education, who have expertise in the area, the addition of an option in 'writing for children'.

It was <u>noted</u> that in general the finance template as presented for the validation of programmes does not enable Education Committee to clearly assess the programme's financial viability and make an informed decision.   In the discussion which followed it was noted that the financial summary template is unclear and inconsistent, particularly with respect to the Faculty budget element and the distribution of income. It was agreed that a sub-group of Education Committee comprising Prof L. Looney, Dr A Looney, P. Mooney and M. Irwin-Bannon would meet with relevant members of the Finance Office to seek clarification on the financial model.

It was <u>noted</u> too that a more formalised approach should be taken to market research and it was suggested that the expertise of relevant units would be sought in this regard.

9   **Any other business**

Prof J. Doyle drew the attention of the Committee to the recent launch by the Department of Education and Skills of the Foreign Languages Strategy 2017-2022. He <u>noted</u> that a key challenge contained in the strategy for the Higher Education sector will be the impact of the aim to increase the number of students in higher education studying a foreign language, in any capacity, as part of their course to 20%.

Signed: _____Date_____
Chair

Date of next meeting

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<tr><td>Wednesday, 17 January 2018

at 2.00 in A204</td></tr>
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