

MINUTES OF MEETING NO. 192 OF
THE ACADEMIC COUNCIL
OF DUNDALK INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY
HELD ON FRIDAY 26th APRIL, 2024

Meeting No 192**192.2.1 In attendance:**

Dr. Diana Bogusevschi	Dr. Brian Boyd	Mr. Frank Brady
Dr. Ronan Bree	Dr. Breda Brennan	Dr. Kevin Burns
Dr. Anita Byrne	Ms. Maeve Caraher	Mr. Dermot Clarke
Mr. Eoin Clarke	Dr. Adele Commins	Ms. Karen Commins
Dr. Coleman Dennehy	Ms. Sinead Dunne	Dr. Sheila Flanagan
Ms. Amy Flood	Dr. Joe Gildea	Mr. Peter Gosling
Dr. Myles Hackett	Dr. Edel Healy	Ms. Helen Howley
Mr. Shane Hill	Dr. Siobhan Jordan	Dr. Gillian Lambe
Dr. Fiona Lawless	Mr. Mark Lee	Dr. Paul MacCartan
Dr. Moira Maguire	Dr. Annaleigh Margey	Dr. Eamonn Martin
Prof. Fergal Mc Caffrey	Ms. Irene Mc Causland	Ms. Catherine McCloskey
Dr. Tim Mc Cormac	Mr. Pat Mc Cormick	Dr. Martin Mc Hugh
Dr. Ruth Mc Keever	Dr. Kevin Mc Kenna	Dr. Patricia Moriarty
Ms. Linda Murphy	Dr. Diarmuid O'Callaghan	Ms. Deirdre O'Malley
Ms. Teresa O'Rourke	Ms. Michelle O'Shea	Dr. Jade Pollock
Mr. Conor Reidy	Ms. Eimear Rice	Dr. Kayla Rush
Dr. Brendan Ryder		

192.1.2 Apologies:

Mr. John Reid		
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192.1.3 Absent:

Mr. Noel Mc Kenna		
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192.1.4 Minutes & Matters Arising of Academic Council Meeting No. 191**Minutes of Meeting No. 191****Proposed by:** Mr. Dermot Clarke**Seconded by:** Dr. Brian Boyd

No matters arising

192.02.01 Election of a Vice Chairperson

Dr. Sheila Flanagan, Vice President for Academic Affair and Registrar outlined the duties involved in the role of vice chairperson of Academic Council.

“2.4.2 Vice-Chairperson

*A vice-chairperson shall be elected from among **the elected members** of the Academic Council at its first meeting.”*

The Vice-Chairperson will automatically become the Chairperson of the Standing Committee Sub-Committee.

The Vice-Chairperson will also sit on the Academic Disciplinary Appeals Committee along with the Registrar as required.

One elected Member was nominated – Dr. Ronan Bree

Proposed by: Dr. Brendan Ryder

Seconded by Mr. Dermot Clarke

As there were no other nominations Dr. Bree was deemed elected as the new vice Chairperson of Academic Council.

192.03.01 Sub-committee Minutes**Standing Committee (AC:DOC:192:02:01)**

Dr. Adele Commins as outgoing vice-chairperson of Standing Committee presented two sets of minutes for noting.

Quality Sub-Committee (AC:DOC:192:03:02)

Dr. Brendan Ryder presented the minutes of the Quality Sub-Committee to Academic Council. He noted that the Sub-Committee was currently working on the Preparation, Review and Transfer of Examination Papers. The committee will endeavour to have the guidelines completed for consideration by the Academic Council in the near future.

A working group has been established to develop a micro-credentials policy for the Institute. The members of the working group as follows: Dr Brendan Ryder, Dr Moira Maguire, Sinead Dunne, Dr Ronan Bree, Dr Patricia Moriarty, Dr Colette Henry, Dr Conor Brady, Dr Breda Brennan, Dr Edel Healy, Dr Geraldine O'Connor, Professor Fergal McCaffery, Dr Martin McHugh.

Work on Academic Integrity is continuing with a policy update being part of the remit to be completed.

Graduate Research Studies Board (AC:DOC:192:03:03)

Mr. Pat Mc Cormick presented the minutes of the Graduate Research Studies Board.

Professor Joe Stokes announced his departure after 7 years in the role. The role was initially for 5 years but was extended for 2 additional years. His successor is Professor Sharon O'Brien, Associate Dean for Research in the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences.

Mr. Pat McCormick thanked Professor Stokes who has been a huge friend and supporter of Dundalk Institute of Technology over the years.

Programme Evaluation Sub-Committee (AC:DOC:192:03:04)

Dr. Myles Hackett presented the minutes of Programme Evaluation Sub-Committee to Academic Council.

Learning and Teaching Sub-Committee (AC:DOC:192:03:05)

Dr. Moira Maguire presented the minutes of the Learning and Teaching Sub-Committee to Academic Council. She noted that the previous members of the Learning and Teaching Working Group will continue to serve.

192.04.01 Student Voice – (AC:DOC:191:04:01)

Mr. Eoin Clarke, Student's Union President presented the student voice to Academic Council.

Students Union elections took place on campus on the 20th March, 2024.

The incoming team are:

President – Holly Lambe-Sally (Current VP for Welfare & Equality)

VP Welfare & Equality – Tobi Bewaji – (Student from Dept of Creative Arts & Music)

VP Student Engagement – Gerry O'Brien (Student from Dept of Humanities)

The incoming team will take up their roles on 1st July.

DKITSU raised €2,000 for charity during this year's RAG week. This has been divided between 4 charities chosen, Dundalk Dog Rescue, SAFE (Castlebellingham), Maria Goretti and Jack and Jill Foundation. Each charity will receive €500.

192.05.01 Filling of vacancies on Subcommittees

There are currently vacancies on the following committees

Standing Committee – 1 seat

Programme Evaluation Sub-Committee – 1 seat

Graduate Research Studies Board – 2 seats for elected members of Academic Council as agreed at the meeting. The terms of reference will be updated and brought to the next meeting of Academic Council.

It was agreed that Dr. Tim Mc Cormac would become chairperson of the Graduate Research Studies Board (GRSB)

Proposed by: Dr. Diarmuid O'Callaghan
Seconded by Professor. Fergal Mc Caffrey

192.06.01 School Prizes

Motion 192.01

That the Academic Council confirms the establishment of the following School Prizes in the School of Informatics and Creative Arts
(AC:DOC:192:06:01)(AC:DOC:192:06:02)

- The Samson Films Best Short Film Award.
- The Dearbhla Walsh Award for Best Major Project

Proposed by: Professor Fergal Mc Caffery

Seconded by: Dr Adèle Commins

Votes: 41
In Favour: 41
Against: 0
Abstentions: 0

Professor Fergal Mc Caffery and Dr Adèle Commins presented two additional prizes from the School of Informatics and Creative Arts to Academic Council. These prizes will forge stronger links with Industry.

192.07.01 Academic Council Meeting Schedule for noting (AC:DOC:192:07:01)

The Academic Council Meeting Schedule for 2024/25 was noted.

192.08.01 Policies

**Updates to Progression Policy for Higher Diploma in Midwifery Students in the Department of Nursing, Midwifery and Early Years (AC:DOC:192:08:01)
(AC:DOC:192:08:02)**

Motion 192.02

That Academic Council approve the updated Progression Policy for Higher Diploma in Midwifery Students in the Department of Nursing, Midwifery and Early Years

Proposed by: Dr. Myles Hackett
Seconded by: Dr. Edel Healy

Votes: 41
In Favour: 41
Against: 0
Abstentions: 0

Dr. Myles Hackett presented an amendment to the Progression Policy for Higher Diploma in Midwifery Students in the Department of Nursing, Midwifery and Early Years to Academic Council for approval.

192.09.01 Annual Monitoring (AC:DOC:192:09:01)

(A) External Examiner Reports Analysis and Action Plan 2022/2023 (for noting).

This report provides a qualitative analysis of External Examiner reports submitted to the Registrar's Office at Dundalk Institute of Technology (DkIT) for the academic year 2022/2023. The purpose of the analysis is to determine if the External Examining system as a whole is enabling the Institute to assure the standard of programme assessments and maintain the integrity of DkIT's awards and academic qualifications.

This analysis compliments the External Examiner Report analysis conducted by Heads of Department and Programme Boards at Department level.

There was a total of 169 programmes for which External Examiner Reports were due to be submitted in the academic year 2022/2023. 63% of reports were submitted by External Examiners across the four Schools with 37% of programmes across the four Schools having no report submitted.

The findings reported that overall, the external examining system at DkIT was found to be effective and fit-for-purpose. The quality of the assessment processes continues to assure the standard and integrity of the awards made at DkIT. The feedback provided by the External Examiners indicates a strong commitment by DkIT to delivering a high-quality educational experience to students on their programme of study.

External examiners commended the overall quality and fairness of the assessment processes. They highlighted the clear and timely communication, supportive staff, and well-organized procedures that facilitated their role which contributed to a positive external examination experience. The examiners were impressed by the use of innovative and engaging assessment methods that effectively measured student learning (knowledge, skills and competencies). Transparent marking schemes, detailed feedback to students, and robust moderation practices ensured consistency and fairness in the assessment process. The quality of student work met or exceeded expectations, with a focus on practical skills and real-world application. The distribution of marks and grades was considered fair and appropriate. The Examination Board's procedures were commended for their impartiality, focus on individual student performance, and professional conduct. The examiners were particularly impressed by the Institute's ability to adapt to challenges and continuously improve its assessment practices.

The institution ensures that external examiners have the information, resources and support necessary to fulfil their roles.

An action plan was formulated as part of the report.

It was agreed that external examiners will need further encouragement to submit their reports in a timely manner as the submission rate for reports is of a concern to the schools. A discussion ensued.

It was noted that it is becoming increasingly more difficult to recruit External Examiners and that the role needs to be re-examined. It was agreed that the Academic Quality Sub-Committee would look at the matter.

192.10.01 Validations

(A) Programme Validation–School of Engineering (AC:DOC:192:10:01)

Motion 192.03

That the Academic Council ratifies approval of the following programme(s)
(AC:DOC:192:10:01):

Department	Programme Title(s) (provisional)	Validation Type	NFQ Level	Award Class	ECTS Credits	Delivery Mode(s)
Built Environment	<i>Bachelor of Science (Honours) in Quantity Surveying</i>	New	8	Major	240	Full-time, Modular
Built Environment	<i>Bachelor of Science in Quantity Surveying</i>	New	7	Major	180	Full-time, Modular
Built Environment	<i>Higher Certificate in Science in Quantity Surveying</i>	New	6	Major	120	Full-time, Modular

Proposed By: Dr Breda Brennan

Seconded By: Dr Brendan Ryder

Votes: 43

In Favour: 43

Against: 0

Abstentions: 0

Dr Breda Brennan presented a suite of new programmes in the Built Environment Department which will commence in September 2024 and are currently advertised on the CAO.

She congratulated the programme team and in particular Ms. Denise Quigley who led out on the development which was validated without any conditions. She also thanked the Registrar's Department

**(B) Change of the entry criteria for the Certificate in New Born Clinical Examination (DK_NNBCE_9) programme
(AC:DOC:192:10:02)(AC:DOC:192:10:03)**

Motion 192.04

That the Academic Council approves the amendment to the entry criteria for the Certificate in New Born Clinical Examination (DK_NNBCE_9) programme.

**Proposed by: Dr. Myles Hackett
Seconded by: Dr. Edel Healy**

Votes: 43
In Favour: 43
Against: 0
Abstentions: 0

Dr. Myles Hackett presented a change of the entry criteria for the Certificate in New Born Clinical Examination for approval by Academic Council.

192.11.01 Student Survey Working Group Action Plan (AC:DOC:192:11:01)

Motion 192.05

That Academic Council approves the Student Survey Action Plan 2024.

**Proposed by: Dr. Breda Brennan
Seconded by: Dr. Moira Maguire**

Votes: 42
In Favour: 42
Against: 0
Abstentions: 0

Dr. Breda Brennan on behalf of the Learning and Teaching, Student Survey Working Group presented the action plan for 2024.

The working group membership 2023/24 are Breda Brennan (Chair), Moira Maguire, Anita Byrne, Antoinette Rourke, Karen Commings, Ronan Lynch, Brendan Ryder, Linda Murphy, SU Vice President for Engagement.

The Student Survey.ie results for 2023 were reviewed by the Working Group.

The response rate for the student survey was 32%. Students once again expressed high levels of satisfaction with 79% of respondents indicating that they had a 'good' or 'excellent' experience in DkIT. 80% of respondents indicated that they would 'probably' or 'definitely' come to DkIT if given the chance again. For most indicators, DkIT benchmarked positively against the sector.

58% of respondents indicated that they had not considered leaving their programme of study. Those who had considered leaving selected several reasons including financial (13%), employment (9%), health (8%), family or personal (18%) and transfer to another institution (12%) - all of these were slightly above the sectoral average, with the exception of 'employment'.

The Student Survey Working Group is proposing two Academic Council thematic areas for 2024:

1. Linking assessments to 'real-world' problems - 'Keeping it Real' through the use of authentic assessment.
2. Highlighting the awareness of student supports for Academic Integrity.

192.12.01 Examination Results

Motion 192.06

That the Academic Council confirms the results of the Examinations, as listed in the Examination Result Listing (AC:DOC:192:12:01)

Proposed by: Dr. Edel Healy

Seconded by: Dr. Sheila Flanagan

Votes: 42
In Favour: 42
Against: 0
Abstentions: 0

Dr. Edel Healy requested that Academic Council consider ratifying the final results for the Higher Diploma in Midwifery students. These students have all been offered permanent contracts which they cannot commence until results are ratified.

Dr. Breda Brennan requested that Academic Council consider ratifying the final results for ten graduates of the Heat Pump Installer programme.

192.13.01 A.O.B.

Dr. Ronan Bree highlighted that with CELT, several staff and various working groups across DkIT are leading out on embedding the principles of Universal Design for Learning, and that this might be an opportunity for us as a group to ensure we use a sans serif font going forward with all documentation

created as part of Academic Council, and within our own roles also. Fonts such as Arial, Verdana, Calibri and Helvetica are often referred to as being good choices to support UDL.

Dr. Joe Gildea enquired about having a seat specially for disability on Academic Council. The President reassured him that elected membership is open to all staff of Dundalk Institute of Technology and there is only a gender requirement under the Act.

The President asked Dr. Fiona Lawless if she could bring the matter to the EDI Committee.

Dr. Gildea also asked about the Policy on Continuous Assessment and the timeframe on returning feedback to students. Dr. Ryder offered to meet with Dr. Gildea to discuss.

Mr. Pat Mc Cormack highlighted the following from the C.A. Policy

“The results of continuous assessment will be communicated to students within a reasonable period and normally prior to the submission of the next continuous assessment element. This will be done in a manner that will respect the confidentiality of the marks for each student, or in the case of group work, the confidentiality of the group mark.”