

MINUTES OF MEETING NO. 197
OF THE ACADEMIC COUNCIL
OF DUNDALK INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY
HELD ON FRIDAY 21st FEBRUARY, 2025.

Meeting No 197

197.2.1 In attendance:

Dr. Diana Bogusevski	Dr. Conor Brady	Mr. Frank Brady
Dr. Ronan Bree	Dr. Breda Brennan	Dr. Anita Byrne
Ms. Maeve Caraher	Mr. Dermot Clarke	Dr. Coleman Dennehy
Ms. Sinead Dunne	Dr. Sheila Flanagan	Dr. Gerry Gallagher
Mr. Peter Gosling	Prof. Colette Henry	Ms. Helen Howley
Mr. Shane Hill	Ms. Holly Lambe Sally	Dr. Fiona Lawless
Dr. Paul Mac Artain	Dr. Moira Maguire	Dr. Annaleigh Margey
Prof. Fergal Mc Caffrey	Ms. Irene Mc Causland	Dr. Tim Mc Cormac
Dr. Ruth Mc Keever	Dr. Patricia Moriarty	Ms. Linda Murphy
Dr. Kieran Nolan	Mr. Gerry O'Brien	Dr. Diarmuid O'Callaghan
Dr. Teresa O'Rourke	Ms. Michelle O'Shea	Dr. Maxwell Yeboah Owusu-Twum
Dr. Jade Pollock	Ms. Denise Quigley	Mr. Conor Reidy
Dr. Kayla Rush	Dr. Brendan Ryder	Dr. Arjan Van Rossum

197.1.2 Apologies:

Dr. Kevin Burns	Dr. Adele Commins	Ms. Karen Commins
Ms. Briege King		

197.1.3 Absent:

Ms. Amy Flood	Dr. Joe Gildea	Dr. Siobhan Jordan
Dr. Eamonn Martin	Ms. Catherine McCloskey	Dr. Martin Mc Hugh
Mr. Pat Mc Cormick	Dr. Kevin Mc Kenna	Ms. Deirdre O'Malley
Ms. Eimear Rice		

197.1.4 Minutes & Matters Arising of Academic Council Meeting No. 196

Minutes of Meeting No. 195 Approved

No matters arising

Proposed by: Mr. Dermot Clarke

Seconded by: Mr. Peter Gosling

Standing Committee (AC:DOC:197:02:01)

Dr. Ronan Bree presented the minutes of Standing Committee. Dr. Bree highlighted that a rescinded award was dealt with at the last meeting. As this is new to the Institute, Academic Quality Sub-Committee will now examine and create a new policy.

Research Sub-Committee (AC:DOC:197:02:02)

Dr. Tim Mc Cormac presented the Research Sub-Committee Minutes to Academic Council.

Programme Evaluation Sub-Committee (AC:DOC:197:02:03)

Mr. Shane Hill presented minutes from the Programme Evaluation Sub-Committee.

Academic Quality Sub-Committee (AC:DOC:197:02:04)

Dr. Brendan Ryder presented two sets of minutes from the Academic Quality Sub-Committee to Academic Council. Significant work is being carried out on the Academic Integrity Policy with the establishment of two working groups to work on various aspects of updating the policy. Dr. Ryder indicated that Staff Feedback on DkIT's Guidance on Generative Artificial Intelligence needs to be analysed.

The Sub-Committee will examine a draft Rescinding and Surrendering of Awards Policy. The current DkIT Assessment and Standards includes a section for the revocation of an award. Based on recent experiences there is now a requirement to include the rescinding and surrendering of an award.

Graduate Research Studies Board (AC:DOC:197:02:05)

The minutes of the Graduate Research Studies Board were presented by Dr. Tim Mc Cormac. The Guidelines for PhD by Publication have been updated by DCU and adopted by DkIT. The "Declaration of Authorship Form" has also been updated and will be submitted to this committee for approval.

Year 2 Action plan emanating from the Self-Assessment Report through external quality was presented to the Board. The report was discussed by members with an emphasis on Year 2 actions. The Year 3 update to this report will be presented to DkIT GRSB at the end of this academic year.

Dr. Mc Cormac gave an update regarding the poor uptake of some online Epigeum Modules by the PGR community in particular the Research Method Toolkit. In addition, the chair informed the board that the Graduate Studies Office were currently procuring a new suite of online training platforms from Epigeum. The need for Viva Chair training was also emphasised and this will be run in semester 2 by the Graduate Studies Office.

Learning and Teaching Sub-Committee (AC:DOC:197:02:06)

Dr. Gerry Gallagher presented the minutes of the Learning and Teaching Sub-Committee.

197.3.1 Student Voice (AC:DOC:197:03:01)

Ms. Holly Lambe Sally outlined the recent activities from the Student's Union which include

- Part Time Officers Elected, Union Executive team is now filled.
- Student's Union Nominations open 3rd March

- SHAG week (Sexual Health and Guidance) week is commencing 10th of February.
- Culture Week, commences on 24th February.
- Plans are in place to run a pre easter study essential campaign before students break for easter.
- Work is underway with USI on campaigns for Retention and Progression in the Institute.
- RAG week (Raise and Give) is being planned in conjunction with hosting charity driven events.

Mr. Ger O'Brien Student's Union Vice President for Welfare reported on a recent national meeting on retention. One of the main issues faced by DkIT's students is the expense of food on campus.

197.4.1 Validations

(A) Programme Validation–School of Informatics and Creative Arts (AC:DOC:197:04:01)(AC:DOC:197:04:02)

Motion 197.01

That the Academic Council ratifies approval of the following programme(s)
(AC:DOC:197:04:01)(AC:DOC:197:04:02):

Department	Programme Title(s) (provisional)	Validation Type	NFQ Level	Award Class	ECTS Credits	Delivery Mode(s)
Creative Arts, Media and Music	<i>Certificate in Digital Media Design</i>	Differential	7	Minor	40	Part-time Online
Creative Arts, Media and Music	<i>Certificate in User Experience (UX) Design</i>	Differential	7	Minor	40	Part-time Online

Proposed by: Professor Fergal McCaffery
Seconded by: Dr. Brendan Ryder

Votes: 37
In Favour: 37
Against: 0
Abstention: 0

Professor Fergal McCaffery outlined the background to this differential validation to the members of Academic Council. He acknowledged the work of the Development Team lead by Dr. Adele Commins and the Registrar's Office.

(B) Programme Validation–School of Health and Science (AC:DOC:197:04:03)**Motion 197.02**

That the Academic Council ratifies approval of the following programme(s) (AC:DOC:197:04:03):

Department	Programme Title(s) (provisional)	Validation Type	NFQ Level	Award Class	ECTS Credits	Delivery Mode(s)
Nursing, Midwifery and Early Years	<i>Certificate in Introduction to Cognitive Behavioural Therapy</i>	New	9	Special-Purpose	10	Part-time Blended

Proposed by: Dr Moira Maguire

Seconded by: Dr Brendan Ryder

Votes: 33

In Favour: 33

Against: 0

Abstention: 0

Dr Moira Maguire presented a new programme in the Certificate in Introduction to Cognitive Behavioural Therapy. This is a new area for the Institute providing an additional skill set for the sector. She acknowledged the work of the Development Team lead by Ms. Geraldine O'Connor and Ms. Briege King and the Registrar's Office.

Dr. Maguire noted that the External Panel were constructive and helpful.

(C) Programme Validation–School of Business and Humanities (AC:DOC:197:04:04)**Motion 197.03**

That the Academic Council ratifies approval of the following programme(s) (AC:DOC:197:04:04):

Department	Programme Title(s) (provisional)	Validation Type	NFQ Level	Award Class	ECTS Credits	Delivery Mode(s)
Humanities	<i>Certificate in Cultural Landscapes: Newgrange and the Boyne Valley</i>	Differential	6	Special-Purpose	15	Full-time

Proposed by: Dr Patricia Moriarty

Seconded by: Dr Brendan Ryder

Votes: 34

In Favour: 34

Against: 0

Abstention: 0

Dr Patricia Moriarty presented a Differential award for approval to Academic Council. This is now a 15 credit (previously 10 credits) programme aimed at Study Aboard (USA) and already has bookings for Summer 2025. She acknowledged the work of the Development Team lead by Dr. Annaleigh Margey and Dr. Conor Brady and the Registrar's Office.

(D) Programme Validation–School of Informatics and Creative Arts (AC:DOC:197:04:05)

Motion 197.04

That the Academic Council ratifies approval of the following programme(s) (AC:DOC:197:04:05):

Department	Programme Title(s) (provisional)	Validation Type	NFQ Level	Award Class	ECTS Credits	Delivery Mode(s)
Creative Arts, Media and Music	<i>Master of Arts in Creative Practice</i>	New	9	Major	90	Full-time Blended, Part-time Blended
Creative Arts, Media and Music	<i>Postgraduate Certificate in Creative Practice</i>	New	9	Minor	30	Full-time Blended, Part-time Blended

Proposed by: Professor Fergal McCaffery

Seconded by: Dr. Brendan Ryder

Votes: 32

In Favour: 32

Against: 0

Abstention: 0

Professor Fergal McCaffery presented two new programmes for approval. He highlighted that this was an interdepartmental blended programme which is both exciting and innovative and will add greatly to the School's Post Graduate offerings. He acknowledged the work of the Development Team lead by Dr. Adele Commins and the Registrar's Office.

(E) Consortium Agreement and Motion 197.05 - Deferred

197.5.1 Policies (AC:DOC:197:05:01)

Dr. Brendan Ryder outlined the context to the next three motions in relation to the Institute's position.

As part of briefing document (AC:DOC:197:05:01) he clarified that DkIT approved a "Micro-credentials Policy" through its Academic Council on the 20th June 2024, separate to the Policy on the Design and Approval of Programmes. A micro-credentials proposal form was also developed which was based on QQI's programme descriptor. Micro-credentials are either existing validated modules (validated as part of a programme validation) or new modules (requiring review by an external expert, similar to a standard module validation). A transcript of results for the modules taken is issued to students. The policy supports the piloting of Micro-credentials at DkIT for the academic year 2024/2025.

Dr. Ryder outlined the recently updated legislative and funding implication and acknowledged the significant work of THEA and the HEI Environmental Scanning that was carried out.

- For the purpose of validation by QQI, a micro-credential is a programme with the following attributes (DkIT adopted some of these characteristics in its current policy):
- volume of between 5 and 30 ECTS, leading to a special purpose award at NFQ 6 to 9.
- designed to meet a current market need for which there is demonstrable learner demand and value.
- targeted to a clearly expressed learner profile and programme delivery and assessment methods appropriate to that learner profile.
- delivered using a blended learning delivery mode (blend of onsite and online media) or solely online delivery. It will not be awarded transnationally.
- comprising one or more modules which may either originate from previously validated programmes or which may be novel.
- having a clear and persuasive rationale for creation of a new standalone award for such a programme rather than as an embedded award created through the standard validation / revalidation processes. These are standalone single programmes, without embedded awards. If additional award(s) is sought, this would require a separate application.
- with quality assurance procedures relevant to the delivery and assessment methods proposed.

Working Group Recommendation

In light of the developments, DkIT policy and associated procedures should be updated to reflect the position as set out by Quality and Qualifications Ireland (QQI), which has been adopted by ATU.

Micro credentials should not be considered to be separate awards. The term should instead be used as an umbrella term to describe awards of 30 ECTS or less for marketing and communications purpose. The QQI definition should be adopted which would mean that the minimum ECTS value for a programme at DkIT would be 5 (lowering from 10 ECTS to 5 ECTS).

This would allow DkIT to meet its statutory requirement that, so far as is reasonably practicable, that each award that it makes is an award that is included within the Framework. Programmes published in the Irish Register of Qualifications (IRQ) are testament to the suitability of the existing NFQ policies and criteria for the inclusion of micro-credentials within the Framework.

We are also required to implement the Joint Sectoral Protocol and comply with all provisions in relation to awards standards, programme design and review, assessment and external examining, access, transfer and progression and credit, awarding and certifying qualifications and provision of information to learners.

It was noted that 5 – 10 credit modules can be validated as Special Purpose/Minor Awards and Microcredentials at the same time.

Motion 197.06

That Academic Council approves the amendments to the DkIT Awarding Policy (AC:DOC:197:05:02) (AC:DOC:197:05:03) (AC:DOC:197:05:04).

Proposed by: Dr. Brendan Ryder

Seconded by: Dr. Breda Brennan

Votes: 32
In Favour: 32
Against: 0
Abstention: 0

Motion 197.07

That Academic Council approves the amendments to the DkIT Policy on the Design and Approval of Programmes (AC:DOC:197:05:05) (AC:DOC:197:05:06) (AC:DOC:197:05:07).

Proposed by: Dr. Breda Brennan

Seconded by: Dr. Brendan Ryder

Votes: 34
In Favour: 33
Against: 1
Abstention: 0

Motion 197.08

That Academic Council approves the designation of the following micro-credentials as 5-credit non-major awards.

School of Engineering:

Micro-credential Title	ECTS Credits	Award Type	Title of Award
Building Information Modelling (BIM)	5	Minor	Certificate in Building Information Modelling 1 (BIM 1)
AutoCAD	5	Minor	Certificate in AutoCAD
Electric Vehicle Level 1 & 2	5	Special-Purpose	Certificate in Electric Vehicle 1 and 2
Qualified Certifier (QC) Electrical, Testing and Verification	5	Special-Purpose	Certificate in Electrical, Testing and Verification - Qualified Certifier
Heat Pump Installer	5	Special-Purpose	Certificate in Heat Pump Installation

Proposed by: Dr. Breda Brennan

Seconded by: Dr. Brendan Ryder

Votes: 32
In Favour: 32
Against: 0
Abstention: 0

Dr. Breda Brennan presented a suite of awards for ratification. These awards were previously presented to Academic Council for approval as Microcredentials.

Dr. Brendan Ryder informed Academic Council that guidance will be given to Heads of Departments at Academic Heads Forum (AHF).

197.6.1 Examination Results

Motion 197.09

That the Academic Council confirms the results of the Examinations as listed in the Examination Result Listing. (AC:DOC:197:06:01)

Proposed by: Dr. Diarmuid O'Callaghan

Seconded by: Dr. Sheila Flanagan

Votes: 35
In Favour: 35
Against: 0
Abstention: 0

Mr. Anthony Murray, Examinations Officer presented a report on the recent examinations. Each Head of School in turn presented the results for ratification from their school and acknowledged the work of the Heads of Departments, Lecturing Staff, School Office Staff, Registrar's Department and the Examinations Office.

The Registrar congratulated Mr. Anthony Murray and his team on his successful completion of this suite of exams. Dr. O'Callaghan echoed his appreciation to all involved.

The Examinations Officer circulated a report on the result processing for the January 2025 session on the teams Channel.

Result Processing for the January 2025 Session

Between the four schools and the Examinations Office; results were processed for 4591 students from the 2024/2025 Winter Semester.

Examination Overview January 2025 Session

In the January Examination Session, a total of 3419 students sat 302 separate examinations over 8 days across 4 main venues primarily.

- A total of 182 students were facilitated with a smaller / separate room as part of their special need requirements with a further 37 sitting within a main venue.
- There was a 21% increase year on year in students requiring a separate (1-1) venue.
- In total 67 invigilators managed the examination sessions.

Examination Spot-checks & Examination Infringements January 2025 Session

- Approximately 700 spot checks were carried out during the examinations.
- 9 students were found with prohibited material in the exam halls, and/or in breach of the regulations.
- Of these, 5 students were found to be in breach of Section 5, part 7 of the Regulations for the Conduct of Examinations, pertaining to mobile phones and electronic devices. Details of all breaches were forwarded to the Disciplinary Officer to be dealt with under the Student Code of Conduct.
- The total amount of examinations that took place was in the region of 302.

197.7.1 A.O.B.

A number of concerns relating to Carparks and Canteen Facilities were raised by Members of Academic Council. The President advised that Academic Council was not the forum and to bring it to the attention of Executive Board through the School Management Teams.