

**MINUTES OF MEETING NO. 199**  
**OF THE ACADEMIC COUNCIL**  
**OF DUNDALK INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY**  
**HELD ON FRIDAY 23<sup>rd</sup> MAY, 2025.**

**Meeting No 199**

**199.2.1 In attendance:**

Mr. Frank Brady	Dr. Ronan Bree	Dr. Breda Brennan
Dr. Kevin Burns	Dr. Anita Byrne	Ms. Maeve Caraher
Mr. Dermot Clarke	Dr. Adele Commins	Ms. Karen Commins
Dr. Coleman Dennehy	Dr. Sheila Flanagan	Ms. Amy Flood
Mr. Peter Gosling	Ms. Helen Howley	Mr. Shane Hill
Dr. Siobhan Jordan	Ms. Briege King	Ms. Holly Lambe Sally
Dr. Fiona Lawless	Dr. Eamonn Martin	Prof. Fergal Mc Caffrey
Ms. Catherine McCloskey	Dr. Tim Mc Cormac	Dr. Martin Mc Hugh
Dr. Ruth Mc Keever	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	Ms. Denise Quigley
Mr. Conor Reidy	Ms. Eimear Rice	Dr. Kayla Rush
Dr. Brendan Ryder	Dr. Arjan Van Rossum	

**199.1.2 Apologies:**

Dr. Conor Brady	Dr. Gerry Gallagher	Dr. Moira Maguire
Dr. Jade Pollock	Ms. Irene Mc Causland	Dr. Patricia Moriarty
Dr. Annaleigh Margey		

**199.1.3 Absent:**

Prof. Colette Henry	Dr. Joe Gildea	Mr. Pat Mc Cormick
Dr. Kevin Mc Kenna	Ms. Deirdre O'Malley	Ms. Sinead Dunne
Dr. Diana Bogusevschi	Dr. Paul Mac Artain	

**199.1.4 Minutes & Matters Arising of Academic Council Meeting No. 198**

Minutes of Meeting No. 198 Approved

**Proposed by: Mr. Dermot Clarke**

**Seconded by: Dr. Sheila Flanagan**

**Matters arising**

The President's reminded colleagues of his update to members of Academic Council on the 8<sup>th</sup> May. Following consideration of the judicial review the Institute has engaged legal advice regarding the updating of Dundalk Institute of Technology's disciplinary procedures. . It is envisaged that this will be completed and presented to Academic Council before the end of term for consideration.

**199.2.1 Sub-committee Minutes****Graduate Research Studies Board (AC:DOC:199:02:01)**

Dr. Tim Mc Cormac presented two sets of minutes to Academic Council outlining the recent business of the Graduate Research Studies Board.

Dr. Mc Cormac gave an update on the PGR Student Survey. The additional promotion by the Schools, Student Representatives and Graduate Studies Office helped with increasing the completion rate to 56%.

Dr. Tim McCormac and Dr. Brendan Ryder will provide analysis of the results and report into the next Graduate Research Studies Board.

Independent Chairperson Refresher Training was held on the 21st March 2025 with an emphasis placed on the role of the chairperson, completing the PGR6 form, how to conduct the viva voce examination and issues highlighted by the Graduate Research Examination Board. 29 staff are now trained. All research active supervisors need to be encouraged to attend the training and take up the role. Some academic areas are underrepresented and the schools need to increase this and ascertain the barriers that are preventing staff from taking up the role and attending the training.

Other considerations included the updating of the Quality Enhancement Plan Year 3 Report and Academic Regulations for Postgraduate Degrees by Research and Thesis in line with DCU Regulations.

**Research Sub-Committee (AC:DOC:199:02:02)**

Dr. Adele Commins reported on the recent activities of the Research Sub-Committee including the Research Innovation Strategy, Integrity (RI) policy and the Regional Graduate Academy

An AI working group has met to discuss AI guidelines.

The group have looked at the EU guidelines and feel they could be adopted by DkIT as a starting point.

**Programme Evaluation Sub-Committee (AC:DOC:199:02:03)**

Mr. Shane Hill presented minutes from 14<sup>th</sup> March 2025 for noting. Dr. Brendan Ryder reminded members of Academic Council that the Approved Programme Schedules (APS) are a legal contract with our students'. A number of cases with difficulties have arisen recently at the Programme Evaluation Sub-Committee.

**199.3.1 Student Voice (AC:DOC:199:03:01)**

The Student's Union President, Ms Holly Lambe Sally presented the student voice to Academic Council.

The Student's Union Student Hub officially opened on Monday 28<sup>th</sup> April, 2025. The space is only open if a Student's Union officer is working in the space.

The President congratulated the Student's Union Team on the project.

A successful examination campaign for students of general information about their exams and services was posted on social media as well as "Brain food" pens and last-minute study materials being given out to students from the Student's Union office.

Student Union attended USI Comhdhail (congress) where they voted on motions and mandates for the coiste gno and voted in the new USI team for 25/26 academic year. Bryan O'Mahony President Elect to start July 1<sup>st</sup>. The new DkIT Student's Union team will start on July 1<sup>st</sup>.

#### **199.4.1 Schedule of Meetings 2025/26 for noting (AC:DOC:199:04:01)**

The Schedule of Meetings 2025/26 was noted.

#### **199.5.1 Titling of Minor, Special-Purpose, and Supplemental Classes of Awards (AC:DOC:199:05:01) (AC:DOC:199:05:02)**

##### **Motion 199.01**

That the Academic Council agrees to abide by the following **modified version** of the proposed titling convention for minor, special-purpose and supplemental classes of awards until further notice in writing from Quality and Qualifications Ireland (QQI):

NFQ Level	ECTS credit range	Stem for minor, special purpose and supplemental award classes	Abbreviation
6	All	Certificate	Cert.
7-8	< 60	Certificate	Cert.
	≥ 60	Diploma	Dip.
9	< 60	Certificate	Cert.
	≥60*	Diploma	Dip.

*\*There are some in the IRQ. Note the Postgraduate Diploma at NFQ level 9 is a major award type and this step cannot be used for minor, special purpose or supplemental awards.*

The NFQ level of the award is required to appear on the diploma supplement and academic transcript.

This recommendation does not affect awards already conferred. The question of whether and when the word "professional" may prefix the award stems is under discussion. This recommendation does not address such usage. It is recommended that prefixes that are used by major award types be avoided – e.g., advanced, higher, postgraduate (with diploma), or prefixes that are likely to cause confusion between major award types and non-major awards).

For the avoidance of doubt, use of the Postgraduate Certificate stem for minor, special purpose and supplemental awards where the award involves fewer than 60 ECTS is consistent with this recommendation. However, the Postgraduate Diploma stem is reserved in the NFQ for major awards.

**Proposed by:** Dr. Brendan Ryder.

**Seconded by:** Dr. Sheila Flanagan.

**Votes:** 30

**In Favour:** 30

**Against:** 0

**Abstention:** 0

Dr. Brendan Ryder presented the background to Motion 199.01 to Academic Council. A proposed convention on the titling of minor, special-purpose, and supplemental classes of awards was sent to sixteen statutory awarding bodies (all designated awarding bodies) in January 2024 for ratification along with questions on related matters.

The purpose of this document is to provide the outcome of the QQI consultation with Designated Awarding Bodies (DABs), that took place in the academic year 2023/2024, on the *“Proposed Convention on the Titling of Minor, Special-Purpose, and Supplemental Classes of Awards”*.

The briefing contains the following:

- Consultation Summary.
- QQI Conclusions and Recommendations.
- DAB Sectoral Responses.
- DkIT Policy Amendments.

Dundalk Institute of Technology (DkIT), as a Designated Awarding Body (DAB) received correspondence from Quality and Qualifications Ireland (QQI) on the 18th January 2024 on a proposed convention on the titling of Minor, Special-Purpose, and Supplemental Classes of Awards. QQI provided a paper on the proposed convention together with a number of questions to be considered by each statutory awarding body.

1. Do you agree to abide by the proposed titling convention for minor, special purpose and supplemental awards classes?
2. Do you think that the titling of minor, special purpose and supplemental classes of awards should be regulated by a formal NFQ determination?
3. What are your views on having a convention restricting the usage of the term “professional” and cognate terms in NFQ award stems to qualifications that are recognised as preparing a person to practise a well-defined (but not necessarily regulated) profession (plus a number of sub-questions)?

DkIT agreed to abide by/assent to the proposed QQI titling convention (collective statement agreed at sectoral level) for minor, special-purpose and supplemental classes of awards (until such time that further guidance has been provided by QQI requiring further assent / approval by DkIT) at the Academic Council meeting on the 23rd February 2025 (Meeting No. 191, Motion 191.07)

- DkIT responded to QQI's request for feedback on the 27th February 2024.
- DkIT received the outcome of the consultation with DABs on the proposed convention on the titling of Minor, Special-Purpose, and Supplemental Classes of Awards, including a recommendation from QQI on the 21st February 2025. The conclusions and recommendations are summarised below.

Changes to titles needs to be carefully managed and communicated with due notice.

It was noted that this was a slight adjustment to what Academic Council previously agreed.

### **Motion 199.02**

That the Academic Council approves the updated DkIT Awarding Policy(AC:DOC:199:05:03) (AC:DOC:199:05:04) (AC:DOC:199:05:05).

**Proposed by:** Dr. Brendan Ryder.

**Seconded by:** Dr. Sheila Flanagan.

**Votes: 33**

**In Favour: 32**

**Against: 0**

**Abstention: 1**

The current Awarding Policy is affected by the previous motion and must be now updated. It was agreed that the Postgraduate Certificate stem would still apply to all historical programmes including those recently re-validated during Programmatic Review.

Dr. Fiona Lawless enquired about a new validation in her department which was recently announced in the Springboard Listings and was a Postgraduate Certificate. A discussion ensued.

### **6. A.O.B.**

Dr. Brendan Ryder to circulate information on the work which is currently underway at Quality and Qualifications Ireland (QQI) to develop "*Topic-specific Statutory Quality Assurance Guidelines on Work-Integrated Learning (WIL)*". Two new publications that have been circulated to the Sector by QQI, essentially interim documents in advance of the statutory Quality Assurance Guidelines relating to Work-Integrated Learning (<https://www.qqi.ie/news/new-publications-qqi-insights-on-work-integrated-learning>):

- **Work-integrated Learning Practice in Ireland:**
  - Outlines the types of work-integrated learning currently practised in Irish further education and training (FET) and higher education (HE) as reported by practitioners in those sectors.
- **Quality Assuring Work-integrated Learning in Irish Tertiary Education:**

- Provides a thematic analysis of the perspectives and experiences of a wide range of stakeholders with an interest in work-integrated learning

The findings of both reports will inform the development of draft statutory guidelines which QQI expects to publish for consultation in the coming months.

The Registrar's Office will keep Council updated on further developments as received.

The President concluded the business of the meeting by inviting members of Academic Council to a coffee morning on Friday 20<sup>th</sup> June, 2025 at 11a.m.