

Quality Promotion Sub-Committee

Minutes of the meeting of 14 December 2010

Present: Professor Jim Walsh (Chair), Mr Robert Dixon, Dr Honor Fagan, Dr Bernard Mahon, Dr Tom O'Connor, Mr. Aengus Ó Maoláin, Professor Rowena Pecchenino, Dr Richard Watson (Secretary).

Apologies: Professor Tom Collins, Mr. Cathal McCauley, Mr. Colm Nelson, Professor Ray O'Neill, Dr David Redmond,

In Attendance: Dr Frank Mulligan

The Chair welcomed the second student representative, Mr Robert Dixon.

1. Minutes and Notes of meeting of 30 November 2010

The draft minutes and notes of this meeting had been circulated and were accepted, with the correction of the typographical error in the name of Mr Robert Dixon.

2. Matters arising

Under 4, it was announced that the visit had taken place on 8 December 2010, and the Director thanked all those who had taken part in the meetings.

3. Self Assessment Report from the Access Office

The QPSC reviewed the draft Self Assessment Report (SAR) of the Access Office. The Sub-Committee is aware of the excellent work that is done by the Access Office, but is concerned that the SAR does not succeed in conveying this to the reader: worse still, it does a disservice to the Access Office as the apparent confusion in the document may be interpreted as suggesting a confusion in reality. For example, great work is no doubt being done by different people in multiple programmes, but the description provided in the main text and the appendices raises the question as to whether there are overlaps which should be avoided; and the information available to the reader does not supply an answer to this question. The disquiet felt by the Sub-Committee on reading the SAR is heightened by the good standing of the Access Office within NUI Maynooth, and the awareness that the External Reviewers, perhaps unfamiliar with the University, may form quite a different impression from reading the SAR.

The Sub-Committee requests the Access Office to rewrite the SAR, taking account of the recommendations in *Quality Review Guidelines (Revised September 2009)*. Much of the required information has been collected, though some of it may need to be reformulated or represented for this review and amalgamated into a coherent summary of the activities of the Access Office. In particular, the main text should

include, alongside other matters listed in section 3 of the *Guidelines*, the following matters presented in an intelligible and accessible format:

- an outline of the structure of the Access Office, such as is provided by the Organisational Chart in Appendix 2;
- a description of the methodology used to produce the SAR;
- mention and analysis of the interface with other bodies in the University, such as Student Services, the Admissions Office and the Library;
- a consideration of the future of the Access Office in the context of a reduction in staff numbers, an increase in student numbers, and the severe risks facing the Office.

The suggestion was made that the Peer Review Visit be postponed in order to give the Access Office more time to prepare an adequate SAR, but the Sub-Committee considered that there would be sufficient time before the final version is to be sent to the External Reviewers on 24 January 2011.

4. AOB

None.