



**A meeting of the Royal Irish Academy of Music, Associated College Degrees Committee (RIAM ACDC) was held on 07 February 2024 at 10.00am in the Arts Building Conference Room.**

Present: Professor Neville Cox, Registrar (*Chair*)  
Professor David Shepherd, Senior Lecturer/Dean of Undergraduate Studies  
Ms. Roisin Smith, Quality Officer  
Professor Damian Murchan, Head of School of Creative Arts  
Professor Carmel O Sullivan, Head of School of Education  
Professor Deborah Kelleher, RIAM Director  
Professor Lynsey Callaghan, Research Representative & Chair of Doctoral Committee, RIAM  
Professor Kathleen Tynan, Chair of Postgraduate Committee, RIAM  
Mr. Padraig Rynn, Administrative Officer, Registry, RIAM

Apologies: Professor David Collins, RIAM Chair of Undergraduate; Professor Richard Duckworth, Second Representative from the School of Creative Arts; Mr Conn McCluskey, School of Education Manager; Professor Susan McCormick, Second Representative from the School of Education; Professor Martine Smith, Dean of Graduate Studies

In attendance: Dr Michael Cleary-Gaffney, Academic Affairs; Dr Liz Donnellan, Academic Affairs; Dr Orla Flanagan, School of Creative Arts; Ms Jo McNamara, School of Creative Arts Manager.

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- RIAM/ACDC/23-24/09**      **Draft minutes of 08 November 2023 RIAM ACDC meeting**  
The minutes of the meeting of the 08 November 2023 were approved.
- RIAM/ACDC/23-24/10**      **Matters Arising**  
**RIAM/ACDC/23-24/07.1:** A meeting did not happen with the Chief Finance Officer to discuss the finance of the Bachelor in Music Education programme. The Head of School of Education informed RIAM ACDC members that there is a proposal to work the finance of the programme out a faculty level. The Head of School of Education will update members on this matter at the next RIAM ACDC meeting.
- RIAM/ACDC/23-23/11**      **Standing update on Quality Assurance of Linked Providers by Quality Officer**  
The Registrar invited the Quality Officer to provide an update on the following items:
- **International Education Mark (IEM)**  
The Quality Officer stated that since the last meeting there had been no updates in relation to the IEM. The annual cost to the Linked Providers in relation to the application fee and the annual cost is still unknown. The IEM is expected to open in mid-February with a call for applications. The Quality Officer will inform RIAM when she receives any information in relation to the IEM.
  - **Institutional Quality Review**  
RIAM's Institutional Quality Review will be on the 23<sup>rd</sup>-25<sup>th</sup> of April. The Quality Officer stated that the Quality Office had received a final version of RIAM's Self-Assessment Report (SAR). The Quality Officer will now

review the SAR and will proceed to schedule meetings with the various stakeholders the external panel will meet.

▪ **Policies under review**

The Quality Officer advised that RIAM had submitted the following proposals to Trinity for review:

- i. English Language Policy
- ii. Educational Recruitment Policy
- iii. Fee Support and Education Assistance Policy

These policies have been approved internally by Trinity Global and Head of the School of the of Linguistics, Speech and Communications Sciences. The Quality Officer confirmed that these policies will go to the Registrar for review. Once approved by the Registrar, they will be presented to the Quality Committee for consideration and to Council for approval.

**RIAM/ACDC/23-24/12**

**Master in Music Performance Review Report**

The Review Report for the Master in Music Performance (MMus) along with RIAM's response to the report was circulated to members. The Registrar invited the Director of RIAM to speak to the item.

The Director outlined that an on-site review happened at the end of October 2023. During the site-visit, the panel met with various stakeholders involved in the MMus programme. At present, there are 29 students enrolled on the programme. The genesis of this review is that RIAM are considering introducing greater flexibility and choice within the programme by adding more streams and it was felt that an external review would enable external reviewers to act as critical friends to review the strategic direction of the programme and to highlight how the programme can develop. The external panel made 19 recommendations, none of which are of concern to the overall quality of the programme.

The review team queried what was the unique identity of the programme within RIAM and wider educational circles. RIAM acknowledged that at present there is no clear answer to this question. This is something that RIAM are going to heavily reflect upon. RIAM intend in the future to offer more streams within the MMus programme and understanding the unique identity of the programme will be at the heart of the programme design. RIAM will ensure that proposed streams are not generic and instead will have a more focused professional focus and align with the specific area of expertise of staff. As a whole, the programme is considering taking a more dynamic approach to research and sustainability within the programme. RIAM believes that these steps will provide the MMus programme with a unique identity. The School Manager for the School of Creative Arts suggested that RIAM link with course director for the newly approved M. Phil in Digital Arts and Intermediate Practice to examine whether the School of Creative Arts and RIAM could collaborate to offer electives to students on either programmes.

The Senior Lecturer queried the panel's comments in relation to having a third examiner who is a voting member present during Final Recitals. The Director of RIAM outlined that current practice is that an external examiner and Head of Specialism assess Final Recitals. She indicated that the practice of assessing Final Recitals differs across institutions. However, she reiterated

that RIAM ensures robustness by having an external examiner whereas other institutions do not use external examiners when assessing Final Recitals. The Senior Lecturer queried what would be the purpose of the 3<sup>rd</sup> examiner; was it for a secretarial purpose or minimise potential grading bias. The Panel report suggest that the inclusion of a 3<sup>rd</sup> person could ensure the robustness and consistency of assessment. The Senior Lecturer commented that there is potential that just because the expert panel utilise of 3<sup>rd</sup> examiner in their own institution, there is a tendency to recommend similar practices to others.

The external panel heard from RIAM students that they felt that their opinions were taken on board and their voice was heard. For example, student feedback on the student handbook was implemented which has been positively received.

The Registrar, the Head of School of Education and the Senior Lecturer congratulated RIAM on developing a thorough SAR, for the work that they put into their programmes and for an excellent quality review report with only very minor recommendations.

#### **RIAM/ACDC/23-24/13 Standing items on communication:**

- i) Inter-institutional collaboration including research: Heads of School of Education and Creative Arts and RIAM Director

The Registrar invited the Head of School of Education to provide an update. The Head of School updated on the Trinity Elective "*Music Making, The Arts and Society*" which is delivered by the School of Education and RIAM. The Elective is extremely popular with a maximum student capacity this year with 40 Trinity students enrolling on the elective. RIAM students can also take Trinity Electives with around 8 RIAM students taking Trinity Electives. RIAM ACDC members stated that this collaboration between both institutions was beneficial to all students. Professor Lynsey Callaghan of RIAM who is one of the module coordinators on the Trinity Elective noted that the elective was fortunate to secure high-profile guest lecturers to deliver the module such as Professor John O'Hagan. Prof Lyndsey Callaghan and Prof Marita Kerin (School of Education) have presented their experience of developing and teaching on this elective at conferences (from the perspective of a conservatoire and from the perspective of delivering within a university). There will also be a peer review publication coming from the work and experience of developing an interinstitutional module. The Registrar and the Senior Lecturer praised the School of Education and RIAM for their work on the Trinity Elective. The Senior Lecturer suggested that the module co-ordinators make the Chair of Trinity Electives Sub-Committee aware of the positive developments in relation to research outputs and conference presentations.

The Head of Education informed members that RIAM had been involved with the School of Education in the submission of an EU grant application under the Creative Europe scheme. The proposal was pertaining to listening pedagogy and improvisation for students who do not have English. The School Manager from the School of Creative Arts noted that the School would be open to research collaborations where synergies exist in relation to social inclusion.

RIAM have also assisted on a Horizon Europe project being led by Dr Mairead Hurley from the School of Education. The project entitled "*Critical Change*

*Labs: Democracy meets the arts critical change labs for building democratic cultures through creative and narrative practices*” uses creative tools (including augmented and virtual reality) to assist individuals to envision alternative futures for (shared) European democracy. This project has benefitted from the support of colleagues from RIAM.

Prof Lynsey Callaghan noted that RIAM is at the early stages of strengthening its research profile and thanked the School of Education for supporting RIAM on this endeavour. Prof Callaghan outlined that RIAM is at the early stages of developing a research institute. The proposed institute will be called “The Centre for the Future of Performance Education.” The proposed institute would focus on 3 areas:

- i. Social impact and student engagement
- ii. Utilising the National Library for archives/research
- iii. Research led and informed teaching and learning

Prof John Sloboda who is an emeritus professor at the Guildhall School and who was the founder of the Institute for Social Impact Research in the Performing Arts is assisting RIAM in the development of the new of the new research institute. The Registrar congratulated RIAM on the excellent work they are doing on embedding research into the institutional culture.

- ii) Policies and procedures relevant to RIAM: Senior Lecturer/Dean of Undergraduate Studies and Dean of Graduate Studies

The Registrar invited an update from the Senior Lecturer.

The Senior Lecturer advised members that TCD is currently reviewing its Virtual Learning Environment (VLE). The Senior Learning Technologist is meeting with individuals across the University who have feedback about the VLE; specifically, feedback on what aspects of the current VLE work well, what do not and what should change. The primary focus of the review is the functionality of the current VLE and the expectations of the VLE. This review will take place over the next number of months. The Director of RIAM suggested that the review team meet with Senior Librarian at RIAM. This may be beneficial to the TCD reviewers as RIAM uses different VLE technologies compared to TCD and RIAM may be able to share insights into functionality and where gaps in the existing VLEs exist.

The Senior Lecturer stated that in the era of generative AI, Trinity was sharing with staff examples of best practice which schools are using to reduce the misuse of generative AI in assessment. Trinity would soon be approving a new academic integrity policy. Work towards a generative AI policy was being progressed and this policy would feed into the academic integrity policy. Prof Lyndsey Callaghan stated that at RIAM’s Academic Faculty meetings, staff were requesting guidance on how to combat the use generative AI. The Senior Lecturer agreed that resources will be shared to RIAM. The Senior Lecturer also advised that Dr Paul LeBlanc would be giving a lecture entitled “Going Digital, Staying Human: Opportunities and Challenges of AI for Education” at Trinity on the 22nd of February and the RIAM was welcome to attend the event.

The Undergraduate Studies Committee is currently reviewing the attendance/non-satisfactory attendance regulations. Trinity is examining different options to monitor attendance. The Senior Lecturer noted that a monitoring system may need to be put in place to ensure equity in the application of consequences for non-attendance across the University. All

members noted that attendance is an issue, and that non-attendance can be disruptive to students who attend their lectures (for example not being able to complete group work projects). The review of the VLE is considering options to monitor attendance. RIAM outlined that it currently has in place procedures to record attendance for some student cohorts. This is currently done manually by the lecturer who reports on an MS Form if a student has not attended their learning session. If a student is found to be not attending, a meeting is had with the student to understand if there are circumstances which are preventing them from attending and supports are provided to the student to assist them. It was noted that this manual type of monitoring is resource heavy and would not be practical in large class sizes. The School manager for Creative Arts suggested that students scan their ID card when attending their classes but its implementation would need to be accepted across the University. The Senior Lecturer noted that some Schools within the University already have in place an electronic attendance monitoring system. Some members suggested that attendance monitoring could be implemented for 1<sup>st</sup> year students only.

The Senior Lecturer noted that Council would, in the next month be asked to approve the cessation of Trinity's historic matriculation examinations.

The Senior Lecturer noted that Council has approved revisions to the A-level points equivalences. These revisions will level the playing field for students from Northern Ireland and it is hoped will improve student mobility between Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland.

The work of the postgraduate renewal programme is ongoing. The renewal is split into three horizons (1,2 3). Horizon 1 which focused on clarifying and simplifying some of the core activities related to postgraduate study is now complete and the outcomes from it can be found [here](#). Work has now commenced on Horizon 2 which focuses on enhancing processes and activities related to postgraduate studies.

#### **RIAM/ACDC/23-24/14**

#### **Any Other Business**

- i. The Quality Officer advised that a new online external examiner nomination process had been approved. The automated process intended to improve user experience and allow for accurate recording of nominations and appointments. The Quality Officer highlighted that it has come to her attention that RIAM email addresses are not being recognised by the online system. A TCD email address may need to be provided to enable RIAM to submit external examiner nominations.
- ii. The Head of School of Education highlighted a proposal to amend the entrance requirements to the Bachelor in Music Education. The Registrar advised that this proposal should be discussed at the Bachelor in Music Education co-ordinating committee.