



**Trinity College Dublin
The University of Dublin**

**Minutes of the Trinity Electives Sub-Committee
24 November 2021, 3.00pm, online**

Present: Áine Kelly (AK), Clair Gardiner (CG), Stephen Maher (SM), Rachel Hoare (RH), Ciara O'Farrell (COF), Linda Darbey (LD), Jennifer Pepper (JP), Bev Genockey (BG), Ciara Conlon (CC), Graeme Murdock (GK)

AK welcomed new members and thanked the Associate Dean of Undergraduate Common Architecture (ADUCA), Prof. Graeme Murdock, for attending today's meeting. She explained that, after discussions with the Senior Lecturer/ Dean of Undergraduate Studies, it has been informally agreed that the role of Chair of the TESC should alternate between the Associate Dean of Undergraduate Science Education (ADUSE) and the ADUCA. This will be formalised subject to the approval of membership of the committee at USC next year.

TESC/21-22/01 Minutes of 25 February 2021

The minutes for the meeting of 25 February 2021 were approved.

TESC/21-22/02 Matters arising

TESC/20-21/08(a) Psychology of Climate Crisis

AK noted that the Psychology of Climate Crisis module was approved by USC and currently on offer to students.

TESC/20-21/08(b) Brain, Mind and Human Experience

AK informed members that she discussed feedback with the proposal writers of this module. A revised proposal has not been submitted.

TESC/20-21/08(c) Early Irish Law

AK informed members that she discussed feedback with the proposal writers of this module however a revised proposal has not been submitted.

TESC/21-22/03 Trinity Elective Enrolment data 2021/22

AK outlined the data on TE Enrolments for 2021/22, noting that there is a reasonably even breakdown between the two Semesters, aided by some module co-ordinators who agreed to move modules from Semester 2 to Semester 1. There is no elective running below the set minimum quota. Overall, the elective modules ran at 70% capacity in Semester 1. Currently capacity is at 72% for Semester 2, however visiting students are yet to enrol. The expected visiting student number is 660, with 593 places left to accommodate them. There were 235 Withdrawals in Semester 1, which may be due to students enrolling on language and culture modules when their competency does not match that required to enrol.

AK advised that the Global office have communicated that visiting students can receive conflicting advice regarding their eligibility to enrol. Schools should advise visiting students about eligibility and mechanism for enrolling in TEs.

SM queried who he could contact regarding removing the cap on capacity in his own module and JP agreed to look at this issue.

Action/Decision

03.01: SM and JP to discuss the cap on capacity issue on the Cancer: The Patient Journey module.

03.02 CC to communicate with module co-ordinators to ensure their school is aware that visiting students are eligible to take a TE.

TESC/21-22/04 Trinity Elective Proposals

Members noted that all TE modules should have a formal re-assessment component in place, and that the proposal form should be modified to request this information. Information about reassessment need not be listed on the short-form information on the website.

a. Creativity and Technology

The TESC noted the proposed module would be an exciting and appealing offering and praised the multidisciplinary nature of the module. However further clarity is needed around the assessment components, and COF advised that Academic Practice is available for consultation on how the below feedback can be incorporated when redesigning the assessment components.

The following feedback was provided:

- The multidisciplinary nature of the assessment is welcomed however could be streamlined to ease the workload on staff. The following points were raised in relation to assessments:
 - There is a high weighting assigned to the groupwork component and it was suggested that weighting should be redistributed to individual components. Assessment can drive a student's choice of module and highly weighted groupwork components are not attractive to many students.
 - The nature of the group video presentation assessment needs to be more specific, such as how this contribution is measured. It could be useful to allocate a nominal mark to the shared groupwork with a further marked personal contribution, such as a personal reflection. Students could also individually assess the contribution of their group members.
 - Typically, grading is not allocated to formative assessments and it is recommended to redistribute the weighting to summative assessment components. The individually marked online multiple-choice questionnaire, worth 20%, should fall under summative assessments.
 - Students will need guidance to complete the online journal and it would be useful to outline how this will be scaffolded.
- Learning outcomes need to be refined and mapped to the assessments clearly. It was noted that the first LO is not mapped to an assessment. It was also highlighted that

mapping an LO to more than one assessment can create confusion when marking and removing this overlap would ease burden on staff

- The format of re-assessment should be considered, particularly as groupwork can not be reiterated.
- Ensure information is consistent throughout proposal, for example the module aims stated on page 17 differ from those on page 19.
- The maximum capacity of students was thought to be high and could create a considerable burden for staff, which could be lessened by reducing the number of students or offering the module in both semesters and splitting the maximum capacity. Numbers could be increased after the first iteration of the Elective.
- It is important to ensure information provided in the pitch to potential students should be straightforward and succinct.

b. Music-Making, the Arts and Society

AK noted this proposal fosters connections and opens up academic opportunities for our students to engage with the Royal Irish Academy of Music. The TESC will consider the academic merits of the proposal but it is important to note that a separate piece of work is needed on the logistical and operational side before it goes to USC, since an inter-institutional agreement between RIAM and Trinity will be required. Members agreed there is great merit in offering this course and providing novel opportunities to Trinity students.

The following feedback was provided:

- Assessments should be clearly mapped to learning outcomes, for example how will the fourth LO, Engage in the co-creation of music, be assessed?
- Consideration needs to be given to ensure this module is attractive to students; will students with no music background be attracted to this course? It was also suggested the pitch to students would have to be simplified and align with language typically used in descriptions of Trinity modules.
- Members noted it was difficult to gauge workload.
- While this is a very attractive offering to students, Members felt some may be intimidated by the music creation sessions, particularly those with no music background. It should be clearly articulated what will be expected of students and how they will be guided during the sessions in order not to deter students who may otherwise be interested in taking the module.
- It was felt that 50 hours allotted to group work is quite large and may be difficult to co-ordinate between groups and different student timetables,
- It is unclear if what materials will be used in the online component and care needs to be taken to ensure coherence and a connected narrative thread needs to run throughout the module.
- A Trinity academic department needs to be identified to ensure academic and operational oversight is provided, for example it is not clear which school will host this module to ensure all logistics of running the module are provided such as entering marks into SITS etc.

- It was noted that the second module coordinator named is an Emeritus Professor. It is intended that TE are offered for a minimum of four years and to ensure stability and continuity it would be appropriate to collaborate with another module coordinator.
- It is recommended that, given the existing close relationship between RIAM and the School of Creative Arts, an invitation is extended to the School to make a contribution to the module.

Action/Decision

04.01: AK to provide feedback from TESC to those who submitted the TE proposals

TESC/21-22/05 Revised Proposal Form

AK advised members that the form was revised and sections were added to formalise a commitment from the relevant Head(s) of School to deliver the TE for a minimum of four years and to identify that a second module coordinator in order to ensure stability.

Members agreed to these revisions and suggested further amendments:

- Include a section for information on proposed re-assessment format
- Insert a table to ensure LOs are mapped clearly to assessments
- Insert guidance around marking and weighting

RH highlighted her involvement in the inclusive curriculum project and that TEs provide examples of an inclusive curriculum in practice as they include a range of teaching, learning and assessment methods. There is scope to embed inclusive practices even further. RH proposed she would put a memo together on this for discussion at a future TESC meeting. LD drew members' attention to the resources that were produced for Micro-Creditentials and suggested that similar resources, such as an example template, are developed to provide guidance for those working on TE proposals in future.

Action/Decision

05.01: CC to amend the Proposal form according to member's suggestions and to liaise with LD and AK to put together further resources to be put on the TE website.

05.02: RH to put together a document on inclusive curriculum in TEs.

TESC/21-22/06 2020/21 Reports

a. Draft Trinity Elective Annual Report 2020/21

AK spoke to the Trinity Elective Annual Report 2020/21. JP queried if it was worthwhile including a specific update on the NCAD module. AK noted that while the full complement of TCD students are taking the NCAD elective, that there are currently no NCAD students enrolled in any TE offered in Trinity, which may be due to the shift to online teaching resulting from COVID restrictions. It was agreed to delay specific reporting until the reciprocal arrangement is fully operational.

b. Student Evaluations - Summary Reports 2020/21

AK pointed out that the data produced in these reports are centralised feedback collated by Quality Officers, and while module co-ordinators may also administer surveys, TESC does

not have visibility of those reports. AK noted that there are broad positives in terms of students reporting being exposed to multidisciplinary perspectives and peer learning. Students are reporting confusion around how the TE fits into their curriculum structure (eg compulsory vs optional). AK commented that communication to students should be strengthened and suggested producing a video of student testimony. BG proposed inserting testimony into course handbooks to guide students.

SM commented on the low response rate of the student evaluation report and the possibility of self-selection bias which may have skewed results. He suggested developing a standardised survey for module co-ordinators to administer to increase the response rate and produce more robust data for cross- comparison.

SM highlighted that staff perspectives are not captured and stated this would be beneficial as staff often communicate positive experiences of delivering modules. AK agrees that this could be included in next year's annual report.

Responding to a query around staff access to LENS report, AK confirmed that module coordinators are responsible to ensure they are aware of any required accommodations and can check their module page in my.tcd.ie for the list of student LENS reports.

Action/Decision

06.01: CC and AK to communicate on developing a survey for module coordinators to administer to students

06.02: CC and AK to discuss collecting data on the experience of module coordinators

06.03: CC to include a reminder for coordinators to check enrolled student's LENS reports when next communicating with module coordinators.

TESC/21-22/07 Trinity Elective policies: no change of mind & no ring-fencing of quota

AK advised that these policies are reviewed on an annual basis. She stated that there are very good reasons not to allow students to change their mind on their selected TEs. The policy on no ring fencing of quota for visiting students ensures that Trinity students can access their top preference modules and as it currently stands, sufficient capacity is available for visiting students.

Action/Decision

07.01: Members agreed to continue to implement the policies on no change of mind and no ring-fencing of quota.

TESC/20-21/08 Systems Support and Personnel

AK invited JP to provide an update on this item. JP advised that as the Digital Trinity 2 (DT2) project has now concluded, administration of TE modules has transitioned into Academic Registry, and the process workflows and end to end processes have been finalised in recent Transition workshops. Five distinct bodies of work will take place over the academic year and JP outlined an engagement plan between AR and TESC. Subject Matter Experts, Kelly Byrne and Shane Coultrey, will oversee the mainstreaming of TE to AR and JP confirmed Kelly Byrne will continue to lead the support of TE.

JP highlighted the consideration given to replace the TE Preference process and replace it with 'First Come First Served' process. AK stated that the algorithm currently utilized incorporates a number of factors, such as balance of students from different faculties, preference of JS students over SF students, that are necessary due to the nature of TEs. AK noted that as a stand-alone system it is very efficient however acknowledged that there are issues with how it fits with other processes.

TESC/20-21/09 Any Other Business

- a. A move to SharePoint to share meeting documentation for future TESC meetings was proposed. This was agreed by members.
- b. The tremendous contribution Sorcha De Brunner has made to the TESC was noted by members and she was thanked for her incredible work. AK will contact Sorcha on behalf of TESC to communicate this.