Trinity College Dublin
Coláiste na Tríonóide, Baile Átha Cliath
The University of Dublin

GRADUATE STUDIES COMMITTEE
Minutes of the meeting held at 9am on Thursday 19th May 2016
Boardroom, Provost's House

XX = Council relevance

Present:
Professor Aideen Long, Dean of Graduate Studies (*Chair*)
Directors of Teaching and Learning (Postgraduate) as follows:
Professor Frank Barry, School of Business
Professor Dónall Mac Dónaill, School of Chemistry
Professor Lucy Hederman, School of Computer Science and Statistics
Professor Michael O'Sullivan, School of Dental Science
Professor Ruth Barton, School of Drama, Film and Music
Professor Damian Murchan, School of Education
Professor David O'Shaughnessy, School of English
Professor Anne Dolan, School of Histories & Humanities
Professor Giuliana Adamo, School of Languages, Literatures & Cultural Studies
Professor Caoimhín MacMaoláin, School of Law
Professor Christer Gobl, School of Linguistic, Speech & Communication Sciences
Professor John Stalker, School of Mathematics
Professor Stephen Smith, School of Medicine
Professor Joan Lalor, School of Nursing and Midwifery
Professor Louise Bradley, School of Physics
Professor John Gilmer, School of Pharmacy & Pharmaceutical Sciences
Professor William Phelan, School of Social Sciences & Philosophy

Ms Katie Crowther, Graduate Students' Union President   (*Ex officio*)
Ms Jessie Kurtz, Deputy Librarian   (in attendance *Ex officio*)
Ms Helen O'Hara, Information System Services Representative
                                                          (in attendance *Ex officio*)

Apologies:
Professor John J Boland, Dean of Research   (*Ex officio*)
Directors of Teaching and Learning (Postgraduate) as follows:
Professor Amir Khan, School of Biochemistry and Immunology
Professor Roger West, School of Engineering
Professor Seamus Joseph Martin, School of Genetics and Microbiology
Professor Patrick Wyse Jackson, School of Natural Sciences
Professor David Hevey, School of Psychology
Professor Benjamin Wold, Confederal School of Religions, Peace Studies and Theology
Professor Virpi Timonen, School of Social Work and Social Policy

Ms Patricia Callaghan, Academic Secretary, CAPSL Representative
(*Ex officio*)
Dr Gianna Hegarty, Graduate Students' Union Vice-President
(*Ex officio*)

***In attendance*:**
Ms Ewa Sadowska (Trinity Teaching and Learning), Temporary Secretary (*Ex officio)*
Ms Helen Thornbury, Office of Dean of Graduate Studies   (*Ex officio*)
Prof. Carol O'Sullivan (School of Computer Studies and Statistics)
for item GS/15-16/49
Dr Seán Delaney (Registrar from Marino Institute of Education) for item GS/15-16/50
Ms Niamh Brennan (Assistant Librarian)   for item GS/15-16/52

GS/15-16/47 Minutes of 21st April 2016
The minutes were approved by the committee as circulated with a factual correction on page 4 (GS/15-16/41) from "3 times annually" to "2 times annually" to read: "The Dean of Graduate Studies confirmed that the strand would not be reviewed by an external assessor as the MEd is a long established course with numerous strands already in existence, and each one is subject to regular annual reviews by the MEd external examiners (2 times annually)."

GS/15-16/48 Matters Arising

Re: GS/15-16/40   *A new course proposal MPhil in Christian Theology:* The Dean of Graduate Studies advised that the proposal had been approved by the University Council on 11 May 2016.

Re: GS/15-16/41   *A new Master in Education strand proposal in Mathematics Education:* The Dean of Graduate Studies advised that the strand had been approved by the University Council on 11 May 2016.

Re: GS/15-16/42   *A new MSc course proposal in Operations and Supply Chain Management:* The Dean of Graduate Studies advised that the proposal had not been submitted to the University Council on 11 May 2016 and further development was being carried out on the proposal in light of the external reviewer's report. With regard to the query from the last meeting about allocation of the course income to *cista communis* she clarified that Board had approved that a portion of the postgraduate course income would go towards funding the communal parts of the new Business School building which will include a 600 seater auditorium and catering facilities.

Re: GS/15-16/43 Non-EU Collaborative and Transnational Education Policy: The Dean of Graduate Studies advised that the policy had been approved by the University Council on 11 May 2016.

Re: GS/15-16/44 Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) Policy: The Dean of Graduate Studies advised that the RPL policy had been approved by the University Council on 11 May 2016. With regard to the query from the last meeting about how

research students could register via SITS on modules she reported that that was a work in progress in the Academic Registry and further feedback would be available at a later date.

XX   **GS/15-16/49 A new MSc course proposal in Computer Science**
The Dean of Graduate Studies welcomed Professor Lucy Hederman (School of Computer Science and Statistics DTLPG) and Professor Carol O'Sullivan. Prof. Hederman spoke to the circulated document explaining that the proposed MSc had been developed to more closely align the current postgraduate suite of courses to the 2014-2019 School of Computer Science and Statistics Strategic Plan. The Dean clarified that the Graduate Studies Committee did not have a remit to close any courses (for which there is a separate process) but only to consider the new MSc proposal. Prof. Hederman explained that the MSc Computer Science will follow the postgraduate model of one course with a number of strands. The four proposed strands (Data Science, Intelligent Systems, Future Networked Systems, Graphics and Vision Technologies) would commence in 2017/18 (subject to approval) and some modules on the programme will be shared across strands and with Year 5 UG students in Computer Science and MAI students from School of Engineering. Prof. O'Sullivan noted that Trinity was very well positioned to run an MSc in these specialisms and to attract international candidates to Dublin which has a strong and vibrant ICT culture. The Deputy Librarian noted that the proposed increase in postgraduate students in SCSS would have implications for the library and that this would need to be addressed prior to the first intake of the programme.

The committee approved the new course without any changes.

XX   **GS/15-16/50 A new validated postgraduate Master in Education Studies course in Inquiry-Based Learning from Marino Institute of Education (MIE)**
The Dean of Graduate Studies welcomed Dr Seán Delaney(MIE Registrar) to talk to the circulated proposal. Dr Delaney explained that MIE is an associated college of Trinity and is seeking to expand its current Master in Education Studies (MES) portfolio. The proposed MES course in Inquiry-Based Learning would commence in the academic year 2017-2018. The MES in IBL would be solely delivered by MIE, overseen by the Associated Colleges Degrees Committee (ACDC) in terms of academic quality and validated by Trinity.

The MIE Registrar noted that in line with the approval procedure for the associated collages the proposal had been reviewed by the School of Education and had been discussed by ACDC. The proposal iteration submitted to the Graduate Studies Committee incorporated the feedback from both committees.

In a short discussion which followed the School of Education DTLPG confirmed that the School welcomed the new course which was complementary to its postgraduate offering. A particular query was raised about the pass level which was at 40% for module assignments and at 50% for progression from year 1 to the dissertation in year 2. Dr Delaney agreed to unify the pass level to 50% across the board on the new course.

The committee approved the new course subject to the change in the pass mark for modules being 50%.

XX **GS/15-16/51 Policy on remote research supervision**

The Dean of Graduate studies explained that she receives a number of requests annually from international applicants to the PhD register who are seeking to carry out their PhD research from overseas and avail of a "remote supervision" arrangement. She further explained that she had convened a working group on remote supervision in conjunction with the Vice President for Global relations, both to formalise current practice and to develop a policy on remote supervision of research students. The Dean confirmed that remote supervision arrangements would remain exceptional and would only be considered where access to the data required for the proposed research project necessitated the candidate to remain in residence overseas. There would need to be an indisputable academic requirement, as opposed to a preference, to undertake the research abroad which would necessitate residence outside of Dublin for more than half of the student's time on register. The Dean further clarified that the policy does not consider remote supervision arrangements in relation to dual/joint programmes or those agreed as part of formal institutional partnership arrangements.

In the discussion which ensued the requirement for co-supervision was raised and the Dean explained that it would be mandatory to put in place a co-supervisor for remotely supervised students in order to ensure an uninterrupted continuity of supervision while the student was abroad. This provision would be a prudent safeguard not only for the student but also for the School ensuring regular contact between the two parties. The Dean of Graduate Studies referred the committee members to the *Report of the Expert Panel on the QA of Research Degree Programmes* circulated for noting under Section C which promotes co-supervision and supervisory panels as more effective supervisory arrangements than the currently standard single supervision. It was agreed to insert and amendment into the policy to say that a rejection of an application for a remote supervision is final and cannot be appealed. The Dean clarified that 7.1.3 point of the policy aimed to give flexibility to the Schools to replace with alternative provisions those compulsory modules such as seminars or workshops which were in place for research students resident in Trinity.

The requirement for the Head of School to approve individual risk assessments was discussed and the Dean clarified that Estates and Facilities was already requiring such a sign off for all current students going abroad under various schemes and projects. The policy and the draft *Application Form – Remote Supervision of Research Student* was based on the current requirements. It was agreed to ask the Academic Secretary to bring the draft policy and its accompanying documents to the Heads of School Committee for information. Health and safety responsibilities raised in relation to this policy were seen as such a broad issue in College generally that it was agreed to discuss them as a separate agenda item during the next academic year. The committee approved the draft policy subject to the agreed amendment on appeals.

XX   **GS/15-16/52 E-Theses Submission**

The Dean of Graduate Studies welcomed Ms Niamh Brennan (Assistant Librarian). Ms Brennan spoke to the PowerPoint presentation and explained that a system for the deposit of the digital versions of Trinity research theses (eTheses) into TARA (Trinity's Access to Research Archive) had been approved by the Graduate Studies Committee and developed and tested in College some years before. College-wide roll-out of the e-thesis deposit system had been delayed largely due to the introduction of SITS and that it was now proposed to implement TARA College-wide for all research theses from September 2016. The Assistant Librarian explained that TARA was an *open access* institutional repository for scientific and scholarly publications in digital form, and that the deposit process begins after the research examination process had been completed. She further explained that the configuration of TARA can facilitate withheld access if required, and it was agreed to explore the option of including an "opt out" function giving students a choice not to make their theses electronically available if they so wished.

The Assistant Librarian highlighted the benefits that the implementation of TARA would bring including elimination of duplication of data; reduction in time, effort and cost, for the student, the Academic Registry and the Library and increased visibility of the students work nationally and internationally. It was noted that the experience of other universities indicates that when theses are uploaded their usage and citations in academic journals significantly increase. She confirmed that once the practice of electronic theses availability is introduced in line with best practice internationally it offers potential for further efficiencies to be realised in the future.

A discussion developed around the strongly expressed concern of a possible ease of plagiarising the uploaded thesis which normally lends itself to quick copying and pasting by the plagiarist. The Assistant Librarian explained that such a danger could be to a significant extent controlled, firstly by banking the theses in a plagiarism detection software, secondly by benefitting from the experience of other universities using the eThesis system nearly for a decade, which indicates paradoxically perhaps, that online plagiarism appears to lend itself to an effective control. Academic works online are firmly in the public domain and references to them, and unacknowledged "borrowings" from them, can easily be traced to source through various specialist software such as *Turniti*n which acts as an effective preventive measure. Online files can also be made more secure by being encrypted and locked down but the disadvantage of that would be that they are less visible publically and have much less impact in the academic world. Any unacknowledged "borrowings" from such locked down files could go undetected for many years.

The committee agreed that the eThesis was a very valuable initiative which would speed up the submission process and were enthusiastically in support of the implementation process along the lines of the presented timescale.

GS/15-16/53 Plagiarism policy

The Dean of Graduate Studies clarified that the working group on plagiarism re-convened recently to review the feedback on the year-long use of the new regulations in College. A number of recommendations were formulated for

implementation in 2016/17. The Dean noted that communication about the plagiarism regulations and site would be improved and would include social media communications. The online plagiarism repository will be moved to a tcd.ie web address for increased visibility and the tutorial video will be improved. There will be minor changes to the Calendar entry for both undergraduates and postgraduates. This includes reference to the procedure and regulations in cases where student is not willing to accept summary procedure. A series of workshops will be organised for DTLPGs using anonymised cases from 2015/16 to assist with standardising DTLPGs' approach to plagiarism issues across College. *Turnitin* will be incorporated into Blackboard. The Academic Registry has developed a drop down menu to record four levels of plagiarism at the module level. To facilitate timely recording the procedural loop between the School and the Junior Dean needs to be closed up to ensure that the School receives the Junior Dean's decision in a timely manner.

In a discussion which followed some members expressed their appreciation for effective communication on the updated plagiarism regulations in College noting that the visibility of the issue amongst students had increased. The Graduate Students' Union President undertook to incorporate plagiarism information into the Graduate Students' Union handbook. It was also proposed that the issue of dealing with plagiarism should acquire due prominence in the summer academic English course delivered by the Centre for English Language Learning and Teaching for new non-native English speaking entrants who would have a particular difficulty with academic writing and limited familiarity with College plagiarism regulations.

GS/15-16/54 Graduate Studies Committee Self-evaluation survey 2015/16
The Dean of Graduate Studies informed the members of the annual self-evaluation requirement for each principal Committee in College and invited them to complete this year's online survey of the Graduate Studies Committee at their earliest convenience.

GS/15-16/55   AOB
The Dean of Graduate Studies advised the committee members that a new Graduate Studies website was going live soon, and invited them to submit their feedback and suggestions to her office directly.

The DTLPG in the School of Pharmacy & Pharmaceutical Sciences noted that it was the last meeting under the chairmanship of Professor Aideen Long and thanked her for her constructive support to the DTLPGs during her term of office. Other committee members expressed their appreciation for Professor Long and referred in particular to the consistently high attendance rate by DTLPGs at the meetings. Members noted the usefulness of the Graduate Studies Committee meetings to the postgraduate community.

The Dean thanked the committee members for their appreciation and expressed how much she had enjoyed working with them. She congratulated the members on their effectiveness in their committee work, and noted their commitment to maintaining excellence in Trinity's graduate education in the challenging economic environment

throughout her term. The Dean noted that during her term in office the Graduate Studies Committee had :

- reviewed and approved nearly forty new course proposals including 5 online courses and the new suite of PG courses for the Trinity Business School.
- proposed and developed the PG Certificate- PG Diploma – Masters pathway.
- developed or contributed to a number of new policies including Plagiarism Remote Research Supervision; Recognition of Prior Learning; Joint and Dual Awards and Return of Coursework.
- streamlined procedures for PG course, strand and module proposals.
- contributed to joint TCD/UCD Research Supervision Workshops.
- contributed to the National Framework for Doctoral Education; the revised Irish Universities PhD Graduate Skills Statement and other working documents through the IUA Deans of Graduate Studies Group
- positively engaged with the Academic Registry Enhancement Programme and contributed to changes in the student cases process; transcripts working group; and PG modularisation pilot project

In conclusion the Dean of Graduate Studies also expressed her thanks to Ewa Sadowska and Dimitrios Paraskevas who worked as Secretary to the committee during her office term.

Section B for noting and approval

The committee noted and approved *Calendar* III changes for 2016/17 as follows:

- a change of course title from M.Sc. in Midwifery to M.Sc. in Midwifery Practice and Leadership; a new optional module *Midwifery Clinical Practicum* within MSc in Midwifery Practice and Leadership from the School of Nursing and Midwifery (*Encl B1*)
- two optional modules *Contemporary Conflict and Peace-making: Global Perspectives, Mediation and Conflict Analysis Skills* within MPhil Conflict Resolution and Reconciliation (*Encl B2*)
- a part time delivery on MPhil in Philosophy (*Encl B3*)
- two optional modules *Computer-Assisted Language Learning: Design, Implementation* (*Encl B4*) *and Evaluation in* M.Phil. in Speech and Language Processing, and *An Ghaeilge mar Mheán Teagaisc/Irish as a medium of instruction* in M.Phil. in Applied Linguistics in School of Linguistic, Speech and Communication Sciences (*Encl B5*)
- changes from the supplemental circulation (*Encl B6*):
(i)   School of Drama, Film and Music
(ii)   School of Education including the closure of the Aggression Studies strand on the MEd course
(iii)   School of English
(iv)   School of Law
(v)   School of Medicine
(vi)   School of Psychology including reactivation of the MPhil course in Psychoanalytic Studies
(vii)   School of Business
(viii) Associated College of Trinity: Marino Institute of Education
(ix)   School of Histories and Humanities

(x)   Confederal School of Religions, Peace Studies and Theology
(xi)   School of Social Sciences and Philosophy
(xii)   School of Social Work and Social Policy
-       an optional module *Editorial Practice* for research students in the School of English (*Encl B7*)
-       an optional module *Contemporary Science Fiction Film and the Experience of Myth* within the MPhil course in European Studies in the School of Languages, Literatures and Cultural Studies (*Encl B8*)

Section C for noting
The committee noted the below:
C.1 Minutes of the Royal Irish Academy of Music Associated College Degrees Committee (RIAM ACDC) of 4 May 2016.
C.2 Report of the Expert Panel on the QA of Research Degree Programmes

There being no other business, the meeting ended.

Prof. Aideen Long   Date: 19 May 2016

Remote Supervision of Postgraduate (Doctoral) Students

1.   Context

Trinity College Dublin, the University of Dublin is a global university with strategic goals to increase international engagement and enhance global recognition of the University's strengths, capacity and reputation in research.

Trinity receives a number of enquiries from students regarding PhD enrolment where research necessitates access to specific data or field experience that could not be undertaken in Dublin and which requires the student to be overseas for the majority of their registration.

2.   Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to set the parameters upon which requests for remote supervision will be considered; to clarify the roles and responsibilities of student and supervisor(s) involved in the implementation and oversight of remote supervision arrangement; and to highlight specific regulations pertaining to research students supervised remotely.

3.   Benefits

3.1   The policy provides a formal process to facilitate informed decision making for requests for remote supervision, on the basis of academic merit.

3.2   Potential difficulties and risks faced by students who work remotely from their supervisors are addressed prior to entering a remote supervision arrangement and managed proactively.

4.   Scope

4.1   This policy will only consider Trinity students undertaking research abroad on the basis of academic merit.

4.2.   This policy does not consider remote supervision arrangements in relation to dual/joint programmes. Remote supervision as relevant to partnerships will be organised separately and within the specific agreements.

5.   Principles

5.1   Trinity is committed to maintaining a consistently high standard of supervision for all its research students.

6. Definitions

6.1 Local Advisor

The local advisor (where such an appointment is appropriate) facilitates the work that is set out in the supervision plan. This plan will set out the roles and responsibilities of the local advisor, which are therefore defined on a case by case basis. The role of local advisor is an honorary position which typically will not incur payment.

7. Policy

7.1. Eligibility

7.1.1. Remote supervision is an arrangement which is granted in extraordinary circumstances on the particular academic merit of the proposed research project requiring the students to be in residence outside of Dublin for more than 50% of their time on register. There must be an academic requirement, as opposed to a preference, to undertake the research abroad.

7.1.2. Where permission for a remote supervision arrangement is granted based on access to specific data/research subject(s) which is not accessible from Dublin, and where this access arrangement changes prior to or during the student's time on register, the remote supervision arrangement will immediately be declared invalid. Options that may be available to the student are to engage, in Dublin, in the Trinity Structured PhD, or to withdraw (or be removed) from the register.

7.1.3. In all circumstances, students will be required to be based at Trinity for a time in order to successfully complete the structured and other (including Health and Safety) elements of the Doctoral programme based on the requirements of the Schools (such structured elements may be different for students under remote supervision). If the structured elements are online, or are not provided in year 1 of the programme, students must still come to Trinity in the first year for at least a period of two weeks. Subsequently, the student will attend annually for completion of annual reports, confirmation process and meet in person with supervisor(s). It is the student's responsibility to ensure that their visa and travel documents are in order to enable them attend mandatory components including *viva voce* examinations.

7.2. Roles and responsibilities

7.2.1. Approval process

To apply for permission to supervise a PhD student remotely, the proposed supervisor will nominate an applicant/student who is seeking remote supervision and submit an application form and a supervision plan to the Director of Teaching and Learning PG (DTLPG) and the relevant Head of School. The Head of School must nominate a co-supervisor also located at Trinity, to take the place of principal supervisor should the need arise. All current regulations with respect to "Eligibility to Supervise" (Calendar Part III) must be adhered to. Where appropriate a "local advisor" will also be appointed by the supervisor in conjunction with the DTLPG. The application form will include a statement that a risk assessment is complete and local health and safety standards have been met.

Following approval by DTLPG and Head of School, the complete application should be sent to the Dean of Graduate Studies for final approval (the decision of the Dean of Graduate Studies is final).

7.2.2. Remote supervision plan

A detailed supervision plan will form part of the application from a potential supervisor to the Dean of Graduate Studies to permit remote supervision. The plan should be signed by student, supervisor, co-supervisor and approved by the DTLPG and Head of School prior to submission to Dean of Graduate Studies. This supervision plan must be finalised and approved before the remote research takes place. The plan will include the following:

- Details of when, and for how long, the prospective student will be present at Trinity.
- Plan of how the student will complete structured elements of PhD.
- Demonstration (by student and/or supervisor where applicable) that the remote location where the proposed research will be carried out is suitable and that resources required to carry out the research are in place. This includes risk assessment, health and safety and taking cultural elements into account.
- Schedule of meetings/interactions (minimum of 1 per month – skype, video conference where facilities are available, in addition to emails/phone calls);
- Schedule of visits to be undertaken by supervisor and/or co-supervisor to remote location (where applicable);
- Ethical approval(s) where applicable;
- Statement re access to data; and Intellectual property considerations.

7.2.3. The remote supervision plan should be reviewed and signed off twice yearly (including before the next registration of the student) by the student, supervisor and the co-supervisor. The plan may be amended, if appropriate, at these points. Amendments must be validated by DTLPG, Head of School and Dean of Graduate Studies as above.

7.3 Reporting/Monitoring of remote supervision

7.3.1. Six-monthly supervisory reports (including progress of research), in the same format as the Annual Report must be sent to the Office of the Dean of Graduate Studies. This must be accompanied by verification by the DTLPG in consultation with the Head of School that student, supervisor and co-supervisor have adhered to the supervision plan. Student-Supervisor/Co-supervisor interaction will be recorded as a log. Confirmation that the log book is complete and up-to-date will form part of the supervisory report.

7.4 Access to services

7.4.1. When students are attending Trinity and resident in Ireland, they will have access to all services available to registered research students. However, when resident at a remote location, level of access will be necessarily different.

7.5 Regulations

7.5.1. Students working remotely are subject to all regulations pertaining to research students as per The University of Dublin Calendar Parts I, II and III (link). Financial arrangements (including project costs) must be worked out with the School. All students that have been supervised remotely are required to attend for their viva voce examination in Dublin (at a location organised by the DTLPG). Travel and other costs will be borne by the student, unless there is a prior agreement with the School. Students working remotely will not normally be eligible for College Studentships (under Irish tax regulations).

7.5.2. Intellectual property associated with the project in accordance with Trinity regulations unless a prior agreement between Trinity and the Institution where the remote supervision is taking place has been set up.

8. Responsibility

8.1 The responsibility for this policy lies with the Dean of Graduate Studies

9.   Related Documents

9.1   Research Supervision Policy

10.   Document Control

10.1 Date approved

10.2 Policy Review date