



## GRADUATE STUDIES COMMITTEE

Minutes of the online meeting held  
at 10am on Thursday 23 April 2020

(originally scheduled in Trinity Boardroom, Trinity Business School)

**XX = Council relevance**

**Present:** Professor Neville Cox, Dean of Graduate Studies (Chair)

Directors of Teaching and Learning (Postgraduate) as follows:

Professor Rachel Mary Mc Loughlin, School of Biochemistry and Immunology

Professor Sinéad Roden, Trinity Business School

Professor John Boland, School of Chemistry

Professor Owen Conlan, School of Computer Science and Statistics

Professor Paula Quigley, School of Creative Arts

Professor Ioannis Polyzois, School of Dental Science

Professor Keith Johnston, School of Education

Professor Biswajit Basu School of Engineering

Professor Philip Coleman, School of English

Professor Matthew Campbell, School of Genetics and Microbiology

Professor Ashley Clements, School of Histories & Humanities

Professor Justin Doherty, School of Languages, Literatures & Cultural Studies

Professor John Saeed, School of Linguistic, Speech & Communication Sciences

Professor Manuela Kulaxizi, School of Mathematics

Professor Kumlesh Dev, School of Medicine

Professor Cian O'Callaghan, School of Natural Sciences

Professor Fiona Timmins, School of Nursing and Midwifery

Professor Carlos Medina Martin, School of Pharmacy & Pharmaceutical Sciences

Professor Mauro Ferreira, School of Physics

Professor Ladislav Timulak, School of Psychology

Professor Gillian Wylie, School of Religion

Professor Thomas Chadeaux, School of Social Sciences & Philosophy

Professor Paula Mayock, School of Social Work and Social Policy

Prof. Jake Byrne, Academic Director, Tangent

Ms Gisèle Scanlon, Graduate Students' Union Vice-President

Ms Shaz Oye, Graduate Students' Union President

*(Ex officio in attendance)*



Ms Siobhan Dunne, Sub Librarian for Teaching, Research and User Experience  
Mr Geoffrey Bradley, Information Technology Services Representative  
Martin McAndrew, Postgraduate Student Support Officer,  
Senior Tutor's Office  
Ms Ewa Sadowska (Academic Affairs, Trinity Teaching and Learning)  
Secretary to the committee

*Apologies*

Professor Linda Doyle, Dean of Research (Ex officio)

Directors of Teaching and Learning (Postgraduate) as follows:  
Professor Deirdre Ahern, School of Law

*Observers in online attendance for all items:*

Patricia Callaghan, Academic Secretary, Head of Trinity Teaching and Learning, (TT&L)  
Marie Mc Peak, Education Support Officer, Academic Affairs, TT&L  
Fedelma McNamara, Director of Internationalisation, TCD Global  
Breda Walls, Director of Student Services

*In attendance for individual items:*

Professor Eleanor Denny (School of Social Sciences and Philosophy)  
for item GS/19-20/381

In light of the COVID-19 crisis, the decision was taken to conduct this meeting online. The papers for the April GSC meeting were circulated in a pdf format and were followed by a briefing email from the Dean of Graduate Studies who confirmed that due to the coronavirus pandemic and continuing closure of College the meeting will be conducted via zoom.

The Dean of Graduate Studies extended his appreciation to the Library, the Academic Registry, IT Services, Global Relations, Marie Mc Peak, Education Support Officer, Academic Affairs, TT&L and Ewa Sadowska, GSC Secretary for the work that they had been doing for PG students in College during the COVID-19 pandemic.

**GS/19-20/379 Minutes of 26 March 2020**

The minutes were approved as circulated incorporating a minor change requested by the DTLP in the School of Education in his email in advance of the meeting to amend his contribution on page 8 (in GS/19-20/378 (iii)) to "The DTLP from the School of Education noted that the offerings in that School needed to align with the operation of the secondary school academic year and their courses would continue to start in September."

**GS/19-20/380 Matters Arising**



**Re: GS/19-20/358 Distance-based Postgraduate Research Degrees:** The Dean advised that DTLPs from four Schools had expressed interest to participate in the proposed pilot initiative, namely the School of Psychology, the School of Religion, the School of Languages, Literatures and Cultural Studies, and the School of Linguistic, Speech and Communication Sciences. More Schools could still join if so wished. The Dean will liaise with the Academic Registry the following week to discuss logistics of going live with the pilot from September 2020.

**Re: GS/19-20/359 Revised External Examiners Policy:** The Dean noted that remote vivas were being successfully conducted in Schools and feedback had been positive. He also clarified that a pre-viva report does not apply to theses sent out prior to the Council approval of the amended forms and guidelines for examination of PGR degrees.

**Re: GS/19-20/361 PG Strategic Reform:** The Dean noted that he was in the process of collating feedback from Schools and from student focus groups into a consolidated list to be forwarded to the Vice Provost/Chief Academic Officer to inform the PG Strategic Reform process the following year.

**Re: GS/19-20/362 (ii) AOB:** The Dean advised that in response to Council's recommendation he would prepare a more detailed proposal that Trinity would not require submission of a hardbound copy of a research thesis to the library.

**Re: GS/19-20/372 A new course proposal: Integrated UG/PG Environmental Science and Engineering:** The Dean advised that the proposal had been approved by Council in early April 2020.

**Re: GS/19-20/373 A new course proposal: MSc in Quantum Fields, Strings and Gravity:** The Dean advised that the proposal was still with an external reviewer.

**Re: GS/19-20/374 New course proposals:** The Dean advised that Council had approved creation of separate course titles and course codes for Advanced Practice (Midwifery) (M.Sc./P.Grad.Dip/P.Grad.Cert) and Advanced Practice (Nursing) (M.Sc./P.Grad.Dip/P.Grad.Cert) for new entrants from 2020/21 and permitted retention of the existing Nursing - Advanced Practice (ANP) (M.Sc./P.Grad.Dip/P.Grad.Cert) to see through current cohorts already in the system.

**Re: GS/19-20/375 Academic Awards Policy (revised February 2020):** The Dean advised that Council had approved the revised policy via the GSC March minutes.

**Re: GS/19-20/376 Recognition of Prior Learning Policy (revised February 2020):** The Dean advised that Council had approved the revised policy via the GSC March minutes.



Re: *GS/19-20/377 Handbook Policy (revised March 2020)*: The Dean advised that Council had approved the revised policy via the GSC March minutes.

**XX GS/19-20/381 A new course proposal: MSc in Economic Policy**

The Dean noted that members had had an opportunity to review the new course in advance of the meeting. He welcomed Professor Eleanor Denny (School of Social Sciences and Philosophy), a prospective course director, who was let into the meeting. The Dean noted that the course has a two year part-time format delivered through face-to-face lectures and tutorials. The MSc programme, worth 90 credits, will have an intake every second year e.g., in years 1, 3, and 5, starting from January 2021. It will also commence in January rather than September i.e. Hilary term 2020/21 will be the first semester for this new MSc. This was chosen based on the characteristics of the identified target market of civil and public sector employees in Ireland. The final mark is based on a credit-weighted average of the mark awarded in each module. The course will comprise 12 new modules, six of which are compulsory core modules and will focus on core concepts and skills. The other six modules are focused on key policy areas and students will select three of these. The new course will provide students with a greater understanding of the economic policy process and the ability to engage confidently in evidence-based economic policy making. The course will be jointly delivered by expert staff in key practical areas of policy design in the Department of Economics at Trinity and the Economic and Social Research Institute (ESRI) whose relevant staff have been made adjunct to the School. It is aimed at civil and public sector employees in Ireland who do not have a background in economics e.g. at officials in government departments, the HSE, state bodies and agencies, to allow them to better engage with international and national economic research with relevance for Irish policy formation. It will cover a range of key policy areas including, but not limited to, health economics, housing, climate change, banking, regulation, behavioural economics, taxation and welfare.

Professor Denny thanked the Dean for a thorough summary of the course outline. She pointed out that the new course would be an exciting prospect for the School due to its collaborative delivery with a broad network of participating institutions. The DTLP of the School underlined that the course would present a unique opportunity for non-economists in the public sector to gain professionally relevant expertise.

In response to a query from the Dean that admissions are aimed at candidates with NFQ level 7 degrees (i.e. ordinary rather than higher degrees) and, exceptionally level 6 qualifications (advanced certificates/higher certificates) Prof. Denny clarified that traditionally the minimum education level for the civil service was not level 8. However, she acknowledged that had probably changed in the past decade and undertook to amend that entry criterion to levels 8 and 7 to be in line with admissions requirements for other Masters programmes across College.

In response to a 2<sup>nd</sup> query from the Dean to do with proposed staffing requirements, namely whether a possible freeze to hire a teaching fellow in year one and, with funds raised, an assistant professor in year two might not stymie the programme, Prof. Denny responded that the proposal had been designed before the hiring freeze. However, should the School not be in a position to hire it would be very



cautious about proceeding with the course. Prof. Denny undertook to put some text to that effect into the proposal which will convey that the delivery of the MSc is contingent on hiring, and if the School could not then the start of the programme would be delayed until such a time that the hiring freeze is lifted.

After Prof. Denny and the School DTLP left the meeting the Dean opened the floor for discussion. The Academic Secretary recommended that given a rather heavy load of teaching allocated to ESRI staff a letter of undertaking from the ESRI be appended to the proposal confirming its staff commitment to deliver the allocated components on the course. There were no additional issues raised and the committee approved the course proposal.

**Decision GS/19-20/381:** The Committee recommended the proposal to Council subject to a favourable external review and implementation of changes raised during the meeting.

## **XX GS/19-20/382 COVID-19 Assessment Update**

The Dean reiterated his thanks, expressed also in his briefing email circulated in advance of the meeting, to all committee members and staff in Schools, for efficiently raising to the challenges created by the COVID-19 pandemic. In particular, he reconfirmed that alternative PGT assessments had been successfully put in place and the College was moving into “exam time”.

However, before proceeding to a discussion on the PGT dissertation issue the Dean opened the floor to discuss Postgraduate Research concerns. Firstly, he extended his thanks to Joseph Faulkner, Activity Support in the AR, for his promptness to process PGR requests for extensions.

The Dean raised two substantive issues:

- 1) Supervisors are asked to contact the Dean swiftly should their PGR students require extensions for submission having regard to COVID-related disruption.
- 2) A huge concern is that, even if free fee extensions are granted by Trinity, funded students may face a situation where their stipends expire prior to this extension period, and, in many cases, this will mean that it will not be realistically possible for them to continue with their research. Trinity is chairing the IUA this year and the IUA Dean of Graduate Studies group wrote to research funders in Ireland (copied to relevant Government departments) requesting that they match stipends to the extensions granted. Holding sympathetic responses were returned but no decision has been taken yet. The Dean is in regular contact with all postgraduate students and will keep them updated on developments of this kind. He also noted that Deans of Research made similar representations on behalf of Irish Universities.

In a discussion which followed a number of issues were raised:

- (i) The disruption caused by COVID will invariably impact not merely on submission of theses but on timelines for confirmation of students on the PhD register. The Dean confirmed that it would be possible for the confirmation process to be delayed and for students to be allowed to register on year 3 and undergo the confirmation process subsequently.



- Such requests come in currently on a case by case basis, but the Dean will liaise with the AR to discuss how to streamline the process.
- (ii) Some students, for example in natural sciences, may be particularly impacted, in that their data research is seasonal in nature. In other words, the fact that they cannot research at this time of the year may lead to the project being delayed by an entire calendar year. The Dean advised that there is no blanket solution to address this bespoke issue. It would be possible to grant a generous extension in mitigation of this disruption; alternatively (and whereas this would impact on their receipt of stipends) it might be possible for students to go off books for a year.
  - (iii) It was also suggested that it would be ideal if PGR students on internal Trinity awards might have extended stipends to match any period of extension on the register. The Dean noted the dire financial position in which College found itself, but undertook to raise this issue centrally.
  - (iv) It was suggested by a member that it might be possible to use the 1252 Trinity award flexibly – for example by dividing it into quarterly instalments to be given as 3 or 6 month funding to existing PGR students with extensions. The Dean advised that the award can currently be divided into yearly allocations, but that he would check with Ciaran O'Brien in AR (to whom he paid special tribute) whether smaller allocations can be made.
  - (v) It was noted that PGR students without VPN do have access to online periodicals to which the Library subscribes. All members in College (academic staff, UG and PG students) can access these online periodicals remotely via the Library website using the College network login. This access method is long established, secure and stable. A VPN connection is not required, and the current VPN service does not provide remote access to online periodicals. The Sub Librarian for Teaching, Research and User Experience advised that there may be confusion regarding access to UK electronic Legal Deposit content. Due to legislation restrictions, these free periodicals can only be accessed on computer terminals in the physical Library. The Information Technology Services Representative advised members to contact Directors of Research in their Schools to bring feedback from PGR students to the Research Committee which works with the IT Services to find workable solutions to online issues.
  - (vi) Eligibility of PGR students for social welfare. The Postgraduate Student Support Officer from the Senior Tutor's Office advised that such students were not eligible as their stipends were not taxable and do not fall under Department of Social Protection. Hardship Fund had however been increased to provide some relief to the affected students.

**Action GS/19-20/382 (i):** The Dean to liaise with the AR and other relevant College Officers and Administrative Areas to clarify PGR-related issues raised during the meeting.

The Dean subsequently returned to PGT issues. He referred to his letter circulated on 15 April 2020 to DTLPs that outlined College-agreed principles (i.e. that alternative assessment methodologies to examinations appropriately assess programme and module learning outcomes, the academic integrity of degrees is





protected and students are not disadvantaged by the new modes of assessment) which apply in relation to (a) the setting and operation of online exams and other assignments and (b) the marking of assessments during the current period impacted by COVID-19. He noted that there was only one PG online exam in “real-time” required for accreditation purposes and all other exams have been converted to assignments or online (non-real time) exams that take place over a number of hours or days.

The Dean further stated that, when running “non real time” online assignments and exams academic staff should bear in mind technological and other issues facing the student, construct questions appropriate to the online modality with extended submission deadlines and accommodating needs of students with disabilities, be reasonably available to students to respond to their questions during the period when they are under examination and accommodate deferrals. In terms of grading the Dean noted that staff should act with integrity and sensitivity in equal measure. A high proportion of international students on PGT courses have returned to their home countries, and their applications for deferrals or extensions, should be considered with maximal sensitivity to student circumstances. He reiterated his request from the original correspondence that DTLPs ensure that his letter be sent to all colleagues in their Schools involved in PGT assessment (i.e. examiners and course directors).

The Dean referred to his communication to DTLPs in advance of the meeting in relation to how to respond to the COVID crisis in so far as **taught Masters dissertations** are concerned. Although students in all disciplines have been affected to some degree by COVID-19, students in some projects will have been especially dis-advantaged in completion of work on their dissertations. Those particularly affected are

- (A) students who require lab and/or library access, some form of data collection, fieldwork, placements, human interaction etc. to complete their dissertations,
- (B) Students who have had to return home either in Ireland or to another country, have now limited access to high speed internet connections, or returned to a country with firewalls that limit access to online facilities,
- (C) Students who are needed to work in front line service provision (such as students in health science disciplines).
- (D) Students with family and other responsibilities.

Given a broad variety of those circumstances, the Dean noted that, unfortunately, there is no one solution, such as granting extensions to submit, that would work for all students. In addition, there may be issues in terms of bandwidth in Schools if supervision of ‘class of 2020’ students must continue into the 2020/21 academic year.

An alternative that could be proposed in some circumstances is to convert a “wet” project to a “dry” desktop-based one (given uncertainty about when labs will be re-opening, and the difficulties for students who have gone home and cannot afford to fly back to Ireland). However, this arrangement would not address the situation when students came to Trinity in order to do the lab research as a stepping stone on their



career progression towards a PhD programme or where the project involved group work, and a key learning output of the course was that students gain experience in working in groups.

The Dean categorised the PGT student body into a number of cohorts with possible solutions. This was not an official categorisation, but merely a summary of the issues of which he was aware:

- a) students who can still complete their intended project within the intended timeframe and who could proceed as normal;
- b) students whose intended project can remain the same but who, because of disruption, need an extension to submit. In such cases, extensions to submit could be granted even if this means delaying courts of examiners meetings;
- c) students who can proceed with the dissertation by changing the nature of the project (for example from a “wet” to a “dry” project). In such cases, revised projects could be framed, and with the possibility of students receiving extensions to submit said projects.
- d) students who could complete their project (or a revised project) but would need an extension to submit but who cannot avail of the extension either on financial grounds, or because they must return to their jobs, or take up new positions (e.g. PhD positions) or would need to return to Trinity to have better internet connectivity to do so. This was a difficult situation without an exact solution;
- e) students for whom a change to the nature of the project (for example from “wet” to “dry”) would fundamentally undermine their reason for doing the course in the first place, but who would be able to return to work on the original project as and when the university is able to facilitate them. In such circumstances, extensions to submit might be granted or students might be taken off books for a year (May 2020 – May 2021) to return to work on their project in May 2021;
- f) students who could accept extensions/alterations to projects, but this might create problems within Schools, such as availability of supervisors or the impossibility of facilitating in parallel the end of one Masters year group and the beginning of another (e.g. where there is limited space in a lab and it would be impossible to facilitate the class of 2020 and the class of 2021 simultaneously). Again this was a difficult situation without an exact solution.

The Dean advised DTLPs to communicate with all course directors, as soon as possible, about how the dissertation space for their courses might be managed. It was vital that all students in all courses be communicated with by the end of the next week to let them know what was proposed. In advance, the Dean would communicate with (and meet) individually all DTLPs to discuss the proposed approach to research dissertations in their Schools. He noted finally that a general solution might be proposed for a cohort of students on a course, but there would still need to be consideration for individual students within the cohort who were affected above and beyond the norm.

The Dean also noted that he would be in communication with Lorraine Norton, Activity Administrator in the AR, to ascertain possible scheduling of PGT graduations





the next year so that the latest dates for deferred court of examiners and length of extensions could be calculated.

The Dean opened the floor for discussion and the following issues were raised:

- a) In the School of Psychology, many PGT courses offer professional placements which are provided by the employer and these may continue but many placements had been suspended or reduced. The disruption to placements constitutes a difficulty similar to that of disruption to dissertation and should be adequately addressed by College alternative provisions. The Dean commented that extensions can easily be granted but they may not solve some personal circumstances when students have to return to work in September for professional reasons.
- b) Granting a time off to PGT students to return on books the following year might result in another difficulty where supervision might not be available in the School due to a change of staff.
- c) When possible, students could avail of data collected elsewhere for dissertations as alternative to their original project.
- d) The School of Engineering is assessing PGT Masters projects and most students are doing fine. Special attention is given to students who must finish in September 2020.
- e) There is uncertainty as to when the College will re-open but when it does there is certainly a strong argument that PGT and PGR students should be allowed in as a matter of priority because their dissertation and thesis work is ongoing.
- f) The School of Medicine has 95% of Masters students doing dry projects and only a small minority needs extensions. Priority is to keep going and finish the projects and if not to go into step 2 of granting extensions to especially avoid having to manage two cohorts (continuing and new) the next year simultaneously and to avoid keeping a backlog of current students in the system which would undermine the quality of student experience for both cohorts.
- g) The PG academic year runs until September and there is therefore still time to address emerging issues. Should next year start later than September it would free up additional space for extended dissertations.
- h) Cohort extensions may be available on some courses but individual courses should take the best approach which suits the interest of their students as provisions made on one course does not automatically transfer to students on another course.

**Action GS/19-20/382 (ii):** The Dean to contact individually DTLPs in Schools with PGT courses to get out information by end of next week for PGT students with proposed solutions addressing their concerns. The Dean is also happy to contact individual course directors.

## XX **GS/19-20/383 2020/21 Academic year contingency planning**

The Dean referred to his communication circulated to members in advance of the meeting. He noted that the item relates to PG intake for the following year, and the need to work out how recruitment was to proceed because of the inevitable financial and academic hit Trinity will take due to COVID-19. He suggested that it was crucial



for all individual courses in all schools to take an approach to the next academic year that maximizes recruitment potential. The Dean mentioned the already approved changes to the rules in relation to English language requirements for the incoming cohorts in September 2020 noted by the last committee. He had already asked members to consider the options of PGT courses starting in January 2021 or parallel course start dates in September 2020 and January 2021. From feedback received he gauged that Schools were not in favour of the parallel option. Some Schools have offered instead to teach electronically for the first semester (if necessary) with face to face resumption in January. Equally the Dean noted the uncertainty of the current situation and the fact that contingency plans must be made for all scenarios.

The Dean praised the work of the Admissions Officer and the AR team who had been trying hard to minimize the recruitment decrease going forward and proposed a change for College to permit applicants who hold a conditional offer to defer their place subject to approval by the relevant Course Co-ordinator. He also praised the work of the Global Relations team in this regard.

The Dean referred to the uncertainty of not knowing when College will reopen and the need therefore to put in place contingency plans for the next year based on a three-step process of 1) working out contingency plans; 2) prompt advertising of the agreed arrangements so as not to lose recruitment momentum and to hold to PG market share, and 3) to prepare for delivery on the basis of these contingency plans.

There appear to be two logical approaches having regard to the current uncertainty as to when the University will re-open namely

- (a) Online delivery of aspects of a PGT course, certainly for the first semester
- (b) Delayed start dates for a PGT course.

Online delivery in the first semester has been suggested by a number of Schools and it is worth noting that it could create a re-usable resource going forward for micro-credentialing and CPD purposes (and indeed the possibility, in the future, of Schools being able simultaneously to offer face to face and online iterations of a course thereby increasing revenue streams for College). The Dean referred to the recent intensive online preparations for implementation of alternative modes of delivery upon closure of College acknowledging the efforts of Schools, IT Services, Trinity Online, TT&L and CAPSL in responding to the challenges presented by COVID-19. However, he cautioned that whereas this was outstanding in the context of an emergency, equally the quality and *nature* of online provision would need to be significantly enhanced if it were to replace face to face engagement for a subsequent year. He made the point that the significant amount of preparatory work that would be needed by Schools and colleagues in this regard is something that would need to be factored into decisions to 'go online'.

The Academic Secretary referred to a survey to be conducted amongst students in relation to recent online teaching experience in Trinity. The Vice-Provost/Chief Academic Officer had asked the Academic Secretary for feedback how best to support academic staff to get their UG and PGT courses online with correct pedagogy.



The Dean advised that he was planning to tease out from Schools what their preferred plans are with respect to the following year. Members shared their views in a discussion which followed:

- (i) A start day of the PG academic year to be postponed to January 2021 would not be supported by most Schools. However Schools would support postponement to October or possibly November 2020 which would cause minimal disruption to Schools but would give additional time to applicants to sort out delayed visas, transcripts or language tests. A start of a 2020/21 PG academic year in Trinity does not have to coincide with that for UG students albeit that this might happen.
- (ii) A total move to online delivery would not be favoured by all PGT international markets and especially students in China or even India. Surveys have shown that Chinese candidates would not be interested in taking online courses. Instead they would defer entry for a year in order to ensure actual student F2F academic experience in a foreign university.
- (iii) The Global Office in Trinity are concerned about the speed of making a decision for admission by Schools. There are currently around 1,300 applications awaiting review by Schools and decisions should be sped up not to lose applicants. No drop in actual application numbers has been noticed yet. Some Schools maintain direct communications with applicants on an ongoing basis not to lose them.
- (iv) Preferences of Irish applicants should also be taken into account as they apply to Trinity to experience academic life F2F on Trinity campus and they might not apply should courses be offered entirely on line given that Trinity fees are higher than those of its Dublin competitors.
- (v) Given that the Government is planning to make an announcement shortly about its plans to relax the current restrictions and closures in public life, Trinity should wait until the communique comes out before making any definite plans for the next year.
- (vi) There are many successful online courses available in the public domain and any new online courses to be released by Trinity will be in immediate competition with the established ones. Students taking online courses expect direct engagement with academic staff which must underpin the delivery.
- (vii) If any aspects of courses were to be delivered online for a protracted period, consideration would need to be given to a concomitant fee reduction for students taking such courses.

The Dean thanked members for their valuable and insightful contributions in the discussion. He undertook to liaise directly with each School offering PGT courses to ascertain what its preferences are with respect to starting the PG academic year in 2020/21. He will also consult with the Global Office and the Information Technology Services Representative. He would expect to have initial indications as to contingency plans for each individual PGT course by the next week.

**Action GS/19-20/383:** The Dean to work out with Schools, Global and IT Services a clear plan with respect to commencing a PGT 2020/21 academic year by the end of the next week.



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**GS/19-20/384 AOB**

A number of issues were raised:

- (i) The DTLP in the School of Physics advised that PGR supervisors had been surveyed as to how to engage in a creative way with their students during COVID-19 pandemic. He undertook to disseminate a list of creative initiatives once it is compiled. The Dean applauded this initiative and suggested that other DTLPs might compile equivalent surveys so that these could be shared.
- (ii) The Director of Internationalisation invited comments with respect to agenda item 10 which the Dean subsequently went over while noting Agenda B items (GS/19-20/388 below). The DTLP from the School of Psychology referred to the section 7 of that policy document "Recognition of Foreign Qualifications". He noted that it is not NARIC databases that are being used in case of professional courses, but it is also possibly professional bodies. For instance, admission to taught doctoral courses in his School can be extended to applicants who have not only a recognized undergrad qualification in psychology, but whose qualification has to be compatible with the Irish qualification as recognized by the Psychological Society of Ireland. Many American graduates fall short of this requirement. The DTLP suggested therefore that that Policy section should also state that some postgraduate courses may have specific requirements for the entry qualifications that go beyond a prerequisite academic qualification.
- (iii) The DTLP from the School of Dental Science raised an issue of students requesting partial reimbursement of fees due to missing some of clinical experience as a result of College closure due to COVID-19. Similar requests were also coming to other Schools. The Graduate Students' Union President advised that she had also received them and contacted the Vice Provost/Chief Academic Officer for advice. The Director of Student Services referred members to a recent letter from the College Solicitor issued by way of a response to the requests - and agreed to forward this to the Dean.

**Action GS/19-20/384 (i):** The Dean undertook to raise this matter with the VP/CAO.

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**Section B for noting and approval**

**GS/19-20/385 Addition of 2 year PT format of delivery to 1 year FT MPhil in Children's Literature (School of English)**

The School of English was seeking permission to introduce a 2 year part time format of delivery to the already existing 1 year full time MPhil course in Children's Literature from September 2021. The 2 year part-time format of MPhil delivery will continue to have the same learning outcomes as the existing full-time Masters course, lead to the same awards, adhere to the current progression regulations for the exit award of Postgraduate Diploma, have the same course administrator and course director, have the same external examiner, have the same 25 student effort hours per 1 ECTS amounting to 1,500 effort hours across the taught components of 60 ECTS, have the same Quality Assurance arrangements, have the same



admissions criteria (candidates will normally hold at least an upper second class honors in their primary degree or equivalent), and have the same course committee.

**Decision GS/19-20/385:** The committee agreed to recommend the 2 year part time proposal to Council from 2021/22.

### **GS/19-20/386 Addition of 2 year PT format of delivery to 1 year FT MPhil in Irish Writing (School of English)**

The School of English was seeking permission to introduce a 2 year part time format of delivery to the already existing 1 year full time MPhil course in Irish Writing from September 2021. The 2 year part-time format of MPhil delivery will continue to have the same learning outcomes as the existing full-time Masters course, lead to the same awards, adhere to the current progression regulations for the exit award of Postgraduate Diploma, have the same course administrator and course director, have the same external examiner, have the same 25 student effort hours per 1 ECTS amounting to 1,500 effort hours across the taught components of 60 ECTS, have the same Quality Assurance arrangements, have the same admissions criteria (candidates will normally hold at least an upper second class honors in their primary degree or equivalent), and have the same course committee.

**Decision GS/19-20/386:** The committee agreed to recommend the 2 year part time proposal to Council from 2021/22.

### **GS/19-20/387 Suspension of Music Education, Psychology of Education, Positive Behaviour Management, Science Education strands on FT/PT Master in Education course in 2020/21 (School of Education)**

Due to unavailability of staff with responsibility for coordination of the respective four strands for various reasons (retirement, sabbatical leave, resignation) the School of Education was seeking their suspension in 2020/21 as there will be no full-time members of staff with the required expertise to coordinate them.

**Decision GS/19-20/387:** The committee agreed to recommend the proposed suspensions to Council.

### **GS/19-20/388 Revised Admission and Transfer Policy, and Procedures for the Recognition of Foreign Qualifications – from Admissions Officer (Academic Registry)**

The Dean drew members' attention to the revised version of the Admissions and Transfer Policy and supporting documentation detailing the procedures for the recognition of foreign qualifications, along with a cover memo from the Admissions Officer from the Academic Registry. The Dean noted the main changes listed in the cover memo focusing on those pertaining to the PG space. He also stated that the USC had considered the Policy earlier that week.

**Decision GS/19-20/388:** The committee noted the changes and recommended the revised Policy (April 2020) and supporting documentation to Council subject to incorporation of relevant last minute changes.





**GS/19-20/389 Revised effective start date of changes to MD to May 2020 – memorandum from DTLP in School of Medicine**

The School of Medicine was seeking an amendment to Decision GS/19-20/341 to permit implementation of the already approved changes to Doctor in Medicine (M.D.) Degree from 2019/20 for new entrants rather than from 2020/21 with the effective start date of changes to MD deferred to May 2020.

**Decision GS/19-20/389:** The committee agreed to recommend the amendment to Council.

**XX Section C for noting**

**GS/19-20/390** The committee noted Draft Minutes of the Royal Irish Academy of Music Associated College Degrees Committee (RIAM ACDC) of 19<sup>th</sup> February 2020.

There being no other business, the meeting ended at 11.55am.

Prof. Neville Cox

Date: 23 April 2020