



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

GRADUATE STUDIES COMMITTEE

Minutes of the meeting held in College Boardroom in Trinity Business School
at 10am on Thursday 23 January 2025

XX = Council relevance

Present (Ex officio):

Professor Martine Smith, Dean of Graduate Studies (Chair)

Directors of Teaching and Learning (Postgraduate) as follows:

Professor Wladislaw Rivkin, Trinity Business School

Professor Iouri Gounko, School of Chemistry

Professor Gavin Doherty, School of Computer Science and Statistics

Professor Evangelia Rigaki, School of Creative Arts

Professor Pádraig Fleming, School of Dental Science

Professor Noel Ó Murchadha, School of Education

Professor Breiffni Fitzgerald, School of Engineering

Professor Jane Suzanne Carroll, School of English

Professor Russell McLaughlin, School of Genetics & Microbiology

Professor Rachel Moss, School of Histories & Humanities

Professor Jennifer Edmond, School of Languages, Literatures & Cultural Studies

Professor Paul Conroy, School of Linguistic, Speech & Communication Sciences

Professor Stefan Sint, School of Mathematics

Professor Stephen Maher, School of Medicine

Professor Brian Keogh, School of Nursing & Midwifery

Professor Cathal Cadogan, School of Pharmacy & Pharmaceutical Sciences

Professor Graham Cross, School of Physics

Professor Frédérique Vallieres, School of Psychology

Professor Etain Tannam, School of Religion, Theology, and Peace Studies

Professor Selim Gulesci, School of Social Sciences & Philosophy

Professor Eavan Brady, School of Social Work & Social Policy

Professor Ana Perez-Luno, Academic Director, Portal

Ms Patricia Callaghan, Academic Secretary (TT&L)

Ms Siobhan Dunne, Sub Librarian for Teaching, Research and User Experience

Ms Breda Walls, Director of Student Services

Mr Martin McAndrew, Postgraduate Student Support Officer, Senior Tutor's Office

Ms Ewa Sadowska, Administrative Officer (Academic Affairs, TT&L)

Postgraduate Representatives:

TCDSU/AMLCT PGR Representative: Ms Almudena Moreno Borrillo

In attendance for all items:

Ms Leona Coady, Programme Director, Postgraduate Renewal Programme

Ms Frances Leogue, IT support Administrative Officer, Office of the Dean of Graduate Studies

Ms Rima Fitzpatrick (Assistant Academic Secretary – Academic Affairs, TT&L)

Guest: Prof. Brian Broderick, Associate Dean of Research on behalf of Dean of Research

In attendance for Postgraduate Renewal Items:
Aoife Kelly, Programme Administrator (PG Renewal)

Apologies:

Professor Sinéad Ryan, Dean of Research
Professor Rachel Mc Loughlin, School of Biochemistry & Immunology
Professor David Prendergast, School of Law
Professor Micha Ruhl, School of Natural Sciences
Dr Geoffrey Bradley, Information Technology Services
TCDSU/AMLCT PGT Representative: Ms Orla Richard
Dr Cormac Doran, Assistant Academic Secretary, Graduate Education (TT&L)
Ewa Adach, Programme Analyst and Coordinator (PG Renewal)

In attendance for individual items:

Prof. Neil Dunne (Trinity Business School) for item GS/24-25/061
Dr Elizabeth Donnellan, Education Policy Developer, Academic Affairs (TT&L) for items GS/24-25/063-065
Ms Helen O'Hara, Work Package#3 Lead (Systems & Processes) and Mr Mark Sheridan, Senior Project Manager (PG Renewal) for item GS/24-25/068

XX Section A

XX GS/24-25/059 Minutes of GSC of 12 December 2024

The minutes were approved as circulated.

XX GS/24-25/060 Matters Arising

The Dean advised members that all Actions from the December meeting had been completed or attended to. She also noted that Decisions from the previous meeting on Agenda A and B will be considered at the next Council meeting on the 5th February. Most Matters Arising were closed off and covered in the Dean's memorandum circulated in advance of the meeting.

Re GS/24-25/056 Draft Minutes of GSC Sub-Committee on Micro-credentials on 7 November 2024, the Dean advised that the correct credit volume of the Nursing and Midwifery: Perinatal Mental Health and Childbirth Related Trauma Micro-credential is 10 ECTS rather than 5 as stated in the submitted Draft Minutes of the GSC Sub-Committee on Micro-credentials.

XX GS/24-25/061 New Course Proposal: MSc in Accounting and Analytics – Prof. Neil Dunne, Prospective Course Director (TBS), to present

The Dean welcomed Prof. Neil Dunne, a prospective Course Director, and spoke to the circulated slides. She noted that the proposed Masters in Accounting and Analytics, although presented as a new course proposal, builds upon the existing conversion Postgraduate Diploma in Accounting set up in 2016/17 for non-accounting graduates but fully accredited by major professional accounting bodies. Like its postgraduate diploma predecessor, the proposed Masters is a conversion course at NFQ level 9, with a full-time in person delivery format over 1 year consisting of nine core taught modules of 60 ECTS incorporated from the postgraduate diploma but expanded by a new 30 ECTS research module aligned with Model 5 of Trinity's Framework for PG Dissertations supervised in conjunction with Trinity analytics staff and Deloitte experts. Members were asked to note a change in the 60 ECTS taught component as one existing 5 ECTS "Accounting in Practice" (BU7123) module has been replaced with a "Foundation in Business Analytics" module from another existing Masters in Business Analytics programme. All modules are core, and the regulations are aligned with other

Masters programmes within TBS. Assessments are a blend of terminal examinations, mid-term tests, projects, reports and presentations.

The development of a new Masters is partly related to the success of the existing offering. Although consistently well performing, the postgraduate diploma has had a globally limited salience while the proposed Masters, its replacement, aligns with TBS strategy of launching innovative PGT programmes catering to market needs by aligning the School with domestic and international competitors catering for emergence of analytics in accounting and speaking to the accounting skill's placement on the Government's critical skills occupation list. With the commencement of the proposed Masters the existing postgraduate diploma will be ceased from 2026/27. It is however anticipated that its graduates might be actively seeking the opportunity to access the Masters, and therefore the second stage of the project will be to set up a part-time designated Masters Top up of 30 ECTS as progression for the alumni of the current postgraduate diploma after its discontinuation. Given the substantial overlap with an existing approved programme, the Dean did not propose sending the Masters proposal for external review.

The Postgraduate Student Support Officer requested that a clause be inserted into the progression regulations that a resubmitted assessment component be capped at 50%. No other amendments were suggested.

Decision GS/24-25/061: The committee approved the proposed Masters in Accounting and Analytics course proposal for Council approval without the need for an external review.

The Dean thanked Prof. Neil Dunne for his attendance and members for their consideration of the course proposal.

XX GS/24-25/062 Dean of Graduate Studies' Draft Annual Report for 2023/24 – Dean of Graduate Studies to present

The Dean noted that her 2023/24 report was a draft under development. Given the improved reporting functionality available through Power BI analytics and an earlier completion of the AR Annual Report, it was feasible to bring it to the committee four months earlier than in the previous year. The annual report provides an exceptional opportunity to look back at the considerable achievements of the previous year, and to capture the encountered challenges. The Dean underlined that collating the report was a collaborative effort. She drew members' attention to the many areas in College, such as Schools and the Graduate Studies Committee, Academic Practice, Academic Affairs, Academic Registry and Student Services, the Library which supported her in her endeavours to lead graduate studies activities.

Following the established practice, the DGS report is in three parts. Section One is based on the postgraduate data derived from the Academic Registry Annual Report with the other two Sections being "Ongoing Developments" and "Looking to the Future": The Dean commenced her presentation by commenting on the Academic Registry Annual Report data related to PGR, PGT, EU and Non-EU recruitment number totals and by Faculty. She then concentrated on PGT students' statistics of EU and Non-EU fee status and provided an overview of registration numbers on PGT programmes noting that most programmes especially in Health Sciences and STEM were "small" recruiting under 10 or 20 students, an analysis of applications to offers to registration showing an increase in applications but no corresponding increase in offers or registrations, Recognition of Prior Learning as a basis for admissions and Postgraduate Teaching Awards for Teaching Assistants. An overview of PGR student data followed related to PGR admissions with a small increase in registrations, EU country of origin being more numerous than the Non-EU one with EU fee status dominating over Non-EU, viva recommendations, proportion of co-supervised students by School, a

drop in the number of postgraduate student cases, Trinity Research Doctorate Awards numbers for 2023/24, issues considered by the Graduate Studies Committee including contributions from Postgraduate Renewal project, research supervision awards, the national inaugural Thesis-in-3 competition winner from Trinity and an increase in travel awards. Finally, the Dean referred to her own participation in international and Irish inter-institutional partnership meetings and topics generated by the Postgraduate Renewal project likely to dominate GSC agendas in the 2024/25 academic year.

In a discussion which ensued the following issues were raised:

- 1) Current inefficiencies in conditional offers: It was suggested that further automation of the admissions process should be carried out with clearly stated requirements for applicants to submit complete documentation in advance of application assessment. The newly developed online application form will help to streamline the call out of requirements. GenAI may not be used as algorithms are not allowed for any assessment purpose with an educational outcome.
- 2) Conversion of applications to offers and registrations: Competitor universities appear to return their admission decisions much more promptly than Trinity. TBS is willing to run an admissions pilot to shorten the cycle between application stage and issuing a decision.
- 3) An increased number of generic references has been noticed in applications suggesting that applicants may apply via a third party to multiple institutions without preference for Trinity. The practice generates additional workload to assess applications and may in part be linked to agents. However, as a result of the new online application form, Trinity has gained visibility of agents to facilitate evaluation of individual agent performance.
- 4) Recognition of Prior Learning as a basis for admissions: more data would be of interest to Schools from the experience of programmes which used the RPL for admission for candidates with no UG degree. The Dean clarified that those programmes were Framework-based offering entry to postgraduate certificates as the first stepping stage.
- 5) "Small" PGT programmes: In Health Sciences they were not the result of under-recruitment but connected to the capacity limitations associated with laboratory projects. Frequently, small cohorts of students were merged into bigger groups by sharing lecturing space on some common modules.
- 6) A drop in EU applications in the research domain across the board is of concern if it were to continue. It is not workable yet to establish the reasons behind it but fewer funding opportunities in Ireland vs in other countries and high accommodation costs in Dublin may explain it.
- 7) The difference between recommendations for major revisions vs minor corrections should be further reviewed, given the widely varying extent of changes currently emerging under 'minor corrections'. It was suggested that the question of fee implications may influence the examiners' recommendations.

In conclusion, it was agreed that the section on highlights of graduate studies activities in 2023/24 in Schools, normally present in the report, will not be included as it would not be feasible for Schools to return the information to the Dean in time for the report to be circulated for Council.

Decision GS/24-25/062: The committee recommended submission of the Dean of Graduate Studies report for 2023/24 to Council.

The Dean thanked members for their contribution to the discussion.

XX GS/24-25/063 Policy Review: Assessment and Academic Progression - Dr Elizabeth Donnellan, Education Policy Developer, Academic Affairs (TT&L) to present

The Dean welcomed Dr Elizabeth Donnellan, Education Policy Developer (Academic Affairs, TT&L) to speak to the revised Assessment and Academic Progression Policy, last revised in 2021/22 and reviewed in the current year as part of the cycle of reviews of academic policies. The Education Policy Developer thanked Academic Practice for their feedback. The Policy has been updated to articulate more clearly the different types of assessment and the importance of effective assessment design in upholding academic integrity, to reference Generative AI and the new Policy and Procedures on Academic Integrity, to cover making reasonable accommodation resulting from LENS report, and to include a facility for students to be asked to verify and validate their work in order to comply with quality assurance. Proposed changes were listed in the Policy Review Record Sheet circulated as Appendix 1. The Education Policy Developer has advised that feedback on the proposed changes will also be sourced from Schools.

In a discussion which ensued the following comments were made:

- 1) In response to a query, clarification was offered to define “formative” assessment as part of the formal assessment procedure of any module. It was noted that formative assessment has broader connotations covering any question asked and comment made in the classroom. The Education Policy Developer has undertaken to include in the Policy that feedback on formative assessment is only required to be provided where formative assessment is part of the formal assessment process.
- 2) The Postgraduate Student Support Officer has requested a few insertions into the draft to clarify students’ *ad misericordiam* and LENS-related situations and requests for extensions without supportive documentation:
- 3) Re Section 6.2 – The wording of the line “*The use of such safeguards should be specified in the relevant student programme handbook or assessment description*” to be amended to reflect the fact that information to students on assessments is not only provided at programme level (via programme handbooks) but is also provided at a module level (on a module by module basis) within the VLE.
- 4) Re Section 6.7 – Include ‘normally’ as follows in the line “*Requests for extension to a deadline for the submission of assessed work may be considered on substantive grounds e.g. medical or ad misericordiam grounds, and normally require supporting documentation*”.
- 5) Re Section 6.7 – Amend the wording of the line “*Academics are strongly encouraged to consider positively requests for extensions from students who have LENS reports (see Late Submission of Coursework (Extensions) Policy)*” to clarify that where students have a LENS report, no additional documentation is required from students in support of the request for an extension.

The Dean concluded that after incorporating feedback from the meeting and from Schools, the policy will be brought back to GSC. The Dean thanked The Education Policy Developer for her presentation and members for their contribution to the discussion.

XX GS/24-25/064 Policy Review: Remote Supervision of Postgraduate (Doctoral) Students - Dr Elizabeth Donnellan, Education Policy Developer, Academic Affairs (TT&L) to present

Dr Elizabeth Donnellan, Education Policy Developer (Academic Affairs, TT&L) stayed on to speak to another Policy on Remote Supervision of Postgraduate (Doctoral) Students. The Dean noted that the Policy was discussed at two previous meetings in October and December and attempts to incorporate all that feedback would have radically changed its original “narrower” scope which was to address the situation where students were going to another site to collect research data or to work in a research lab, in both cases for a relatively extended but time-limited period. The original Policy aimed to ensure that students were supported effectively in terms of supervision, that risk and IP issues were addressed and that while students were in another research site, a designated individual was available as a contact person. The original Policy never aimed to address scenarios of “remote supervision” that emerged during Covid.

The Dean decided therefore to return to the original focus of the Policy and to address any feedback that related to that specific focus while excluding *ad misericordiam* issues of personal circumstances that might require a student to work remotely. A mechanism and supporting procedures for requesting 'off-site' working for *ad misericordiam*, caring, financial or other circumstances will be developed separately. Accordingly, the draft circulated for consideration at the meeting has been limited to revisions clarifying the timeframe to which the Policy relates, making it clear that the scope of the Policy is for 'off-site' rather than for 'remote' supervision arrangements, and that the Policy relates to requests for off-site supervision arrangements on specifically academic reasons. Documentation relating to the review and approval of the *ad misericordiam* off-site supervision arrangement will be updated at a later stage as required. Proposed changes were listed in the Policy Review Record Sheet circulated as Appendix 1.

In a short discussion which ensued the following comments were made:

- 1) In response to a query, the Dean has provided an update on a possible access to the VPN connection for off-site PGR students. The Director of IT Services had confirmed to the Dean that cybersecurity reasons were behind the currently restricted access. He undertook to contact individual students to assess their needs and propose alternative arrangements.
- 2) It was noted that the Policy should contain a clause about the need for Non-EU students to ensure they comply with visa residency requirements when seeking permission for an off-site stay
- 3) The Education Policy Developer undertook to fix the broken hyperlinks in the Policy resulting from the recent migration of the website of the Office of the Dean of Graduate Studies to T4.

Decision GS/24-25/064: The committee recommended the proposed Remote Supervision of Postgraduate (Doctoral) Students Policy for submission to Council with the revisions suggested at the meeting.

The Dean thanked the Education Policy Developer for her presentation and members for their contribution to the discussion.

XX GS/24-25/065 Policy Review: Return of Coursework - Dr Elizabeth Donnellan, Education Policy Developer, Academic Affairs (TT&L) to present

Dr Elizabeth Donnellan, Education Policy Developer (Academic Affairs, TT&L) stayed on to speak to a third Policy on Return of Coursework, last revised in 2021/22 and reviewed in the current year as part of the cycle of reviews of academic policies. The Education Policy Developer thanked Academic Practice for their feedback. A revision to the name of the policy was proposed, from 'Return of Coursework Policy' to 'Return of Feedback on Coursework (Assessed Components) Policy', to more clearly articulate the purpose of the Policy. Other proposed changes are the inclusion of micro-credentials in the scope of the Policy; clarification that the deadline for return of feedback on assessed work is proportionate to the size and scope of the assessment, the size of the class, the assessment type (i.e., summative *versus* formative assessment) and whether the assessment is at undergraduate or postgraduate level; and distinguishing between the deadline for submission of feedback on formative *versus* summative assessment. Proposed changes were listed in the Policy Review Record Sheet circulated as Appendix 1. The Education Policy Developer has advised that feedback on the proposed changes will also be sourced from Schools.

In response to a query, the Education Policy Developer clarified that the term "coursework" did not capture the full breath of assessment types especially in clinical disciplines and the Policy has therefore been expanded to include "Assessed Components", i.e., term used in module descriptors

for quantifying by means of a percentage the contribution of individual assessed elements in taught and research modules in course proposals.

The Dean concluded that after incorporating feedback from the meeting and from Schools, the Policy will be brought back to GSC. The Dean thanked The Education Policy Developer for her presentation and members for their contribution to the discussion.

XX GS/24-25/066 Horizon 2: PG Renewal monthly update (January) – Ms Leona Coady, Programme Director (PG Renewal) to present

The PG Renewal Programme Director took her slide as read and spoke only to selected highlights: the call for TRDAs and for Sanctuary award for 2025/26 is open; the reorganisation of the Office of the Dean of Graduate Studies has been progressing with a view to bringing a proposal to the next meeting; WP#3 is progressing a design for the integration of PGR assessment and progression processes to SITS and would appreciate more involvement especially from STEM-based Schools. The Dean thanked the PGR Programme Director for her presentation.

XX GS/24-25/067 Horizon 2: Abridged Approval Process for changes to existing PGT programmes: Stage Gate Approval for proposed design - Memorandum from Professors A. Clements, R. Reilly, R. Fitzpatrick, and A. Kelly (Work Package #1 (Taught))

The Dean invited Ms Rima Fitzpatrick (WP#1 (Taught) and Assistant Academic Secretary – Academic Affairs) to speak to the circulated slides. Ms Fitzpatrick noted that the scope of the Horizon 2 work plan includes a deliverable to “design a system for addressing major/minor changes to a programme” (H2.WP1.2.07.A). Appendix 1 to “Programme and Curriculum Design and Approval Policy” sets out minor course changes managed at School level and major changes needing consideration at the GSC for Council approval. The latter changes will need to be submitted in the format and along the process closely aligned to the new 2-stage process for new course proposals currently in pilot, but at a significantly reduced workload. As a result, WP#1 (Taught) has developed abridged approval templates and processes for consideration under the current pilot. It is envisaged that sections of the templates will be skipped over or entirely hidden when the information sought in them is not relevant for the change requested. Early engagement with Academic Affairs by proposers is recommended to receive advice about which template pathway to follow. The members of WP#1, which include a Head of School, a School Manager, a DTLP, and a Faculty Dean, were mindful to ensure that the templates meet the needs of both Schools and Faculties while upholding quality assurance standards and compliance with College governance and policies.

The School of Pharmacy and & Pharmaceutical Sciences DTLP referred to some frustration with the challenge of making changes to the excel-based proof of concept template used in the 2 stage pilot. The Dean noted that both the pilot and the abridged process will be reviewed towards the end of the academic year for efficiency and that all feedback is welcome and will be considered fully. Changes will be made to eliminate inefficiencies causing excessive workload without adding value. Ideally, a designated curriculum management system should be set up in College to deal with new and revised course proposals and changes to the existing courses.

Decision GS/24-25/067: The committee recommended the proposed abridged approval process for further development.

The Dean thanked Ms Rima Fitzpatrick for her presentation and members for their contribution to the discussion.

XX GS/24-25/068 Horizon 2: Stipend Payment Process for PGR Internal and External Awards – Stage Gate Approval - Memorandum from Ms Helen O’Hara, Work Package#3 Lead (Systems & Processes) and Mr Mark Sheridan, Senior Project Manager (PG Renewal)

The Dean invited Ms Helen O’Hara, Work Package Lead (WP#3: Systems & Processes) and Mr Mark Sheridan, Senior Project Manager, to speak to their analysis of Trinity’s current stipend payment process for both internal and external awards. There are two different processes for setting up stipend payments—one for internal awards and one for external awards. The external award process is especially unclear, often leading to significant delays and additional administration. The Senior Project Manager took members through the way data has been collected and identified issues for further consideration, the most important of which was the difficulty with which students receiving payments could be identified and which type of internal/external award/stipend payments they were in receipt of and who were the funders. There is no one system capturing such data and reconciliation is done manually with data stored in FSD in Oracle, in HR in CORE, in AR in SITS and in stand-alone excel files, in Schools and in PG Renewal programme, with no single “source of truth” capturing all award/stipend recipients in College.

The aim of the WP#3 project is to increase optimisation and efficiency for all students and staff, to eliminate delays in the payment of the first instalment to the payee, to track payees and their payments and promptly re-introduce students on payments when returning from a period off books. The WP#3 Lead recommended focusing on short-term process improvements within Horizon 2 to streamline workflows, build quality into the process, and establish robust reporting. Once that foundational stage has been completed, it would be possible to meaningfully evaluate whether a move to a new payment system is required. The PG Renewal Programme’s Steering Committee approved the recommended approach at its meeting on January 13, 2025. If approved by GSC, the current work plan for WP#3 will be evaluated to consider how the proposed process enhancements can be delivered within the Horizon 2 timeline, and any resulting impact on the existing work plan.

In a short discussion, the following considerations were highlighted:

- Some students (e.g., through Marie-Curie funding) have status as students and employees;
- Further input from Schools is necessary for the project to further clarify issues;
- There are delays in receipt of payments through the casual payroll for students;
- PGR students request access to the CORE portal;
- Postdocs should benefit from lessons learnt on the Horizon 2 project;
- Currently, students whose stipend is due to increase on an annual basis have to be dealt with manually every year, and therefore any re-design should aim to eliminate the administrative inconvenience;
- School of Physics has an especially complicated spectrum of payment types and would like to feed its experience into the Horizon 2 project;
- Possible involvement of HR prior to advertising PGR vacancies needs to be considered with caution;
- Students can move payment status while on the PhD register as their source of funding changes.

It was recognised that it might not be possible to set up an ideal system working for all payment situations, but it would be beneficial to have one to efficiently work for most students.

Decision GS/24-25/068: The committee recommended that the WP#3 proceed with Option 1 to enhance the current stipend payment process.

The Dean thanked the WP#3 Lead and the Senior Project Manager for their presentation and members for their consideration of the proposal.

XX GS/24-25/069 Any Other Business

- (i) **LERU Doctoral Summer School 2025, June 22-27:** The call is now closed, and a review panel is being put in place.
- (ii) **Graduate Teaching Assistant Awards for 2024:** A significant number of nominations has been received and a review panel is being put in place.
- (iii) **The Research Factor: A 3 Minute Thesis – 2024/25 internal competition:** Feedback from past participants has been positive as they found engaging with the project helpful in preparation for their viva.

Action GS/24-25/069(iii): DTLPs to encourage their PGR students to go forward, or at least to come along to the sessions to see what is involved.

- (iv) **Blackboard Ultra upgrade project:** The upgrade is going live from September 2025 and support for the current platform will be discontinued. Although some staff have already engaged in training, many more have not. All academic staff should upskill themselves as a matter of priority before the end of the academic year to successfully migrate their resources to Blackboard Ultra. Online sessions appear to be preferred to in-person and therefore more IT resources is being developed to widen out the online training from mid-February. The Dean intends to invite an upskilled person to share their experience at a future meeting.
- (v) **Marking bands within PGT programmes:** The School of Medicine DTLP raised an issue of additional “merit grade band” covering the 65% to 69% range as the best way to make students’ achievement visible. Without initiating a discussion at the meeting, the DTLP asked members to consider the proposed merit grade band. The Dean noted that there would be both advantages and disadvantages to the proposal and would only consider the proposed change if all Schools signed up for it. It was agreed for volunteers to contact the DTLP to participate in a discussion of the pros and cons of introducing the proposed band. As there would need to be buy-in from all Schools in order to progress the proposal further, members who might find the suggestion problematic for their Schools would be particularly encouraged to join the working group.

Action GS/24-25/069(v): The School of Medicine DTLP to set up a WG and seek participation from members to consider a possible introduction of an additional “merit grade band” to be set up on PGT programmes.

XX Section B for Noting and Approval

XX GS/24-25/070 Updated Academic Year Structure Option A – Memorandum from Prof. Vincent Wade, Senior Lecturer & Dean of Undergraduate Studies (Chair of AYS Working Group)

At the previous meeting in December members selected Option A as the preferred academic year structure in line with the overwhelming consensus which has emerged during the College-wide consultation process. Since December, clarification has been made in the circulated Memorandum that under the current structure there are already two working days required for assessment purposes in Trinity Week; this was not flagged in the original memorandum but has been made visible that those days will still be required in the revised structure - the committee endorsed the revised Option A.

Decision GS/24-25/070: The committee recommended for Council approval the amended Option A proposal for the revised Academic Year Structure from 2025/26.

XX GS/24-25/071 Cessation of PGDip in Accounting from 2026/27 – request from Trinity Business School

The Committee noted a request from Trinity Business School to cease the Postgraduate Diploma course in Accounting from 2026/27. From 2025/26, the School plans to deliver a new MSc in Accounting and Analytics incorporating taught modules of the current Postgraduate Diploma in Accounting; during 2025/26, the MSc will run alongside the existing Postgraduate Diploma in Accounting to facilitate applicants currently in the system for entry into the Postgraduate Diploma. From 2026/27 onwards however, the Postgraduate Diploma will be discontinued but the School has made a commitment to facilitate its alumni who may seek to avail of the Masters learning opportunity to develop a linked Masters top up at a later stage.

Decision GS/24-25/071: The committee recommended for Council approval the proposed Cessation of PGDip in Accounting from 2026/27.

XX GS/24-25/072 Cessation of PGDip in Engineering for Climate Action from 2025/26 – request from School of Engineering

The committee noted a request from the School of Engineering to cease the Postgraduate Diploma course in Engineering for Climate Action from 2025/26 on the grounds of its consistent under-recruitment; since the course was established, student recruitment has not grown (maximum 2 students on the full-time programme and 5 students on the part-time programme). After 4 years of HCI support coming to an end, the viability of the programme to continue is not feasible.

Decision GS/24-25/072: The committee recommended for Council approval the proposed cessation of PGDip in Engineering for Climate Action from 2025/26.

XX GS/24-25/073 Suspension of MSc in Community Health for 2025/26 – request from School of Nursing and Midwifery

The committee noted a request from the School of Nursing and Midwifery to suspend MSc in Community Health in 2025/26 to finalise the review of the course and make a final decision on its future. The course will be ceased in 2026/27 unless the School submits a request for it to open for applications.

Decision GS/24-25/073: The committee recommended for Council approval further, and final, suspension of the MSc in Community Health in 2025/26.

XX GS/24-25/074 MEd Strand title change from “Critical Perspectives on Education” to “Open Pathways” from 2026/27 on all FT & PT formats of delivery – request from School of Education

The committee noted a request from the School of Education for an MEd Strand title change from “Critical Perspectives on Education” to “Open Pathways” from 2026/27 on all FT, 2 and 3 year PT formats of delivery as part of a broader suite of changes resulting from an ongoing review of the MEd programme.

Decision GS/24-25/074: The committee recommended for Council approval the proposed MEd Strand title change from “Critical Perspectives on Education” to “Open Pathways” from 2026/27 on all FT, 2 and 3 year PT formats of delivery in the School of Education.

XX GS/24-25/075 English language proficiency level: requirements for admission from 2025/26 aligned to Irish Dental Council – request from School of Dental Science

The committee noted a request from the School of Dental Science to introduce from 2025/26 a minimum IELTS (or indicator) score of 7 with a minimum score of 7 in each band based on the requirement for PhD, MSc, and DChDent degree programmes to register with the Irish Dental Council. PGR and PGT students are required to meet Irish Dental Council regulations relating to English proficiency. The Irish Dental Council stipulates a minimum overall IELTS score of 7 including no less than 7 within each of the four domains. The committee approved the proposed new wording as follows: "All applicants to Trinity are required to provide official evidence of proficiency in the English language. For candidates who are not native English speakers and have not completed a degree through the medium of English, in line with Irish Dental Council regulations, applicants are required to have a minimum IELTS score of at least 7 in each category and at least 7 overall or its equivalent." The Dean confirmed that applicants already in the pipeline for 2025/26 will be affected and any cases arising will be managed by the School as the College admissions need to comply with the professional admissions requirements of the Irish Dental Council.

Decision GS/24-25/075: The committee recommended for Council approval the proposed new wording for English proficiency in the School of Dental Science for admission from 2025/26 for a minimum overall IELTS score of 7 including no less than 7 within each of the four domains based on the requirements from the Irish Dental Council.

XX Section C for Noting

There were no items on Agenda C.

The Dean thanked all the committee members. There being no other business, the meeting ended at 12.05pm.

Prof. Martine Smith

Date: 23 January 2025