



Trinity College Dublin
Quality Committee
Minutes

Minutes of the meeting of the Quality Committee held on 4 June 2015 in the Boardroom, House 1.

Present: Vice-Provost/Chief Academic Officer, Chief Operating Officer, Dean of Undergraduate Studies, Academic Secretary, Quality Officer, Professor Sheila Ryder, Professor Catherine Coxon, Professor John Walsh, Professor Simon McGinnes, Ms. Laura Conway-McAuley.

In attendance: Professor Shane Allwright (The Registrar), Professor Carmel O'Sullivan (Head of the School of Education), Dr. Juliette Hussey (Vice-President for Global Relations), Reverend Julian Hamilton (Chair of the College Chaplains), Mr. John Coman (Secretary to the College), Professor Kevin O'Kelly (Dean of Students), Dr. Liz Donnellan (Secretary to the Committee).

Apologies: Dean of Faculty of Arts, Humanities & Social Sciences, Dean of Faculty of Engineering, Mathematics & Science, Dean of Faculty of Health Sciences, Dean of Graduate Studies, Mrs Jessie Kurtz, Vice-President Graduate Students' Union, Education Officer of the Students' Union.

QC/14-15/056 Draft minutes of the meeting of the 7 May 2015

The minutes of the meeting of the 7 May 2015 were approved.

QC/14-15/057 Matters arising

The Vice-Provost/Chief Academic Officer reported that the Annual Dialogue meeting with QQI had taken place on the 20th May. Among the issues discussed was the delay in publication of the quality assurance guidelines and concerns regarding the conflation of HEIs with English Language Institutes. She reported that Trinity will undergo its next Institutional Review in 2019/20.

In relation to item QC/14-15/054, revised Student Complaints Procedure, which was referred to the Student Life Committee following the meeting of the 7 May 2015, the Academic Secretary stressed the importance of providing the Academic Committees and appropriate College Officers with an opportunity to comment on it. Consequently it will be considered by the Undergraduate Studies Committee and Graduate Studies Committee in September before being sent to Council for approval.

QC/14-15/058 Policy on Joint, Multiple and Dual Awards

The Chair welcomed the Registrar to the meeting for discussion of the new Policy on Joint, Multiple and Dual awards.

The Registrar reported that this policy has been developed in order to articulate Trinity's commitment to maximising its higher education and research impact through the development of strategic partnerships, nationally and internationally, as outlined in the College's Strategic Plan 2014-2019. The purpose of the policy is provide guidance to Trinity staff who are interested in

developing joint or dual programmes leading to joint, multiple and dual awards. It provides a general framework for proposals to be considered and approved by relevant College committees and relates to the awards and not the programmes themselves.

The Registrar defined joint, multiple and dual awards as follows:

- A Joint Award is one conferred on behalf of all partner institutions offering a joint programme of study and is nationally recognised in the relevant jurisdictions. Students receive a single parchment bearing the logos of the participating HEIs.
- A Multiple Award is A FORM OF Joint Award where partner institutions delivering a common programme confer their own awards at an equivalent level. This may be due to regulations within the partner jurisdiction that prevents the latter from issuing joint awards.

For Joint and Multiple Awards, partner institutions will agree if students can register with each of the partner institutions or with only one and which partner becomes the designated Home Institution.

TCD's preferred position in relation to joint awards is that students register with one institution and are issued with a single transcript.

- A Dual Award occurs where students complete a linked inter-institutional programme consisting of two separate curricula provided consecutively by two partner institutions leading to two awards, one from each institution. The institution at which the student undertakes the first part of the curriculum is called the First Institution and that at which the student undertakes the second part of the curriculum is called the Second Institution.

The Vice-Provost/Chief Academic Officer thanked the Registrar and invited comment from the Committee. During the ensuing discussion, the following points were raised.

- While TCD's preferred position in relation to joint awards is that students register with only one institution and are issued with a single transcript, some countries do not recognise a joint award and in these cases two parchments would be required, one from each partner institution i.e. a Multiple Award;
- In relation to dual awards, Trinity's position as First or Second Institution should be agreed at the time of programme design and a rationale for the position recommended should have undisputed academic benefits for the programme;
- It is important to ensure when setting up partnerships that clarity and agreement is reached from the outset on how students are conferred with their awards in order to guard against students receiving multiple awards from different institutions for the same work;
- There should be an underpinning set of criteria which govern equivalences for students entering College or going abroad to undertake joint, multiple or dual programmes of study;
- Programmes of study leading to joint or dual awards will be reviewed as part of the College's quality review cycle according to the procedures for programme reviews and in co-operation with the partner institutions;

The Chair thanked the Registrar and reported that the policy would be amended to reflect the discussion before being forwarded to Council for consideration.

QC/14-15/059 Quality Review of the School of Education

The Chair welcomed the Head of the School of Education, Professor Carmel O'Sullivan, to the meeting and invited her to speak to the Reviewers' report.

Professor O'Sullivan welcomed the Reviewers' report and thanked the review team for their very insightful observations and helpful recommendations, which the School is happy to progress. She reported that since the last School review the focus of teaching activity in the School has shifted from primarily undergraduate to primarily postgraduate, freeing up more time for research. While the Reviewers acknowledge the increased research activity since the last review, they note that there is potential to develop the School's research culture further. Key to realizing this will be the appointment of a research support officer, and Professor O'Sullivan reported that a very positive meeting with the Dean in relation to this and other staffing issues has already taken place. She welcomed the Reviewers' recommendations in relation to filling the two vacant Chairs and the School's reliance on part-time/contract staff. In this regard, the difficulty in retaining ambitious young staff on short term contracts was noted.

The success of the School's transition from providing a one-year initial teacher training diploma (H.Dip.Ed.) to a two-year full-time professional masters (teacher training) programme (PME) is noted by the Reviewers. The Head of School reported some tension however between the newly formed professional masters and the School's existing research masters (M.Ed.). Discussions have already commenced to ensure that the currency of the research masters is retained and a review of the M.Ed. is planned with a view to retaining a clear distinction between the two.

Professor O'Sullivan concluded by noting that the Reviewers' expectations of the School's workload allocation model and of the Review process itself were influenced by their experiences of the UK's REF system.

The Chair thanked Professor O'Sullivan and following a brief discussion during which the improvement in the financial status of the School since the review was noted, the discussion closed.

QC/14-15/060 Education Recruitment Agents Policy

The Chair welcomed the Vice-President for Global Relations, Professor Juliette Hussey, who had been invited to the meeting to discuss the Education Recruitment Agents Policy and to respond to questions raised by members at the Quality Committee meeting on 7 May 2015. Professor Hussey began by clarifying that while there are currently nine education recruitment agents managed through Global Relations, there are another seven that liaise directly with the Schools.

The Chair invited Professor Hussey to respond to the individual queries that arose from the Quality Committee meeting of the 7 May. Professor Hussey confirmed that the College does not tender for agents but that they are recruited through the relevant embassies, with due diligence checks being undertaken by Global Relations. She reported that agents are paid on commission and that contractual arrangements with TCD are reviewed on a regular basis to ensure that international standards such as the London Statement Principles are being adhered to. Breach of principles is a basis for termination of a contract.

In relation to the Data Protection Act and whether it applies to student information held by the Agent after the student graduates or before they become a registered student of the College, Professor Hussey clarified that as the contract is undertaken in the student's own country the data protection laws in that jurisdiction apply. She undertook to ensure that recruitment agents are aware of this.

In response to a query from the Committee regarding the availability to prospective students of information on recruitment agents, Professor Hussey undertook to publish a list of all of recognised Agents on the Global Relations website. She also reported that relevant Schools have been asked to nominate representatives who will act as the liaison point between agents and the School.

The Vice-Provost/Chief Academic Officer thanked Professor Hussey and the discussion closed.

QC/14-14/061 Quality Review of the Chaplaincy

The Vice-Provost/Chief Academic Officer welcomed the Chair of the College Chaplains, Reverend Julian Hamilton, the Secretary to the College, Mr John Coman, and the Dean of Students, Professor Kevin O'Kelly, to the meeting for the discussion of the review of the Chaplaincy.

Rev. Hamilton reported that the experience of the review was a challenging and beneficial one for both the Chaplains and the University, and that it raised some important questions about the Chaplaincy and its role in College. He noted that the timing of the review was pertinent, with the imminent appointment of two new Chaplains in 2015/16. The Secretary to the College warmly welcomed the Reviewers' acknowledgment of the vital role played by the Chaplaincy in College life as part of the network of supports for students. The Dean of Students noted the unique nature of the TCD Chaplaincy in having unpaid Chaplains that are deeply embedded in College life, and reported that in other Irish Universities chaplaincy positions are salaried posts that are often difficult to fill.

The Chair invited comment from the Committee and the following key points were discussed:

- In relation to the recommendation to make the Chapel more accessible to the wider community, the Committee agreed that opportunities to make the Chapel available for suitable social and fundraising events should be explored, provided its character as a place of worship is respected. Additional funds resulting from any extension of its usage could be directed back to the Chaplaincy.
- It was agreed that regular and structured feedback mechanisms for users and stakeholders of the Chaplaincy should be put in place.
- The importance of ensuring that a gender balance is maintained among the Chaplains was discussed and it was agreed that a conversation should be initiated around a balanced representation.
- It was suggested that if further financial support could be provided by College for the Chaplaincy, it would have a significant positive impact as existing resources are stretched.
- The increasing numbers of international students envisaged by the College's Strategic Plan will broaden the cultural and religious mix of students on campus. This will necessitate the provision of pastoral care, on a more formal basis, for people of other faiths. The mechanism for achieving this should be discussed with leaders from the individual faiths concerned in order to ensure that whatever model is chosen is appropriate for individual religious groups, for example, out-reach and a prayer space.

The Vice-Provost/Chief Academic Officer thanked the Committee for its input and closed the discussion.

QC/14-15/062 Corporate Services Division (CSD) Implementation Plans

- (a) Implementation Plans for the College Disability Service & for Student Counselling Services:
Following a short discussion of the Implementation Plan for the College Disability Service and the Implementation Plan for Student Counselling Services the Quality Committee recommended that the Implementation Plans be agreed with the COO in advance of consideration by the Committee, particularly around the commitment to expenditure. Revised Implementation Plans for both services will be considered by the Committee at its meeting in October 2015.
- (b) Implementation Plan for the College Day Nursery:
The Chief Operating Officer spoke to the Implementation Plan for the College Day Nursery which was circulated with papers for the meeting. She reported that significant work had been undertaken since the review to address the Reviewers' recommendations. Key actions included the commissioning of a pre-TULSA/HSE inspection of the Nursery on the 11th of February 2015,

engagement with Human Resources in the implementation of revised Day Nursery policies, engagement with the College's Fire Safety Officer and with Estates and Facilities to ensure compliance with Fire and with Health and Safety regulations, and upskilling of staff in Siolta and Aistear training. The Nursery has established a relationship with the Dublin City Childcare Committee and has become a member of Early Childhood Ireland. Finally, the Day Nursery Manager has been enrolled on a management Training Programme and assigned a mentor.

The Vice-Provost/ Chief Academic Officer thanked the Chief Operating Officer and in closing the discussion noted that while work is on-going to address the Reviewers' recommendations, a significant amount of work has already been undertaken to address the Reviewers' primary concerns. Further work will be required including an assessment of the sustainability of the Service in the long term.

QC/14-15/063 Implementation Plan for Trinity Research & Innovation

This item was deferred to the first meeting of the 2015/16 academic year to facilitate the presence of the Director of Trinity Research & Innovation, who was unable to attend for this meeting.

****QC/14-15/064 Revised External Examiners Policy**

In presenting the revised External Examiners Policy for noting, the Quality Officer requested that the Committee note the change from the current process for approval of external examiner nominations, from Council to the Dean of Undergraduate Studies. This change mirrors the current process for approval of External Examiners for taught postgraduate courses by the Dean of Graduate Studies. In the future, the consolidated list of External Examiners for taught programmes at UG and PG level will be presented to Council for noting rather than approval.

QC/14-15/065 Quality Committee dates 2015/16

The proposed dates for Quality Committee meetings for 2015/16 were approved.

QC/14-15/066 Results of Quality Committee Survey

The Quality Officer reported that six Committee members had responded to the Quality Committee survey to date and encouraged the remaining members to complete the survey at their earliest convenience.

QC/14-15/067 Any other business

The Vice-Provost/Chief Academic Officer noted that two Committee members, Professor Simon McGinnes and Professor Catherine Coxon, were coming to the end of their three-year term and would be stepping down. She thanked them for their work on the Committee over the last three years. She also noted that the Dean of FEMS Professor Clive Williams and the Student Union representatives Katie Byrne and Adam Hanna were finishing their terms of office and thanked them for their input. There was no other business and the meeting closed.