



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

**Trinity College Dublin
The University of Dublin**

Quality Committee

Minutes of the Quality Committee meeting of the
14 December 2017, 3.00 – 5.00pm, Boardroom House 1

Present:

Professor Chris Morash, Vice-Provost/Chief Academic Officer (Chair)
Professor Mary McCarron, Dean of Faculty of Health Sciences
Professor Gillian Martin, Senior Lecturer
Professor Neville Cox, Dean of Graduate Studies
Ms. Patricia Callaghan, Academic Secretary
Ms. Roisin Smith, Quality Officer
Professor Aonghus McNabola, Faculty of Engineering, Mathematics and Science
Professor Sheila Ryder, Faculty of Health Sciences
Ms. Laura Conway-McAuley, IT Services
Vice-President, Graduate Students' Union
Education Officer, Students' Union

Dr Liz Donnellan, Quality Office (Secretary)

Apologies:

Professor Vinny Cahill, Dean of Faculty of Engineering, Mathematics & Science
Professor Darryl Jones, Dean of Faculty of Arts, Humanities & Social Sciences
Ms. Geraldine Ruane, Chief Operating Officer
Professor David Lewis, Faculty of Engineering, Mathematics and Science
Professor John Walsh, Faculty of Arts, Humanities & Social Sciences
Professor Peter Crooks, Faculty of Arts, Humanities & Social Sciences
Professor Catherine Darker, Faculty of Health Sciences
Mrs. Jessie Kurtz, Deputy Librarian
Ms. Victoria Butler, Secretary's Office

In attendance:

Ms Fionnuala Healy (Chief Executive Officer of the Innovation and Entrepreneurship Hub), Mr Ross Brennan (former Chief Executive Officer of the Innovation and Entrepreneurship Hub), Dr Daniel Rogers (Programme Development Manager), and Dr Diarmuid O'Brien (Chief Innovation and Enterprise Officer) for item *QC/17-18/21 - Review report for the Joint Certificate in Innovation and Entrepreneurship*

Section A

QC/17-18/18 Draft minutes of the meeting of the 9 November 2017

The draft minutes of the meeting of the 9 November 2017 were approved.

QC/17-18/19 Matters arising

QC/16-17/043 Update on review of Trinity's Online Education provision- the Vice-Provost/Chief Academic Officer reported that the Chief Operating Officer was unable to attend the December meeting to speak to the status of online provision, but that she would attend a future meeting.

QC/17-18/12 Quality enhancement projects- identification of enhancement themes - The Quality Officer updated the Committee with regard to the provision of institutional-level ISSE scores. She reported that this data is now available for Designated Awarding Bodies (DABs), including DIT and RSCI, and will be published in the New Year at which stage it is planned to bring the data to the Quality Committee. She noted that the report on the Trinity ISSE Survey (2017) had been approved by Council at its November meeting.

QC/17-18/20 Quality Committee call-over log

- (i) *Quality Committee performance:* The Academic Secretary drew the Committee's attention to the first item on the log, *QC/16-17/023 - Quality Committee performance*. She noted that the Committee had reviewed a number of policies during the year and reported that there were more in development. She advised that extending the role of the Committee to include policy creation and development would require a review of the Terms of Reference and Committee membership. She noted recent difficulty in achieving a quorum at meetings and suggested that the availability of the Faculty Deans to attend meetings was an issue.
- (ii) *Report of the Tutorial Service Working Group:* With regard to item *QC/16-17/046 Report of the Tutorial Service Working Group*, The Academic Secretary reminded the Committee that there had been much discussion of the report at Council and that a working group, chaired by Professor Mark Bell, had been set up to review the key recommendations and advise on their implementation. A concise report was produced by the working group and significant progress has been made on implementing the key recommendations. She reported that the requirement to undertake a three-year term as Tutor once every ten years is now included in all new staff contracts. A similar requirement was recommended by the Reviewers for existing staff but HR has advised that this is not possible as it would constitute a change in their contract. She noted that the Senior Tutor has recruited 46 new tutors since the review which has allowed him to allocate smaller chambers, another recommendation from the review.
- (iii) *Review of the Confederal School of Religions, Peace Studies and Theology:* The Academic Secretary reported that Council consideration of the review of the Confederal School of Religions, Peace Studies and Theology (*QC/16-17/048*) had resulted in the establishment of a taskforce to implement the recommendations. A key recommendation from the review was that the Confederal School should operate as a single entity as there was no future for three distinct units (the School of Religions and Theology, the Loyola Institute and the Irish School of Ecumenics) operating separately both financially and structurally. The Academic Secretary reported that as of the beginning of this academic year considerable progress has been made in addressing core recommendations. The Taskforce has met on several occasions and a plan of action has been agreed. A proposal for an all-School UG curriculum (Religion) is in development, led by the Head of

School, Professor Garrigan, with assistance from one of the reviewers, Professor William Storrar, and with involvement from relevant School academic staff. Discussions have taken place with the ISE and Loyola Trusts and work is on-going on developing the required governance and structural changes to support a single School structure as the primary entity. The aim is to have an implementation report and recommendations for consideration by Council and Board in April 2018.

The Vice-Provost/Chief Academic Officer thanked the Academic Secretary and acknowledged the considerable amount of work, skill and leadership that she had contributed to the process of restructuring the School and the UG curriculum from the ground up.

QC/17-18/21 Progress report for the B.Sc. Human Nutrition and Dietetics

The Vice-Provost/Chief Academic Officer invited the Dean of Health Sciences, Professor Mary McCarron, to speak to the Progress report for the B.Sc. Human Nutrition and Dietetics. Professor McCarron reported that most of the review recommendations had been implemented or were in the process of being implemented. A new governance structure for the programme has been established and a new joint strategic management Committee and a professional oversight/advisory Committee have been set-up.

The delivery of research-led teaching has been expanded through the scheduling of guest lectures by visiting academics and alumni, and the integration of inter-professional learning (IPL) across the curriculum is being supported by the Professor of Inter-Professional Learning post, which has been extended for a number of years.

The Dean reported that the School continues to respond to issues identified through student feedback. Induction sessions with Trinity staff are now included in Year 1 as part of a new Trinity-led induction module, and other opportunities for DIT students to engage with the Trinity campus continue to be explored. With regard to developing employability skills for use outside the clinical setting, Professor McCarron reported that a Professional Advisory Committee is working with experienced Dietitians from clinical and non-clinical settings to identify the skills needed to prepare students for a more diverse range of practice settings and roles. Service user representation on this Committee ensures that user feedback is considered in programme design and delivery.

With regard to clinical placements, the Dean reported that there are significant issues concerning the provision of placements for students on this programme as a result of competition from two new graduate entry programs at the University of Limerick and University College Dublin. She reported that a resource has been introduced in the Faculty to provide short-term support for the identification of placements but that a longer term, national solution was required. As the Trinity programme is the only national undergraduate programme of its kind it depends on HSE support, whereas direct entry graduate students are paying for their placements and are therefore a more profitable prospect for clinical providers. The Dean has written to the HSE to request a national commitment around placements, and if this cannot be secured she advised that she would have difficulty standing over the programme.

The Vice-Provost/Chief Academic Officer noted that clinical placements are a high priority for all areas in the Faculty, and across College generally, and queried how they could be made more secure. The Dean reported that she is working to extend MOUs with providers to secure placements for all programmes in the Faculty that have a clinical component, and she stressed the importance of this structural piece for the university as a whole.

The Vice-Provost/Chief Academic Officer noted that arrangements for clinical placements are facilitated by the good will of clinical providers. The Dean agreed, reporting that clinical areas which are already under pressure are not resourced for the additional work associated with facilitating student placements. She suggested that the pressure on student placements will continue to increase as more private providers enter the market.

In response to a suggestion from the Quality Officer that the shortage of student placements be included on the University risk register, the Dean reported that the issue is already included on the programme and Faculty risk register. The Academic Secretary queried whether CORU, the accrediting body for the programme, could help to highlight the shortage of placements. The Quality Officer, reporting that the next accreditation of the programme is due in February 2018, said she expected that the issue would be raised in that context. The risk of losing CORU accreditation if the issue is not resolved was highlighted by the Dean. In response to a query from the Senior Lecturer as to whether facilitating clinical placements abroad could overcome the shortage, the Academic Secretary reported that her discussions with Schools about student mobility suggested that there may be issues around the relevant professional bodies accrediting overseas learning environments and outcomes.

Action: The Vice-Provost/Chief Academic Officer recommended that the difficulty in securing placements for students on programmes with a clinical component should be highlighted to Council as a risk factor in the continued accreditation of the B.Sc. Human Nutrition and Dietetics.

The Vice-Provost/Chief Academic Officer thanked the Dean of Health Sciences and commending her work on restructuring the programme. He closed the discussion and recommended the report to Council for approval.

The Dean Graduate Studies joined the meeting.

QC/17-18/22 Review report for the Joint Certificate in Innovation and Entrepreneurship

The Vice-Provost/Chief Academic Officer welcomed the Chief Executive Officer of the Innovation and Entrepreneurship Hub, Ms Fionnuala Healy, the former Chief Executive Officer of the Innovation and Entrepreneurship Hub, Mr Ross Brennan, the Programme Development Manager, Dr Daniel Rogers, and the Chief Innovation and Enterprise Officer, Dr Diarmuid O'Brien to the meeting to speak to the review of the Joint Certificate in Innovation and Entrepreneurship.

Ms Healy welcomed the report, highlighting the Reviewers' comments regarding the quality of the certificate and the unique and positive relationship with QUB. She acknowledged the challenges highlighted by the Reviewers in terms of the financial model for the programme and welcomed the reviewers' recommendations in that regard.

She reported that while the Innovation and Entrepreneurship Hub welcomed the Reviewers' recommendations, there are two that they do not feel it is possible to implement at present. The first relates to the inclusion of QUB on the Academic Oversight Committee and the second relates to the possible double-counting of credits.

The Vice-Provost/Chief Academic Officer thanked Ms Healy and queried the issue around inclusion of QUB on the Academic Oversight Committee. Ms Healy reported that there was no issue in principle with including QUB representation but that, as its remit extends beyond the joint QUB-TCD certificate programme, it was not felt appropriate to do so. She advised that the issue will be addressed through a new MOA with QUB.

With regard to the issue of double counting of credits, the Dean of Graduate Studies reported that students on the structured PhD programme must obtain between 10-30 credits from taught modules. Those students taking up to 25 credits of the Certificate modules can have these acknowledged as part-fulfilment of the credit requirements of their structured PhD; however if they complete the full 30 credits (and thus achieve the Certificate), none of these credits can be counted towards their PhD transferrable skills credit requirement. The Reviewers recommended that students can double count i.e. be awarded the certificate having completed modules amounting to 30 credits and also take the 30 credits towards their structured PhD.

The Vice-Provost/Chief Academic Officer thanked Ms Healy and Professor Cox, and invited comments from the Committee.

In response to a query as to whether students are aware that they can't double count their credits and if they understand the nuance of the credit transfer, Ms Healy agreed that a communications piece was required to clarify this. The Dean of Graduate Studies reported that all Trinity students can obtain the certificate free of charge if they are paying PhD fees, but as there is no core funding for the programme from College, its finance model is not sustainable. The Vice-Provost/Chief Academic Officer remarked that the certificate could be a selling point for Trinity to address the decline in research student numbers. He noted that the most recent *Pitchbook* Universities Report (2017) revealed that Trinity was the European leader in producing entrepreneurs from its undergraduate programmes. The Dean of Health Sciences reported that the programme was not widely advertised in Schools as an option, and suggested that including a profile of students who have successfully completed the certificate on the website may be useful. Mr Brennan recommended that access to central College marketing tools would help to advertise the programme to research students and supervisors, many of whom are unaware of the certificate.

The Academic Secretary, who acted as Internal Facilitator for the review, agreed that there is a lack of clarity regarding available module options on the structured PhD. She suggested that there is an issue with the way in which the structured PhD is promoted in Trinity and the systems in place to support it. In response to a query as to the mechanisms in place to ensure that students don't take and get credit for more than the allowed 30 credits, the Academic Secretary advised that a checking process is attached to the award.

With regard to the continued viability of the programme, Dr O' Brien highlighted the need to attract more students and to resolve the funding situation. As PhD students can obtain Certificate credits toward their PhD for free, he suggested that a financial contribution to the running of the programme should be sought from the Faculties.

The Vice-Provost/Chief Academic Officer thanked the representatives from the Innovation and Entrepreneurship Hub, the Chief Innovation and Enterprise Officer, and the Dean of Graduate Studies for their contributions and recommended the report to Council for approval.

The Dean of Health Sciences left the meeting.

QC/17-18/23 Revised Linked Provider Appeals Procedure

The Quality Officer reminded the Committee that the Linked Provider Appeals Procedure was presented to the Quality Committee in November 2017 (QC/17-18/14). An action arising from the Committee discussion on the procedure was that the Quality Officer seek clarification on the grounds for an appeal i.e. whether they be substantive or procedural, and to revise the procedure to reflect the specific grounds. Following legal advice on the matter, which stated that unless otherwise provided, an appeal is generally understood to include substantive and /or procedural grounds, there was no need to include a statement in relation to same in the procedure. The Independent

Appeals Person (IAP) will make the decision on whether to uphold an appeal or not, based on the merits of the case and the grounds submitted, be they substantive, procedural or a combination of both. The advice recommended some minor enhancements to the procedure which were contained within the revised version circulated to the Committee and highlighted for convenience.

The Vice-Provost/Chief Academic Officer thanked the Quality Officer and recommended the revised procedure to Board for approval. In closing, he reported that the procedure for Quality Assurance of Linked Providers had been deferred from the December meeting of Board and would be considered in January.

Section B

B.1 Quality within Higher Education – A Summary Report from QQI

The Quality Officer noted that the Annual Faculty Quality Report had been identified in the QQI summary report as an example of good practice.

B.2 National ISSE survey

The Quality Officer noted that the ISSE survey had been raised in the minutes of the last meeting *vis-à-vis* the NSSE scores. She noted the NSSE does not include taught PG students and also that the NSSE incorporates information from 512 institutions, both private and public, and that it is therefore not easy to compare to the Irish context. The NSSE may be a useful tool however for looking at Universities that Trinity plans to partner with. The Vice-Provost/Chief Academic Officer agreed that while this is very useful, the qualifications regarding the scale of participating universities are important. He also suggested that the information could be used as a set of metrics for selection of placements or terms abroad.

B.3 Trinity response to PARN survey

The Quality Officer reported that the survey report stopped short of issuing recommendations to streamline quality reviews and accreditations, and that this had been deferred to the next research stage. She also reported that the IUA has provided feedback on the survey report. The Vice-Provost/Chief Academic Officer welcomed the report, noting that the issue of streamlining the two processes has arisen in every review of a school which is accredited by a professional body.

There was no other business and the meeting closed.