Trinity College Dublin

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Trinity College Dublin
The University of Dublin

Quality Committee

Minutes of the Quality Committee meeting of the
19 April 2018, 3.00 – 5.00pm, Boardroom House 1

Present:
Professor Chris Morash, Vice-Provost/Chief Academic Officer (Chair)
Professor Gillian Martin, Senior Lecturer
Professor Darryl Jones, Dean of Faculty of Arts, Humanities & Social Sciences
Professor Neville Cox, Dean of Graduate Studies
Ms. Patricia Callaghan, Academic Secretary
Ms. Roisin Smith, Quality Officer
Professor David Lewis, Faculty of Engineering, Mathematics and Science
Professor Aonghus McNabola, 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 Sheila Ryder, Faculty of Health Sciences
Professor Catherine Darker, Faculty of Health Sciences
Ms. Laura Conway-McAuley, IT Services
Mrs. Jessie Kurtz, Deputy Librarian
Vice-President, Graduate Students' Union

Dr Liz Donnellan, Quality Office (Secretary)

Apologies:
Ms Geraldine Ruane, Chief Operating Officer
Professor Vinny Cahill, Dean of Faculty of Engineering, Mathematics & Science
Professor Mary McCarron, Dean of Faculty of Health Sciences
Ms. Victoria Butler, Secretary's Office
Education Officer, Students' Union

In attendance:

Ms Fionnuala Healy, CEO Innovation Hub and Dr Diarmuid O'Brien, Chief Innovation & Enterprise Officer for *QC/17-18/044 - Implementation Plan for the Joint Certificate in Innovation and Entrepreneurship*
Dr Caitriona Curtis, Institute Manager, Trinity Long Room Hub (TLRH) for *QC/17-18/045 – Implementation Plan for the Long Room Hub.*

QC/17-18/041   Draft minutes of the meeting of the 22 March 2018
The draft minutes of the meeting of the 22 March 2018 were approved.

QC/17-18/042   Matters arising
The Vice-Provost/Chief Academic Officer (VP/CAO) noted that all actions arising from the March meeting had been implemented and were included on the call-over log.

QC/17-18/043   Quality Committee call-over log
The Vice-Provost/Chief Academic Officer reported that all items on the call-over log were being addressed.

(i)   **Procedures for focus groups:** In relation to item *QC/16-17/035 - FEMS Annual Faculty Quality Report,* procedures for the conduct of focus groups are under development and will be presented to a future meeting of the Quality Committee for consideration.

(ii)   **Interfaith requirements of the student population:** In relation to item *QC/17-18/013 - Quality review of the Chaplaincy,* an update on the development of plans to address the interfaith requirements of a more diverse student population will be sought from the Secretary to the College before the end of this academic year.

(iii)   **TAs on Blackboard:** With regard to the mechanism for adding TAs to Blackboard (*QC/17-18/033 – Progress report for School of English)* the Vice-Provost/Chief Academic Officer invited the IT Services representative to provide an update to the Committee. Ms Conway-McAuley reported that there were issues with assigning TAs to Blackboard modules in the past but that a significant amount of work had been done by the IT Services Teaching & Learning IT Group – the outcome was the definition of a visitor code of VVLE. This should be used rather than the research associate (VRES) code as reported in the School of English. The Vice-Provost/Chief Academic Officer thanked Ms McAuley and suggested that a communications exercise was required in order to ensure that Schools were aware of the code.

(iv)   **Trainee teacher placements:** The Quality Officer reported that the difficulty in obtaining placements for trainee teachers outlined in the 2016/17 AHSS Annual Faculty Quality Report will be addressed by a Steering Group on Teacher Supply recently established by the Department of Education and Skills (DES). The universities are represented on this group along with the IUA Director of Academic Affairs, the Teaching Council, the Schools Inspectorate, the HEA and various sections within DES. The IUA reps on the Steering Group will feed back regularly to IUA Registrars on the issues, and the VP/CAO will feedback from IUA Registrars Group to the Quality Committee and Heads of School Committee.

QC/17-18/044   Implementation Plan for the Joint Certificate in Innovation and Entrepreneurship
The Vice-Provost/Chief Academic Officer welcomed the CEO of the Innovation Hub, Ms Fionnuala Healy, and the Chief Innovation & Enterprise Officer, Dr Diarmuid O'Brien, to the meeting to present the Implementation Plan for the Joint Certificate in Innovation and Entrepreneurship.

Ms Healy reported that progress is well underway to address the majority of the Reviewers' recommendations:

- A three year calendar of modules is being prepared and will be made available to all Innovation Academy new and existing programme participants to help them understand their options and plan their module trajectory and timetable.
- A number of resources have been put in place to support the programme, including a programme manager with specific responsibility for the joint certificate and a new marketing and communications officer for the Innovation & Entrepreneurship Hub with responsibility for ensuring that the course documentation and marketing materials (website and brochure) are up to date.
- In response to the recommendation to clearly outline the integration of modules within a holistic programme, the analytical frameworks and educational philosophy associated with the programme will be published in the course handbook along with aims, objectives, learning outcomes and assessment.
- The Reviewers highlighted the financial sustainability of the programme as a critical issue, with over-reliance on external funding sources a key vulnerability. The sustainability of the programme will be considered as part of the Innovation & Entrepreneurship Hub Business Plan.
- The Reviewers recommended offering the programme to academic staff in order to increase awareness and generate income. The Innovation Academy will pilot an "Innovation Taster" programme for academics as part of an overall marketing strategy for the Joint PG certificate in the Innovation & Entrepreneurship Hub marketing strategy. The ''Innovation Taster'' will aim to demonstrate the potential value of skills inherent in the programme to research teams.

Two review recommendations will not be implemented:
- the recommendation to appoint a representative from Queens University Belfast (QUB) to sit on the Academic Oversight Board will not be implemented as the Innovation Academy runs several undergraduate and postgraduate certificates outside of the relationship with QUB.
- the recommendation that students can double count credits obtained in respect of the certificate programme, i.e., be awarded the certificate having completed modules amounting to 30 credits and also take the 30 credits towards their structured PhD was not approved by the Dean of Graduate Studies or by University Council (CL/17-18/084)

The Vice-Provost/Chief Academic Officer thanked Ms Healy and Dr O'Brien and opened the discussion to Committee members.

In response to the challenge of how to market the programme to a wider audience, Ms Healy suggested that graduates are the best champions of the programme and that taster sessions and engagement with Schools, particularly those in the Arts and Humanities, could help to change the view that entrepreneurial training is only relevant for students in the STEM disciplines. The Dean of Graduate Studies reported that the Graduate Studies Office is producing a student handbook for all PhD students which can include information on the joint certificate, and the Vice-Provost/Chief Academic Officer agreed that the ability to source centralised information on the structured PhD was crucial. The role played by supervisors in referring the programme to their students was acknowledged.

Ms Healy reported that the current business model for the programme is not sustainable and it is significantly subsidised from external sources, with QUB's contribution amounting to approximately one-third of the costs. To address this, alternative funding sources via Faculty bursaries or industry funding/sponsorship are being investigated. The VP/CAO expressed concern that any sponsorship arrangements as part of recurrent spend are vulnerable to change. Dr O'Brien stressed that without support from Schools or Faculty Deans, the long term sustainability of the programme is in doubt. He suggested that the Innovation and Entrepreneurship Hub needs to encourage support from Schools

as part of the structured PhD programme. The Dean of Graduate Studies reported that the normal *quid pro quo* arrangements between Schools does not apply for students on the joint certificate and the Academic Secretary noted that the issue of funding for students who take modules that run outside the School/Faculty structure had been raised at Council and has been referred to Planning Group.

A Committee member suggested that modules in the Joint Certificate could be offered as a TEP elective to undergraduate students. There was warm support from Committee members for this suggestion. The VP/CAO reported that there is already precedent for developing TEP modules outside the School/Faculty structure noting that, to date, 12 TEP elective modules have been developed from Trinity research themes and that the Science Gallery is also interested in developing a module as a TEP elective. He invited Ms Healy to liaise with the Manager of the Trinity Education Project with regard to identifying opportunities for inclusion of modules from the programme as Trinity electives. The Dean of Graduate Studies invited Ms Healy to attend the Graduate Studies Committee to advertise the joint programme to Directors of Teaching and Learning Postgraduate, noting that they are the primary route to PhD supervisors.

Responding to a query from the Academic Secretary as to whether the closure of the programme was a possibility, Ms Healy stated that it was but that it was hoped that a strategy could be developed to mitigate against this. The Dean of Graduate Studies stressed the importance of the programme in fulfilling the requirement for generic skills training as part of the new SFI funding model.

The Vice-Provost/Chief Academic Officer thanked Ms Healy and Dr O'Brien, and closed the discussion.

The Vice-President of the Graduate Students' Union left the meeting.

QC/17-18/045   Implementation Plan for the Trinity Long Room Hub (TLRH)
The Vice-Provost/Chief Academic Officer welcomed the Manager of the Trinity Long Room Hub, Dr Caitriona Curtis, to the meeting to present the Implementation Plan for the Trinity Long Room Hub (TLRH). Dr Curtis reported that with regard to the recommendation on succession planning for the new Director, the current Director has extended her three-year term to five years to allow time for the appointment of a replacement and the smooth transition of relationships, especially philanthropic ones. With regard to developing an ongoing pipeline of academic leadership for the Institute, the TLRH Board has requested the development of a role description for a Deputy Director and to explore how future succession planning and additional capacity and leadership could be generated.

The Reviewers recommended that the Hub should assess the value and operation of its Visiting Research Fellowship (VRF) scheme to ensure that it meets the strategic needs of the TLRH. Dr Curtis reported that the scheme is constantly being invigorated through links with international universities and engagement with VRF alumni. The Hub is collaborating with the Library's Research Informatics Manager, Ms Niamh Brennan, to develop metrics to track the outputs of the scheme and a Longitudinal Study of the VRFs will determine the impact of publications and collaborations.

With regard to increasing research funding, Dr Curtis reported that the Hub strongly encourages colleagues to avail of national and EU funding opportunities through schemes such as the European Research Commission (ERC) 'buy out' and the Hub's Research Incentive Schemes, which have been effective in encouraging external grant activity. The Hub has supported the development of five College-approved research themes, and is looking for networking opportunities to attract funding around 'cultural trauma' as part of the European H2020 co-fund programme. The Hub's links with the Library continue to develop and since the review a Library TLRH working group has been convened to focus on developing a shared multi-annual research agenda. The Reviewers' recommendation to develop a compact of understanding with partner Schools as a framework for

their interactions has been initiated and has the support of Heads of School. The Hub will continue to support the research culture from postgraduate students upwards and will consult with Directors of Postgraduate Teaching and Learning to identify existing skills and training gaps, and how the TLRH can add real value and incorporate this into the compact of understanding with Schools.

The Vice-Provost/Chief Academic Officer thanked Dr Curtis and invited comment from the Dean of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences. The Dean remarked that the review was very positive and thanked Dr Curtis for her work. In terms of developing a compact of understanding with Schools, he reported that the new Baseline Budgetary Model (BBM) had enabled direct funding for the Hub which would facilitate an easier relationship with partner schools. He commended the work of the Hub in supporting early to mid-career researchers, and suggested that this would help to initiate the change in mind-set necessary to increase the number of high quality grant applications.

Noting the low level of ERC funding secured in Arts & Humanities, the Vice-Provost/Chief Academic Officer queried whether any metrics exist around the number of applications being submitted and the success rate of these applications. Dr Curtis reported that the Hub does not currently track the success rate of applications in the Arts and Humanities Schools and that further support is required in the lead-in and application phases to support additional applications from Arts & Humanities for this funding. The Vice-Provost/Chief Academic Officer suggested that metrics would be useful to follow the success rate of applications. The Dean of AHSS advised against making the drive for applications the primary incentive as this can act as a deterrent, and suggested that the development of a culture of support for applications would be more beneficial.

In response to a query from the VP/CAO on the role of research themes in the Hub, Dr Curtis reported that they are central to the Hub's activity. The Deputy Librarian commented on the link between the research themes and the Library collections, noting that some of the most exciting research grants were around the 1641 depositions. She noted that there was further scope for partnering on extended, large-scale grant applications.

In response to a query as to whether the Hub's philanthropic relationships are linked to the Director or to the Hub itself, and whether there is a danger that these relationships will be lost when the current Director leaves, Dr Curtis reported that these relationships have been developed by the Director over time and any handover to the new Director would ensure the continuity of these relationships. Acknowledging the work of the Hub and of the current Research Programme Officer, a member queried the purpose of the compact of understand and its stage of development. Dr Curtis responded that the purpose was to revisit the supports provided by the Hub, to identify a common vision with the Schools, to conduct a gap analysis and to put in place a workable action plan for the coming years to address the issues raised. The Vice-Provost/Chief Academic Officer queried the proportion of the overheads from PI grants that go to the Hub and the Schools, and Dr Curtis clarified that Schools are made aware of the services that are provided by the Hub if overheads are shared between the Hub and the School.

The Vice-Provost/Chief Academic Officer thanked Dr Curtis for her update and commended the work of the Hub.

QC/17-18/046   Proposed Management Plan for the Institutional Review 2021
The Quality Officer spoke to the proposed management plan for the Institutional review scheduled to occur in 2021, which was circulated with the papers for the meeting. She reported that this will be the first institutional review under the new QQI Act 2012 and that it would have a broader focus than previous institutional reviews, incorporating quality assurance, research, international

education, and Linked Providers. She outlined that preparations for the review will be happening at same time as the development of the new College Strategic Plan and the implementation of the TEP.

Ms Smith reported that a key phase of the review will be the development of the Institutional Self-Evaluation Report (ISER) that responds to the QQI Handbook and Terms of Reference for institutional reviews of Universities and Designated Awarding Bodies. It is proposed that a steering committee will be established to manage this process and facilitate engagement with the different constituencies across College. Proposals were put forward for steering committee membership, and for chairs and function leads for nine function areas identified in the draft plan. The role of the Quality Committee and Quality Office in supporting the process was outlined. Finally a small team of writers will ensure style consistency of the ISER and the final document will need Council and Board approval prior to submission to QQI.

A communications strategy will be developed to socialize the ISER and a gap analysis conducted to identify any actions that need to be taken in advance of the review. An institutional profile will also be required. Institution-level goals for QA will need to be articulated in the preparation phase, and the ISER will need to demonstrate how institutional data is used for quality enhancement and informs strategic decisions.

The Dean of AHSS left the meeting.

In the ensuing discussion the Committee expressed concern about the scope of the review and the level of detail required as outlined in the plan. The Academic Secretary clarified that there was still some work to do to hone the scope of the review, and that the review offered an opportunity to highlight issues around national data collection, and to showcase enhancements. The Vice-Provost/ Chief Academic Officer suggested that there was an opportunity to use the review strategically to highlight the impact of reduced resources and to outline how we could do things better. The Senior Lecturer/Dean of Undergraduate Studies suggested that it would be useful to produce key questions for each functional area and the Quality Officer reported that the QQI institutional review handbook contained 11 questions which could be pared down and used in a reflective exercise undertaken by all the identified functional areas. In response to a query regarding the alignment of the proposed review of governance of quality at Trinity with the institutional review, the Quality Officer clarified that the outcome of the review would inform the institutional review.

The Vice-Provost/Chief Academic Officer thanked the Quality Officer and it was agreed that further definition of the scope of the plan was required, and that the plan should incorporate key framework questions under each function heading. Further consideration will also take place on the constitution of the Steering Committee and the Chairs/Function Leads. The VP/CAO closed the discussion by recommending that the Heads of the Functional Areas be invited to attend the Quality Committee next year and he suggested that comments on the plan should be submitted to the Quality Officer.

QC/17-18/047   Revised Linked Provider Quality Assurance Procedure
The Quality Officer spoke to the revised Linked Provider Quality Assurance Procedure. She reported that the procedure had been revised to reflect the legal advice regarding the extent of Trinity's responsibility and liability in the implementation of the Act with respect to linked providers. The revised document outlines Trinity's role as the Designated Awarding Body has responsibility for the quality assurance of a Linked Provider's academic provision. The Linked Provider is required to self-certify their non-academic quality assurance procedures and furnish evidence of external review and assurance of any procedures with a legal or statutory basis. She reported that the revised procedure will be discussed at the May Royal Irish Academy of Music (RIAM) and Marino Institute of Education

(MIE) Associated Colleges Degree Committees, prior to submission to University Council and College Board for approval.

QC/17-18/048   Any other business
The Quality Officer drew the Committee's attention to the revised External Examiner Policy, which was approved by Council on the 4th April 2018.

There was no other business and the meeting closed.