



**Trinity College Dublin,
The University of Dublin**

Quality Committee

Draft Minutes of the Quality Committee meeting of the
1 February 2019, 10.00am – 12 noon, West Theatre Boardroom

Present:

Professor Chris Morash, Vice-Provost/Chief Academic Officer (Chair)
Professor Darryl Jones, Dean of Faculty of Arts, Humanities & Social Sciences
Professor Mary McCarron, Dean of Faculty of Health Sciences
Ms Breda Walls, Director of Student Services
Ms. Patricia Callaghan, Academic Secretary
Ms. Roisin Smith, Quality Officer
Professor Kevin Mitchell, Senior Lecturer/Dean of Undergraduate Studies
Professor Mary Rogan, Faculty of Arts, Humanities & Social Sciences
Professor Jenny Berrill, Faculty of Arts, Humanities & Social Sciences
Professor Jan de Vries, Faculty of Health Sciences
Dr Gogoal Falia, Vice-President Graduate Students' Union
Ms Aimee Connolly, Education Officer Students' Union
Ms. Victoria Butler, Secretary's Office.
Ms. Laura Conway-McAuley, IT Services
Dr Liz Donnellan, Quality Office (Secretary)

Apologies:

Professor Breiffni Fitzgerald, Faculty of Engineering, Mathematics and Science
Professor Vinny Cahill, Dean of Faculty of Engineering, Mathematics & Science
Mrs. Jessie Kurtz, Deputy Librarian
Ms Julia Carmichael, Chief Risk Officer
Professor Neville Cox, Dean of Graduate Studies

In attendance:

Professor Matthew Causey (Head of School, Creative Arts) for item QC/18-19/011 – Review of Creative Arts.
Mr Mike Clark (Director of Campus Infrastructure) for item QC/18-19/021 – Implementation Plan for Estates and Facilities.

QC/18-19/017 Draft minutes of the meeting of the 15 November 2018

The draft minutes of the meeting of the 15 November 2018 were approved.

QC/18-19/018 Matters arising

The Academic Secretary, deputizing for the Vice-Provost/Chief Academic Officer, informed the Committee that the report on the Irish Survey of Student Engagement (ISSE) 2017/18 (QC/18-19/011) was considered by Council on the 28 November 2018 and by the Undergraduate Studies Committee (USC) on the 11 December 2018. The Senior Lecturer/Dean of Undergraduate Studies summarised the key points of the USC discussion, noting that the statistical reliability of the data had been debated at length. He reported reluctance by some Schools to engage with the survey results, particularly where low scores were achieved,

and emphasised the importance of changing attitudes to the survey as it will be an important tool to monitor TEP implementation over the coming years, providing benchmark data against which the impact of TEP initiatives on the student experience can be evaluated. The Director of Student Services informed the Committee that she is involved in a project with the Dean of Students, the Senior Tutor and the Students' Unions to identify key student support issues arising from the ISSE and ISB survey data. A series of focus groups, starting 11th February, will engage students in conversation about support services in Trinity with a view to improving the student experience.

Noting that Council had acknowledged the value of the ISSE data and the importance of acting on its results, the Academic Secretary referenced the considerable amount of work being done across College to address areas of concern. In conclusion, she reported that the Quality Policy Statement (QC/18-19/014) was approved by Council on the 28 November 2018 and by Board on the 12 December 2018 and that the review of the School of Nursing and Midwifery (QC/18-19/013) had been approved by Council on the 16 January 2019.

The Vice-Provost/Chief Academic Officer and the Dean of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences joined the meeting at this point (10:20am)

QC/18-19/019 Quality Review of Creative Arts

The Vice-Provost/Chief Academic Officer welcomed Professor Matthew Causey (Head of School, Creative Arts) to the meeting to speak to the review report for Creative Arts, which was circulated with the papers and taken as read.

The Head of School welcomed the Report, which calls for strong leadership, a shared governance and administrative structure and co-location of facilities. He reported that the review team had correctly identified leadership as a vital aspect of the next stage of the School's development, and in particular the challenges around succession and seniority posed by vacancies and imminent retirements. The unique issues posed by the School's dispersed physical location and fragmented governance structures were also highlighted in the review, and Professor Causey stressed the need to deal sensitively with revised reporting lines, redesigned job titles and possible co-location of School offices.

Noting that implementation of the recommendations would require a cultural shift in terms of attitude and work practices, and that there was a lack of unanimity in the School on the issue of co-location and a shared curriculum, the Dean of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences suggested that the School would benefit from external advice on the best way to proceed. This proposal was welcomed by the Vice-Provost/Chief Academic Officer and the Head of School, and received unanimous support from the Committee. The VP/CAO reminded the Committee that there is precedent for the establishment of a task group to support the implementation of review recommendations, and cited the review of the School of Religions as a recent example. The task group would comprise, *inter alia*, the Head of School and the Faculty Dean, the Academic Secretary and should re-engage members of the review team to act in a consultative capacity to the task group. Noting that he will shortly be stepping down as Head of School and that there would be a gap before the appointment of his successor, Professor Causey welcomed the continuity that a task group would bring to the post-review process. In response to a query from the VP/CAO regarding the timing of the Head of School elections, the Assistant Secretary reported that traditionally the Faculty Dean elections take place before the Head of School elections, but that there were no procedural barriers to altering the sequence. The Committee, therefore, recommended fast-tracking the process to appoint the next Head of Creative Arts in order to bridge the leadership gap arising from the retirement of the current Head.

The meeting debated whether rationalisation of the curriculum should occur before or after reform of the School's governance and administrative structures. The Senior Lecturer queried whether there were plans to integrate the School's disciplines through the development of shared modules in TEP, and the VP/CAO referred to the TEP assistants and fellows for support in this regard. The Academic Secretary suggested that the curricular reform that would arise naturally from TEP might be the best starting

point, and recommended that the School avail of expertise in Trinity Teaching and Learning and from the Senior Lecturer to assist them with the TEP curriculum changes.

In conclusion, the Director of Student Services suggested that help should be sought internally from the Project Management Office and from Human Resources to support the change management process. The Head of School proposed that the Bursar should be consulted regarding space and facilities. Referring to the association between the Royal Irish Academy of Music (RIAM) and the Music Department, the VP/CAO reported that there was currently little integration between these entities and School, which might need to be addressed at a future date.

Decisions:

019.1 The Committee recommended the Quality Review of Creative Arts to Council for approval.

019.2 If approved by Council, a task group should be established to support the implementation of the review recommendations, and members of the review panel be invited to act in a consultative capacity to the task group.

019.3 The process to elect the Head of School should be fast-tracked.

019.4 The School should be provided with support from relevant College Officers and Offices to implement TEP.

QC/18-19/20 Progress Report for Histories and Humanities

The Dean of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences (AHSS) spoke to the Progress Report for Histories and Humanities. He noted that staffing was highlighted in the review as an area of concern, particularly in the History Department where all of the senior professors due to retire over a five-year period were male. He reported that the demographic of the Department had changed significantly since the review, with five of the most recent appointments and the new Lecky Professor being female. He also reported that a new position in Gender and Women's Studies had been approved and filled since the review, and that staffing in the History of Art department will be addressed by a new, single-honours programme currently under development.

The Vice-Provost/Chief Academic Officer thanked the Dean and, noting that the new Head of School was from the Classics Department, welcomed the changes in the School. With regard to the capping of course enrollments, the Senior Lecturer/Dean of Undergraduate Studies reported that there were ongoing discussions across all of the Arts courses in this regard, and that this would remain under annual review as part of TEP implementation. The VP/CAO drew member's attention to two recommendations on page six. Regarding the recalibration of full-time and part-time fees, he stressed that the Academic Registry does not have a role in setting fees. Concerning attendance by M.Phil students at the research seminar series, he recommended that the Head of School should be contacted to confirm that the instructions to students and to the visiting lecturers on the purpose of the seminar series had been reviewed.

Decision/Action:

020.1 The Quality Committee recommended the Progress Report for Histories and Humanities to Council for approval.

020.2 The School should be contacted (i) to confirm that instructions to students and to visiting lecturers regarding the purpose of the seminar series have been reviewed and (ii) to be advised that the AR does not set policy on fee structures.

QC/18-19/21 Implementation Plan for Estates and Facilities

The Vice-Provost/Chief Academic Officer welcomed Mr Mike Clark, Director of Campus Infrastructure, to the meeting to present the Implementation Plan for Estates and Facilities. Mr Clark spoke to the key recommendations in the report, some of which have already been implemented since the review. Noting that the University is operating in an austere environment, he stressed the need to ensure that value for money is obtained on all projects. He informed the Committee that Trinity had joined the Association of University Directors of Estates (AUDE) in October 2018 and that along with the four other

Irish University members, is negotiating with AUDE to include data from Irish Universities in the UK database. This which would facilitate benchmarking on, for example, energy costs and estate utilization.

The Vice-Provost/Chief Academic Officer thanked Mr Clark and, referring to recommendation 5.2.6, queried when the organisational restructuring of Estates and Facilities would be completed. Mr Clark reported that this was ongoing. In response to a query, Mr Clark remarked that there was a significant difference between Irish and UK universities in terms of funding available for estate management and recruitment to key positions. He noted a lack of institutional agility in some areas and stressed the need to move with the times whilst also respecting tradition. He cited the TEP as a good example of institutional flexibility.

The Senior Lecturer welcomed the application of the Well-Building standard to the E3 project. He drew the Committee's attention to the fact that, as part of the TEP logistics stream, School-managed rooms would become centrally managed, and responsibility for the maintenance of the AV infrastructure for these rooms would now fall under the remit of IT Services. He suggested that any new IT and Digital Strategies should include maintenance of AV infrastructure, as it impacts the student experience. In response, Mr Clark noted that a learning and teaching review is the first step in the implementation of the Estates Strategy. The Dean of Health Sciences queried progress with the new student centre and Mr Clark reported that location and capital investment for the project was under discussion. In the interim, incremental improvements are being made to create more informal learning spaces and make improvements to 'Pooled' teaching spaces.

Decision/Action:

021.1 The Quality Committee recommended the Implementation Plan for Estates and Facilities to Board for approval.

QC/18-19/22 Implementation Plan the School of Nursing and Midwifery

The Dean of Health Sciences spoke to the Implementation Plan for Nursing & Midwifery. She reported that discussions with Academic Registry were ongoing to address improved business processes that would provide the School with the ability to respond quickly to market demand. Noting that in the next few years the School will be required to tender for all of its programmes, she suggested that this will require greater agility than is currently possible.

In response to a query from the Vice-Provost/Chief Academic Officer regarding the optimum size of the School, the Dean reported that while the balance of undergraduate and postgraduate numbers would be considered in the School's strategic plan, the quota for undergraduate students is set externally. She advised that the focus of growth in the School will be aligned to its research strengths and to the College's Strategic Plan, and that new Master's programmes will feed into research projects. It is expected that every staff member will have at least one PhD student and the timing of new appointments will be linked to the overarching School strategy. Professor McCarron noted that while currently ranked 25th in the QS World University Subject Rankings 2018, the School aspires to be in the top 20 and hopes to achieve this by benchmarking itself against research-intensive universities such as Yale.

The Dean reiterated that the D'Olier St. campus is not fit-for-purpose, noting that the School's senior PIs are cannot be accommodated there which militates against an ecosystem in which senior and junior staff can mix with students. In addition, although the current layout of the teaching spaces do not conform to TEP requirements, they cannot be altered as the building is listed. With regard to the reference in 4.3 to the creation of teaching fellow track positions, the VP/CAO noted that Trinity does not have a teaching track, and suggested that an explicit career track should be included in the School strategic plan. The Dean undertook to revert to the School regarding this. The meeting welcomed the engagement of the Knowledge Partnership to review the School's existing programmes against the external environment.

The VP/CAO thanked the Dean and recommended that the School update the Implementation Plan (IP) in the light of the Council discussion of the 16 January 2019 and in the context of the School's research and general strategy (in development). The updated IP should consider the optimum balance of undergraduate and postgraduate students and the recruitment of Professors in the context of the School's overarching strategy.

Decision/Action:

022.1 An updated Implementation Plan to be brought back to the Quality Committee at a future date.

QC/18-19/23 Any other business

There was no other business

QC/18-19/24 For noting

The Quality Officer reported that the Annual Institutional Quality Report (AIQR) was due to be submitted to QQI on the 20 February and invited Committee members to provide feedback to her by the 15 February.

The Vice-Provost/Chief Academic Officer advised the Committee that the QC meeting of the 7 March would need to be rescheduled, and that the Quality Office would be in contact with members in this regard.

There was no other business and the meeting closed.