



Quality Committee	
Meeting Date	Thursday 23 May 2024 14.00 – 16.00 Trinity Board Room
Present	Professor Orla Sheils, Vice Provost/Chief Academic Officer (Chair), Ms. Patricia Callaghan, Academic Secretary; Ms. Roisin Smith, Quality Officer; Professor Sylvia Draper, Dean of STEM; Mr. Patrick Magee, Director IT Services; Professor David Shepherd, Senior Lecturer; Professor Jan De Vries, HS Representative; Ms. Jessie Kurtz, Deputy Librarian, Professor David Fennelly, AHSS Representative, Ms. Julia Carmichael, Chief Risk Officer, Dr Dirk Van Damme, External Member of the Quality Committee; Professor Martine Smith, Dean of Graduate Studies; Professor Carmel O’Sullivan, Head of School of Education; Ms. Leticia Peralta (Quality Office).
Apologies	Professor Gail Mc Elroy, Dean of AHSS; Professor Emma Stokes, VP for Global Engagement; Ms. Orla Cunningham, Chief Operating Officer; Ms. Breda Walls, Director of Student Services; Dipto Barman, PG Student Representative; Professor Brian O’Connell, Dean of Health Sciences; Education Officer TCD SU (Position Vacant), Professor Breiffni Fitzgerald, STEM Representative.
Visitor/In - attendance	QC/23-24/046 Ms Shannon Keegan (School of Medicine), Mr David Byrne (TBS), Ms Leona Coady (PG Renewal), Ms Katie O’ Connor (Faculty STEM), Ms Lena Doherty (FHS), Ms Rima Fitzpatrick, Ms Lizzie Witcher, Ms Ewa Sadowska, Dr Elizabeth O Donnell, Ms Ciara Condon, Dr Michael Cleary Gaffney (Academic affairs), Ms Frances Leogue (Graduate studies Office), Mr Shane Moore (Quality Office). QC/23-24/049 Professor Teresa O’Doherty, MIE President and Dr Sean Delaney, MIE Registrar. QC/23-24/050 Professor Ian Donohue Head of School and Mr James Higgins, Scholl Manager School of Natural Science. Professor Vinny Wade, School of Computer Science and Statistics (Incoming Senior Lecturer).

Agenda items		
	Key points arising from discussion	Actions/Decisions
QC/23-24/046 Quality Culture Presentation and Discussion	Dr. Dirk Van Damme, External Member of the Quality Committee, presented a paper on “Quality Culture in Universities” that outlined the definitions, dimensions, and approaches to Quality in Higher Education. Different quality assessment methods, achievements and current risks to Quality Culture were explained. The risks addressed included; bureaucratization, formalism, and	Decision QC/23-24/046: The Quality Committee noted the presentation on Quality Culture.



Trinity College Dublin

Coláiste na Tríonóide, Baile Átha Cliath

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	<p>'legalism', risk-avoidance, window-dressing in the reputation race, high costs and workload, and overemphasis on input and process standards. Additionally, different internal types of organizational cultures adopted by universities were presented.</p> <p>It was noted by the speaker that the increase in external quality assurance in universities in recent decades representing the interests of Government and Employers correlated with a decrease in academic self-regulation of quality. Professionals have institutionalized quality assurance, reducing it to merely filling out paperwork without genuinely reflecting on the actual circumstances. Most quality assurance schemes continue to overly depend on input and process standards. It was highlighted that bringing Quality into Institutions requires shared values, effective leadership, clear communication, and a unified culture.</p> <p>A visitor to the presentation asked about the relationship between quality and resources. Dr van Damme responded that there is no linear connection between Quality and the number of resources allocated. Drawing from his experience, programmes with limited resources can deliver good quality outcomes. It was noted there is no hard evidence indicating Quality is a matter of resources but more about engagement and leadership.</p> <p>Dr van Damme spoke on different forms of Accreditation, i.e., accreditation directed at 'basic standards' or 'threshold standards' and those directed at excellence standards, that requires the implementation of various mechanisms including customer satisfaction, technological innovation, and the incorporation of best practices. In contrast, rankings do not provide a reliable measure of excellence. In response to a question from the Director of Quality Accreditation and Rankings in Trinity Business School, Dr van Damme acknowledged that business school</p>	



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	<p>accreditation processes are ahead in terms of reinforcing excellence in the quality agenda and stated his admiration for these approaches.</p> <p>The Vice-Provost/Chief Academic Officer thanked Dr Van Damme for a thought-provoking presentation. Invited guests for this item retired from the meeting.</p>	
QC/23-24/047 Quality Committee minutes	Minutes from previous Quality Committee meeting held on April 18, 2024, were approved in this Quality Committee meeting (May 23, 2024).	Decision QC/23-24/047: The Quality Committee recommended the minutes from 18 th April 2024 to Council for approval.
QC/23-24/048 Matters arising from the minutes.	<p>The following Agenda Items from the Quality Committee Meeting of 18th April 2024 were presented to the Council meeting of 8th May 2024:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minutes of the QC of 18 April 2024 • QC/23-24/041 Teaching Council Accreditation Report • QC/23-24/042 Request for Derogation for School of Education • QC/23-24/043 Progress Report Genetics and Microbiology • QC/23-24/044 School of Physics Progress Report on Institute of Physics Accreditation for Noting. • QC/23-24/045 RIAM Policies for Noting (English Lang Policy and Education Recruitment Agent Policies) <p>The following Agenda Items from the Quality Committee Meeting of 18th April 2024 were presented to the College Board meeting of the 22 May 2024:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minutes of QC of 18 April 2024; • QC/23-24/045 RIAM Corporate HR Policies (Fee Support and Education Assistance and Continuous Professional Development Policy). 	



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<p>QC/23-24/049 Marino Institute of Education</p> <p>QC/23-24/049.1 MIE Quality Review Report</p>	<p>MIE Quality Review Report, presented by Professor Teresa O’Doherty, MIE President, and Dr. Sean Delaney, MIE Registrar.</p> <p>Professor Teresa O’Doherty noted that the process was a valuable experience with excellent engagement across the Institute from students and staff. MIE received 21 commendations and 15 recommendations and Professor O’Doherty expressed her gratitude to the Quality Office for their support throughout this process.</p> <p>Dr Sean Delaney, MIE Registrar, presented an overview of the Institutional Effectiveness Review (IER) process, which identified four key finding relating to (i) Governance and Management of Quality, (ii) Teaching, Learning and Assessment, (iii) Learner Environment and Support, and (iv) Research Environment.</p> <p>Recommendations included: (i) develop an Annual Review Report for academic programmes, (ii) strengthen student feedback, (iii) utilise analysis and available data to support decision making processes, (iv) targeted orientation and supports for mature, part-time, and international students, (v) strengthen the role of student representative, (vi) monitor demand for study and social spaces and (vi) develop metrics to record research output and impact.</p> <p>The reviewers commended, among other things, the quality of the professional programmes, an impressive and growing range of publications emerging, and the influence of this work on the national educational systems.</p> <p>The next steps involve developing an Implementation Plan and to continue with the improvement and schedule of reviews for the Institute.</p>	<p>Decision QC/23-24/049.1: The Quality Committee recommended the MIE Quality Review Report to Council for approval.</p>



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<p>QC/23-24/049.2 MIE Progress Report on the Professional Diploma in Education – Further Education</p>	<p>The President of MIE in response to a query, acknowledged that currently there is not a consistent approach to Module Evaluation and data gathering. It was highlighted that evaluations typically occur at the end of the module. The objective is to evaluate not only individual modules but also entire programmes.</p> <p>Responding to queries in relation to cybersecurity and data collection, Dr Delaney responded that MIE was seeking to enhance the level of data available through systems to inform decision-making and had appointed a new Academic Service Officer position within the Registrar’s Office to focus on this area. Dr Delaney spoke of efforts to ensure digital copies of all examination results from 2010 were available also in paper form and stored off-site to mitigate the risk of data loss due to cybersecurity breaches.</p> <p>In response to a question from the Chief Risk Officer, it was clarified that data were collected at the institutional level rather than student level and were anonymized.</p> <p>The VP/CAO extended thanks to both the external review panel and especially the note-taker, Yseult Thornley, and congratulated MIE on a positive review outcome.</p> <p>MIE Progress Report on the Professional Diploma in Education, presented by Dr. Sean Delaney, MIE Registrar.</p> <p>The review of the Professional Diploma in Education was conducted in March 2022. The Review Report, the institutional response, and the Quality Improvement Plan (QIP) were considered by the Quality Committee in January 2023. The QIP was resubmitted in March 2023 addressing committee members’ queries at the January 2023 meeting.</p>	<p>Decision QC/23-24/049.2: The Quality Committee recommended the MIE Progress Report to Council for approval.</p>



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<p>QC/23-24/049.3 MIE English Language Policy</p>	<p>The President of MIE highlighted that the process presented a valuable opportunity for staff development, noting the active involvement of Programme Leaders in implementing the recommendations. A member complimented the format of the report template, emphasizing its usefulness as a tool to facilitate the implementation of planned actions by the Institute.</p> <p>MIE English Language Policy, presented by Dr. Sean Delaney, MIE Registrar.</p> <p>Marino is eligible to apply for the International Education Mark and an English Language Policy satisfies one of the criteria for the award of an International Education Mark.</p> <p>The MIE President expressed her gratitude to Professor Carson, Trinity College, for her advice on the policy and noted that it mirrors Trinity’s English Language Policy.</p>	<p>Decision QC/23-24/049.3: The Quality Committee recommended the MIE English Language Policy to Council for approval.</p>
<p>QC/23-24/050 School of Natural Science Quality Review Report</p>	<p>Professor Ian Donohue, Head of Natural Science presented an overview of the Quality Review Report and recommendations for the School of Natural Science. The review took place in February 2024</p> <p>The following commendations were highlighted: (i) the progress made in its financial position given the resource constraints, (ii) research is of an excellent standard, (iii) high quality of instruction and dedication of its teaching and professional staff, (iv) Centre of Environment is a best practice example, and (v) a strong leadership group.</p>	<p>Decision QC/23-24/050: The Quality Committee recommended the School of Natural Science Quality Review Report to Council for approval.</p>



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	<p>Recommendations from the review panel included: (i) urgent action should be taken to ensure staff and infrastructure are matched to increasing student numbers, (ii) College must address transparency in budget processes, (iii) immediate investment in teaching spaces, (iv) develop a centralised School-based management structure, (v) enhancement of School identity, (vi) improve student and staff induction, and (vii) development of a School-wide approach to preserving, maintaining, and displaying collections in a financially sustainable way.</p> <p>The next steps are to develop an Implementation Plan to be presented to the Quality Committee at its first meeting of the next Academic Year 2024.</p> <p>The VP/CAO commented that issues to do with resourcing and infrastructure are typically outside the formal process of quality reviews. She clarified the difference between the E3 budgetary model and the Budget Planning & Allocation model.</p> <p>Professor Donohue confirmed that while not all the report recommendations were highlighted in the presentation, they would all be addressed in the Implementation Plan.</p> <p>Regarding the preservation of the school's collections, Ms. Jessie Kurtz, Deputy Librarian, noted that the Library has preservation and conservation experts that can support the School implement this recommendation.</p> <p>The Dean of STEM offered her congratulations on the commendations received by the School. She agreed that better communication on how budgets are allocated is necessary, and she acknowledged difficulties in the transition between the budgetary models.</p>	



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	<p>In response to a question on different attitudes to the E3 initiative, the Head of School commented on how he was communicating the benefits of E3 at School Committee meetings in terms of new E3 academic positions, new technical and new administrative staff.</p> <p>During the discussion on the Induction of new staff, it was acknowledged that a crucial aspect has been clarifying roles and responsibilities across the school and placing emphasis on the school rather than the discipline structure. The VP-CAO offered to share insights from ongoing work on an Accountability Framework within her office and invited the Head of School to contact the Executive Director ASD for a copy of the framework.</p> <p>Workload issues around Masters and Capstone Project supervision was discussed. The Dean of Graduate Studies highlighted the recent approval of a new process to address challenging supervisor-student relationships, which could be beneficial for the school. She also referred to a disparity in the body of the report in relation to concerns raised by postgraduate student representatives and the absence of any commentary to address these in the recommendations. The Head of School indicated that a forthcoming survey on reporting and complaints will provide further clarity on this matter.</p>	
AOB	<p>The VP-CAO expressed gratitude for Professor Gail McElroy's contributions to the Quality Committee in her capacity as Dean of AHSS. Similarly, appreciation was extended to Professor David Shepherd for his dedicated service as Senior Lecturer, and a welcome was extended to his successor, Professor Vinny Wade, School of Computer Science & Statistics. The VP-CAO also acknowledged Professor Carmel O'Sullivan who will leave the Quality Committee in her capacity as Head of School representative but will remain a member in her new role as Dean of AHSS.</p>	



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	The VP- CAO also acknowledged the contributions of Professor Jan De Vries (HS Representative) and Professor Breffini Fitzgerald (STEM Representative) who completed their second three-year term as members of the committee.	
QC/23-24/051 Quality Committee Self Evaluation	VP-CAO encouraged members of the Quality Committee to complete the survey addressing the performance of the Quality Committee in 2023/24.	Action QC/23-24/051: Quality Committee members were asked to respond to the QC Survey Self-Evaluation by 16 th June 2024.
QC/23-24/052 Update on Quality Review Schedule 2024-25	The Schedule of Quality Reviews for 2024/25 was presented to Quality Committee members for noting.	Decision QC/23-24/052: The Quality Committee noted the Quality Review Schedule 2024-25.
QC/23-24/053 Proposed Dates for Quality Committee 2024-25	Quality Committee proposed dates for Academic Year 2024/25 were circulated.	Decision QC/23-24/053: The Quality Committee noted the proposed dates for Quality Committee 2024-25.