

**UNIVERSITY OF DUBLIN  
TRINITY COLLEGE**

**GRADUATE STUDIES COMMITTEE**

Minutes of the meeting held at 9a.m. on Thursday 22<sup>nd</sup> May 2014  
Boardroom, Provost's House

**Present:** Professor Aideen Long, Dean of Graduate Studies (*Chair*),

Directors of Teaching and Learning (Postgraduate) as follows:

Professor Martin Fellenz, School of Business

Professor Graeme Watson, School of Chemistry

Professor Damian Murchan, School of Education

Professor Martine Cuypers, School of Histories & Humanities

Professor Christer Gobl, School of Linguistic, Speech and  
Communication Sciences

Professor John Stalker, School of Mathematics

Professor Orla Sheils, School of Medicine

Professor Anna Davies, School of Natural Sciences

Professor Anne-Marie Brady, School of Nursing and Midwifery

Professor Lidia Tajber, School of Pharmacy and Pharmaceutical  
Sciences

Professor Louise Bradley, School of Physics

Professor David Hevey, School of Psychology

Professor Carlo Aldrovandi, Aspirant School of Religions, Theology and  
Ecumenics

Professor Peter Muhlau, School of Social Sciences and Philosophy

Mr Ryan Kenny, Graduate Students' Union President (*Ex officio*)

Ms Sarah Smith, Graduate Students' Union Vice President (*Ex officio*)

Mr Trevor Peare, Keeper of Readers' Services (in attendance *Ex officio*)

**Apologies:** Directors of Teaching and Learning (Postgraduate) as follows:

Professor Simon Wilson, School of Computer Science and Statistics

Professor Ebrahim Al Awadi, School of Dental Science

Professor Melissa Sihra, School of Drama, Film & Music

Professor Roger West, School of Engineering

Professor Anne Fitzpatrick, School of Languages, Literatures and  
Cultural Studies

Professor Stephanie Holt, School of Social Work and Social Policy

The Academic Secretary, Ms Patricia Callaghan, CAPSL  
Representative (*Ex officio*)

Professor Vinny Cahill, Dean of Research (*Ex officio*)

**In attendance:** Ms Jennifer Hill, Graduate Studies Office, Secretary to the meeting  
(*Ex officio*)

Ms Helen Thornbury, Graduate Studies Office (*Ex officio*)

**GS/13-14/42 Minutes of 24<sup>th</sup> April 2014**

The minutes were approved by the Committee as circulated.

There was a request from one member of the Committee in relation to (**GS/13-14/36**) to note his enquiry regarding College's position on joint and dual degrees outside the proposed TCD/UCD joint framework. The Dean replied that this was being examined, particularly in the context of Erasmus plus/Horizon 2020.

**GS/13-14/43 Matters Arising**

The Dean noted to the Committee that the Draft TCD/UCD Framework for Collaborative Taught Programmes (**GS/13-14/36**) was brought to Council at the 14<sup>th</sup> May 2014 meeting and was positively received overall but a couple of issues arose that need to be addressed:

1. Mechanism of Appeals – discussion took place on how this will be addressed and further consultation is to take place with UCD. There was a suggestion at Council that the mechanism in place in the course where the administrative hub resides should be used. It was noted at Council that the mechanism must be consistent and fair for the students and clearly stated in advance. The Dean asked the Committee to contact her with any further feedback or suggestions on this as it is still under discussion.

2. Issue of fees and how fees would be divided, particularly in relation to sports facilities, student services. The Dean confirmed that generally fees are to be set on a course by course basis and that the costing of sports and student services may be outside the scope of the (academic) joint framework. It was noted that if the sports levy is not paid in both institutions but students have access to both facilities, it puts additional burden on other students. Consideration was given to whether the student could choose one institution or the other and use the facilities/services where they are based most of the time but it was noted that they might be based at both institutions for certain periods of time over the duration of the course. Consideration was also given to whether there could be a service charge fee that is paid and split between the two institutions. It was requested that the service providers (e.g. the library) should be included in any discussions about the services provided to them and the fees paid for this.

The Dean confirmed that the Postgraduate Certificate in Specialist Practice (**GS/13-14/37**) is awaiting external review. The Masters in Psychology (Conversion) (**GS13-14/38**) has received an external review and suggested amendments are being made prior to submission to Council. The Pharmacy (Integrated) course proposal is being dealt with at an undergraduate level

The Dean reminded the Committee that the International Student Barometer (**GS/13-14/40**) was not discussed at the previous meeting but the committee members had time to review. She highlighted that the main academic issues emerging related to performance feedback to students, use of the technology/VLE, course organization and marking criteria. There were also issues raised about the Academic registry visa advice for postgraduates.

The Dean noted that a document prepared by the Global Relations Office (in part to address issues raised in the International Student Barometer) has been circulated to the Committee (Item C1) to advise on visa regulations, determining the quality of international degrees, etc. One member of the Committee noted that career advice

seemed to be an issue raised in the International Student Barometer and the Dean confirmed that this should be communicated to Global Relations Office / Careers Office to allow them to follow up.

#### **GS/13-14/44            Professional Special Purpose Certificate in Academic Practice**

The Dean noted that this was a staff only programme and introduced Professor Patrick Geoghegan and Dr Ciara O'Farrell and asked them to speak to the circulated proposal.

Dr O'Farrell advised that the programme had been developed to provide for-credit professional development for staff in teaching and learning. The course is designed to be flexible, inclusive and suitable to the needs of a research-led university. She noted that typically a Postgraduate Certificate of this kind is 30 ECTS, linear and done over the course of a year with very little choice in assessments and confirmed that the proposed course differs as it is special purpose, non-major award of 15 ECTS but still sits in the framework at Level 9. Being special purpose allows for a lower number of credits and has enabled the development of a shorter, more flexible programme to give academics, and other staff attending the course, more choice. As professional development should take place throughout the career the modules will change and the number offered will grow over time. It was confirmed that the modules can be attended at different times and can be taken for credit or not; once three modules have been successfully completed the staff member would be eligible to receive the Certificate but could continue to take modules and there is also an option available for the certificate to provide a route into the M.Ed. (Higher Education) whereby graduates of the proposed course can apply to the School of Education for recognition of prior learning through its division of Continuous Professional Development.

A query was raised regarding the two assessment routes, module assignments or Professional Teaching Portfolio (as detailed on page 13), and whether there is a time frame in which to submit as this is not specified. A query was also raised regarding failure of an assignment and whether the student is able to keep resubmitting until they pass or can they just move on to another module? It was agreed that the regulations should be made more specific in relation to the above points.

Some concern was raised regarding staff members attending modules not for credit and concerns about having two types of student taking the same module where some may be more committed than others and motivations may be different. However, it was confirmed that people who attend normally have their own motivations and this is not expected to be an issue. It was noted that if the expected HEA requirement for 3<sup>rd</sup> level staff to have formal teaching/academic practice qualification comes in, individuals will need to show that they have achieved the credit. However, it is felt that any member of academic staff who wishes to take the modules should be encouraged and the course should be as inclusive as possible.

It was suggested that as the module structure of this proposed certificate and the modules on M.Ed. differ it may be useful to provide equivalents and tighten up the structure for those individuals wishing to use the certificate as a route to the M.Ed.

A query was raised regarding whether staff in the School of Nursing and Midwifery could take this certificate as a route to the PG.Dip. / M.Sc. Clinical Health Sciences Education and it was agreed that future consideration may be given to this.

It was noted that there is a need to distinguish between a Postgraduate Certificate which should be 30 ECTS and this Special Purpose Certificate which will be 15 ECTS. This should be taken into consideration in relation to areas such as promotion. It was also noted that while the Certificate does offer progression into the M.Ed. (Higher Education) there may be issues around how the modules may be clustered and credit applied so this will need to be given further consideration.

In relation to the flexible delivery of the course it was confirmed that the idea is that classes would be taken over lunchtimes, evenings, reading week and during the summer, for example. The modules are listed as five two hour workshops but consideration could be given to offering the module over the course of a day. Considerable research has been done on the running of the modules but there will need to be trials done. Offering the modules online may be an option but not immediately.

It was confirmed that anyone with an active teaching role (except TAs) is eligible to do the course.

It was noted that there is some overlap between this course and activities in the School of Education, and while this course will complement what the School of Education do there is a feeling that an academic course should be assigned to an academic unit. The Dean confirmed that a Teaching and Learning Academy has been discussed as part of the education pillar of the Strategic Plan (2014-2019).

In relation to concerns over provision of support for the Certificate, with CAPSL already under-resourced, it was noted that the Academic Secretary is charged with putting together a business plan for this and that many academics involved in the certificate are from other departments in college.

The Committee approved the course for submission to the University Council subject to the above and any additional amendments that may be required following the external assessor's report.

### **GS/13-14/45 M.Phil. Chinese Studies**

The Dean introduced Professor John Saeed and asked him to speak to the circulated proposal.

Professor Saeed explained that this qualification has been developed as part of a range of activities for the Trinity Centre for Asian Studies and the first intake will be in September 2015. It will be a two year full-time M.Phil. and include two strands differentiated by level of Chinese language ability (one strand for those with no background in Chinese language). The course includes a study abroad semester in Michaelmas term of the second year in one of Trinity's partner universities in Beijing, Shanghai, Hong Kong or Taipei.

Three new staff members are planned for the course and are being recruited at present. Two of the new posts will be funded by College and the third will be funded for four years by philanthropic funding.

In answer to a query it was confirmed that for those taking the course with prior Chinese language experience there would be a Chinese language admissions requirement but in-house testing will also be done.

In answer to a query regarding progression it was agreed that the wording in the proposal would be looked at to make the process of compensation clearer. Further consideration was also to be given to the wording in relation to awarding of a distinction and whether a student could pass a supplemental and be awarded a distinction as that is not normally permitted.

The Committee approved the course for submission to the University Council subject to the above and any additional amendments that may be required following

the external assessor's report.

**GS/13-14/46 Certificate in Education (21st Century STEM/CS [Science Technology Engineering and Maths] Teaching and Learning)**

The Dean introduced Professor Carmel O'Sullivan and Associate Professor Brendan Tangney and invited them to speak to the circulated proposal.

Associate Professor Tangney explained that this was an unusual and highly innovative proposal that has been developed as part of a major collaboration with Google. There will be a suite of initiatives that are being funded to support Computer Science and STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics) teaching and learning in schools, with specific attention to disadvantaged schools. Google has provided substantial funding to support this project and it is important, both for College's relationship with Google and developments in education.

In answer to a query in relation to the modules all being assessed in the same way it was confirmed that evidence based assessment is the preferred assessment method and exams at this level would not be a typical approach.

In relation to where a student fails to achieve a minimum of 50% in a written assignment and a resubmission is permitted once, it was clarified that if the student fails a second time they would be removed from the programme unless there are extenuating circumstances but it was agreed that this should be stated more clearly in the proposal.

It was agreed that point 4.4 in relation to compensation would be removed as this does not apply in this proposal.

It was noted that the requirement for a distinction may not be in line with College's harmonization policy. It was confirmed that the same approach is used for other courses in the School of Education after very considerable reorientation of the M.Ed. has taken place over the past few years and in consultation with College it was agreed that the programme could run like this. However, it was noted that this is a new course and therefore should adhere to the new regulations in relation to harmonization.

The Committee approved the course for submission to the University Council subject to the above amendments in relation to assessment, compensation and harmonization and any additional amendments that may be required following the external assessor's report.

**GS/13-14/47 Postgraduate Certificate in Professional Practice**

The Dean advised that College has been involved for some time now in discussions coordinated by the HEA (and involving the US Chamber of Commerce and other third level institutions) in response to a call for an internship programme as a means of providing recent STEM level 8 graduates with additional qualifications in, and experience of key workplace skills, in order to improve their employability.

It was determined that third level institutions should propose a partnership(s) with industry that would allow interns to be awarded special purpose postgraduate certificates. The third level institutions have designed a course that could be rooted in one of four specific clusters of knowledge - process transformation, innovation, market-focused technologies and green, blue and clean industries.

The certificate will have three modules: Personal Development and Employability; Organisational Context; Practice Specialisation. Each module is 10 ECTS and all are core/mandatory.

The HEA called for a pilot process to be put in place to run this certificate programme. The TCD-associated company for the pilot will be Microsoft Ireland. Microsoft Ireland has agreed to provide 10 paid (per annum rate of €21,000) internships. The students will be based in the workplace for the duration of the certificate programme.

The Dean advised that as yet no School has been confirmed to host the programme but asked the Committee to consider the proposal in principle if a School was confirmed and there were members of academic staff to oversee the delivery and assessment of the modules.

In answer to a query in relation to what consideration College would give at the end of the year's pilot to see if it has worked it was confirmed that it would need to be reviewed from a number of perspectives including that of the associated company (Microsoft) the student and the Graduate Studies Committee

The Committee raised concerns in relation to the approval of this proposal including the following: if the pilot is approved, will approval also be sought for continuing the course beyond the first year; the benefits to College of running this; if the pilot is successful for the other partners (Microsoft, HEA) but not necessarily for College is there a means for not continuing beyond the first year; the interns that Microsoft take will be employable anyway and might be offered a position and not complete the course; those who successfully complete the internship will have the skills needed for employment and will not need this certificate.

In answer to another concern in relation to the fact that the course is not going to make a profit and given that College's financial rules now say that no new courses should be developed that aren't going to make a profit it was confirmed that this course (if approved) will be run for strategic reasons.

In answer to a query regarding the difference between a student who graduates and takes this course and those who graduate and go through Microsoft's regular internship programme, it was noted that the former are engaged with education and are assessed at the end of each module.

Consideration will need to be given to whether the participants of the internship are categorised as students and would have full access to facilities and services.

It was confirmed that participants on the programme do not necessarily need to be graduates of TCD.

It was agreed that the relationship with Microsoft for the University is positive but confirmed that there is still considerable work and negotiation to be done in relation to the issues.

A suggestion was made that if the pilot course could run and it should be documented that only if all three partners are happy with the pilot that it continues. Following a one-year pilot and review we will see if there is a School happy to participate and oversee the academic delivery, we will have insight into how such a programme should be run, how it would run with multiple associated companies, and how funding/expenses work out.

**GS/13-14/48            Joint TCD/UCD MSc Palliative Care**

The Dean noted that this item had been removed from the agenda.

**GS/13-14/49            Dean of Graduate Studies Annual Report 2011/12 and  
2012/13**

The Dean advised this is a draft document and asked the Committee to note

the different presentation to previous years due to the document being a combination of two years reporting and the statistics being obtained through SITS. The Committee was requested to review the report in relation to their own areas and report back to Helen Thornbury within the next few days so that amendments can be made before it is presented to Council.

**GS/13-14/50            AOB**

The Dean advised that at the recent GeneSIS Project Board meeting she was advised that Postgraduate Progression was no longer part of G1. No further work is being done on progression and the Schools are advised to keep manual spreadsheets. It was noted that it would be good if at a College level School Administrators could be advised and told what they should be doing in relation to this. It was also noted that communications in relation to what was moved from G1 to G2 were incredibly poor.

In answer to a query it was confirmed that the Research Management SITS functionality is in testing and will be going live but dates for this are still to be confirmed. It was noted that the additional portal functionality requested as part of Research Management had been de-scoped.

The Dean advised that the Working Groups proposed earlier in the year will still happen in the next academic year but there were no resources to organize at present.

The Dean asked the Directors of Teaching and Learning to encourage their respective Schools to develop course proposals earlier in the academic year to allow sufficient time for submission through Graduate Studies Committee and University Council.

**Section B for noting and approval**

1. The Committee noted and approved the proposal from the School of Engineering to introduce a module in Safety, Health and Welfare in Research. Some conversation should be had in the next academic year about visibility of stand-alone modules, particularly those not run by academic schools (CAPSL, etc.)
  
2. The Committee noted and approved the Calendar Part 2 changes from the following Schools:
  - School of Business
  - School of Computer Science and Statistics
  - School of Drama, Film and Music
  - School of Education
  - School of Engineering
  - School of Histories and Humanities
  - School of Law
  - School of Medicine
  - School of Natural Sciences
  - School of Nursing and Midwifery
  - School of Pharmacy and Pharmaceutical Sciences

School of Psychology  
Confederal School of Religions, Theology and Ecumenics  
School of Social Sciences and Philosophy  
School of Social Work and Social Policy

**Section C for noting**

1. The Committee noted the memo from the Global Relations Office.

There being no other business, the meeting ended at 11.10am.

Prof. Aideen Long

Date: 22nd May 2014