XX = Council relevance

**Present (Ex officio):**

Professor Martine Smith, Dean of Graduate Studies (Chair)
Professor Linda Doyle, Dean of Research
Directors of Teaching and Learning (Postgraduate) as follows:
Professor Rachel Mary Mc Loughlin, School of Biochemistry and Immunology
Professor Sinéad Roden, Trinity Business School
Professor John Boland, School of Chemistry
Professor Owen Conlan, School of Computer Science and Statistics
Professor Sarah-Jane Scaife, School of Creative Arts
Professor Ioannis Polyzois, School of Dental Science
Professor Keith Johnston, School of Education
Professor Biswajit Basu School of Engineering
Professor Bernice Murphy, School of English
Professor Matthew Campbell, School of Genetics and Microbiology
Professor Ashley Clements, School of Histories & Humanities
Professor James Hadley, School of Languages, Literatures & Cultural Studies
Professor Deirdre Ahern, School of Law
Professor Kathleen McTiernan, School of Linguistic, Speech & Communication Sciences
Professor Manuela Kulaxizi, School of Mathematics
Professor Cian O'Callaghan, School of Natural Sciences
Professor Cristin Ryan, School of Pharmacy & Pharmaceutical Sciences
Professor Hongzhou Zhang, School of Physics
Professor Ladislav Timulak, School of Psychology
Professor Gillian Wylie, School of Religion
Professor Thomas Chadefaux, School of Social Sciences & Philosophy
Professor Paula Mayock, School of Social Work and Social Policy
Professor Jake Byrne, Academic Director, Tangent

Ms Giséle Scanlon, Graduate Students’ Union President
Ms Bhiswetta Bhattacharjee, Graduate Students’ Union Vice-President

**In attendance (Ex officio):**

Ms Patricia Callaghan, Academic Secretary, Head of Trinity Teaching and Learning, (TT&L)
Ms Breda Walls, Director of Student Services
Ms Siobhan Dunne, Sub Librarian for Teaching, Research and User Experience
Mr Geoffrey Bradley, Information Technology Services Representative
Ms Fedelma McNamara, Director of Internationalisation, TCD Global
Mr Martin McAndrew, Postgraduate Student Support Officer, Senior Tutor's Office
Dr Cormac Doran, Assistant Academic Secretary, Graduate Education, TTL
Ms Ewa Sadowska (Academic Affairs, TT&L): Secretary to the Committee

Apologies

Directors of Teaching and Learning (Postgraduate) as follows:
Professor Kumlesh Dev, School of Medicine
Professor Fiona Timmins, School of Nursing and Midwifery

In attendance for individual items:
Dr Daniel Rogers (Head of Education at Tangent) and Prof. Quentin Crowley (School of Natural Sciences) for item GS/20-21/003
Ms Roisin Smith (Quality Officer, TT&L) for item GS/20-21/005

The Dean greeted members and welcomed all to the first GSC meeting of the new academic year and of her term in the office as Dean of Graduate Studies. New members introduced themselves.

GS/20-21/001 Minutes of 21 May 2020
The minutes were approved as circulated.

GS/20-21/002 Matters Arising

The Dean advised members that all Actions from the previous meeting pertaining to the former Dean of Graduate Studies had been attended to.

Re: GS/19-20/381 A new course proposal: MSc in Economic Policy: The Dean advised that the proposal had been approved by Council on 16 June 2020, but its commencement was subsequently deferred. In responding to a comment from the Senior Lecturer/Dean of Undergraduate Studies on the involvement of the School of Social Work and Social Policy in the programme, the then Dean of Graduate Studies undertook to raise the issue with the course director due to the importance of social policy in influencing economic policy development.

Re: GS/19-20/393 A new course proposal: MPhil in Modern & Contemporary Literary Studies: The Dean advised that the proposal had been approved by Council on 16 June 2020.

Re: GS/19-20/394 A new course proposal: Postgraduate Diploma in Irish Sign Language Interpreting: The Dean advised that the Course Director had not been successful in her application for funding under the Human Capital Initiative (HCI) Pillar 1 but the proposal had been approved by Council on 16 June 2020 subject to funding being secured.
Re: GS/19-20/396.1 Action: The Dean advised that the Assistant Librarian had sent out a questionnaire to members on issues related to the Research Integrity module, and noted that many members had also subsequently participated in the focus group related to the module.

Re: GS/19-20/396.2 Action: The Director of Student Services advised members that she had sought clarification re PGR functionality in SITS and stated that the issue was firmly on the radar with a view to possible improvements taking place during the current academic year.

Re: GS/19-20/399 The Dean advised that the June Council had approved (CL/19-20/213) via GSC May minutes the MAI in Engineering with MS Columbia University (4+1) agreement in principle for Trinity to cooperate with the University of Columbia re the MS/MAI link and, when that is in place, the School is to come back to Council seeking permission to commence the new strand exhibiting the agreement on which it is based.

Re: GS/19-20/400 The Dean advised that the June Council had approved (CL/19-20/213) via GSC May minutes a new module type for the Structured PhD students belonging to Category 2 called “PGR External” in the Schools of English and of Pharmacy and Pharmaceutical Sciences to be made available from 2020/21, with particular iterations of the new generic PGR External module with bespoke titles to be introduced at a later stage.

Re: GS/19-20/401 The Dean advised that the June Council had approved (CL/19-20/213) via GSC May minutes the 5 ECTS Careers and Employability module and the 10 ECTS Careers, Employability and Work-based Learning module from 2020/21.

Re: GS/19-20/402 The Dean advised that the June Council had approved (CL/19-20/213) via GSC May minutes the change of the course title from MSc in Bioengineering to MSc in Biomedical Engineering for 2021/22 entrants.

Re: GS/19-20/403 The Dean advised that the June Council had approved (CL/19-20/213) via GSC May minutes Calendar III changes for 2020/21.

Re: GS/19-20/404 The Dean advised that the June Council had approved (CL/19-20/213) via GSC May minutes validated Calendar III changes for 2020/21 in the Marino Institute of Education.

Re: GS/19-20/405 The Dean advised that the June Council had approved (CL/19-20/213) via GSC May minutes the Appeals Policy (Academic Progress) revised 2020.

XX GS/20-21/003 A new course proposal: Pg Cert in Climate Entrepreneurship
The Dean noted that members had been given an opportunity to review the new course in advance of the meeting. She welcomed Dr Daniel Rogers (Head of Education at Tangent) and Prof. Quentin Crowley (the prospective Course Director
from the School of Natural Sciences (SNS), who were let into the meeting.

The Dean spoke briefly to the proposal and noted that it had been approved by the Tangent Board and the SNS Executive. The 30 ECTS Pg. Cert. course consisting of three 10 credit modules will be of one year part time duration to be delivered in 24 weeks in a blended format starting from March 2021 but students register for a calendar year. In its first year, the course will be funded from the HEA via Springboard but after the first year it will be self-financed by fee-based and other income. The course will be run with a minimum of 20 EU fee paying or Springboard-sponsored students (meeting the Springboard funding and admissions criteria) in the first HEA-funded year of 2020/21. In subsequent years, it will open to non-EU applicants, but the continuation of the course is not dependent on recruiting non-EU fee paying students. The course will be delivered from Tangent in collaboration with the SNS. Prof. Quentin Crowley from the SNS will be seconded to Tangent for 50% FTE of his time for the duration of the course. The course aligns with the ‘green agenda’, government climate priorities and its strategy. It builds on the European Institute of Innovation and Technology (EIT) Climate Accelerator programme (Tangent) and a module in the MSc Environmental Sciences on Environmental Entrepreneurship. Its target market is SMEs, corporate and not-for-profit organisations, and individuals who will go on to leadership roles in green finance, climate leadership etc. The proposed course is not in direct competition with any existing programmes in Trinity.

When invited to speak to the proposal, Dr Rogers emphasised that the new course was aiming to provide an integrated approach shared between Tangent and the SNS to prepare students to efficiently address climate challenges.

The DTLP from the SNS and the Academic Director of Tangent conveyed strong support for the proposed collaborative course coming from the SNS and Tangent Board respectively.

In a brief discussion which followed some issues were noted and clarified:
1) The new proposal is an imaginative project which resonates well with the E3 research institute.
2) Students on the course will have opportunities to interact with early-stage start-ups and entrepreneurial activities by participating in Tangent’s accelerator programmes.
3) The proposed course offers an opportunity for synergies with Masters programmes on environmental issues in the Schools of Engineering and Natural Sciences which provide further study paths for the course graduates.
4) Funding opportunities beyond year 1 other than fees would explore government and sponsorship openings to support the course. The Springboard scheme is likely to continue in the coming years to upskill people out of work due to the pandemic and Tangent will reapply for renewed Springboard funding.

The Dean noted that the proposal was well received. There were no additional issues raised and the committee endorsed the proposal.
**Decision GS/20-21/003:** The committee recommended the proposal to Council subject to a favourable external review.

**XX GS/20-21/004 A new course proposal: Pg Dip in Entrepreneurship Biotech & Pharma**

The Dean thanked members for familiarising themselves with the new course proposal in advance of the meeting. She explained that Prof. Dev, prospective Course Director and also DTLP from the School of Medicine, was absent for family reasons and that should there be any questions from the floor after she has spoken to the proposal, she would endeavor to address them or defer them to Prof. Dev for after the meeting.

The Dean summarised the course proposal and advised members that the circulated iteration had incorporated a favourable external report. She noted that this is a one year full time or two year part time blended Postgraduate Diploma which obtained funding for 3 years under the recent Human Capital Initiative (HCI) Pillar 1 Graduate Conversion scheme. The course will consist of six taught modules of 10 ECTS each, totalling 60 credits. The final mark will be based on a credit-weighted average of the mark awarded in each module. Students on the full time course will complete all 6 modules in one year. Students on the part time two-year course will complete modules 1-3 in year one and modules 4-6 in year two. The target intake of the course will be 20 students and the first intake is delayed to January 2021 pending approvals.

The Dean drew members' attention to the innovative cross-over nature of the course which is seeking to provide new skills and knowledge to those coming from a non-biology background to be used in drug discovery and pharmaceutical development. The course is also designed to provide new skills and knowledge in pharmaceutical commercialisation to those who are knowledgeable in the area of biology.

The Academic Director of Tangent made a general comment that the proposed course is another example of integrating entrepreneurial training with academic discipline knowledge. There were no other issues raised apart from a query to do with a potential lack of equity in the proposed assessment regulations which allow for supplementals only in Modules 1 and 2. The proposed progression rules could particularly affect students who might come to the Biology content without background expertise, and who might therefore be explicitly disadvantaged by the lack of access to a supplemental examination. Overall, there was enthusiastic endorsement of the proposal. The Dean asked that any other queries for Prof. Dev be copied to her, and set a deadline of close of business next Tuesday for submission of all feedback.

**Action GS/20-21/004:** The Dean to pass the assessment query over to the proposer and members to email any other feedback to the proposer by Tuesday the following week.

**Decision GS/20-21/004:** The committee endorsed the proposal for Council subject to implementation of changes raised during and after the meeting.
GS/20-21/005 CHARM- EU approval process
The Dean advised members that the Quality Officer was in attendance for the item.

The Dean noted that the CHARM-EU project is two-fold and aims to create and test an innovative model of collaboration across five European Universities (Barcelona, Utrecht, Montpellier and ELTE in Budapest), and to deliver a shared Joint Masters programme in Global Challenges for Sustainability that students from any of the partners can register to. Trinity is the only University in the collaboration with the authority vested in the University Council to institute degree awards. The Masters course proposal is to be submitted to GSC in due course. The Dean noted that after the GSC approves a proposal, one external reviewer is normally selected by the Dean to assess the proposal and submit a report. The Dean then outlines to Council the outcome of the external review, and how the report has been implemented in the proposal that is submitted to Council for approval. For the CHARM-EU initiative, a change is needed to reflect the shared inter-institutional ownership of the Masters programme under development, namely, an accreditation panel of reviewers will be recruited, composed of nominees from each of the participating Universities. The report from the panel accompanies the documentation subsequently submitted to the University Council, along with the proposal reflecting any revisions as requested by reviewers’ recommendations made visible by tracked changes. This change in process is what members were asked to consider and recommend. The CHARM-EU endeavour enjoys great support from College, and the process changes proposed do not in any way dilute the external approval process.

In a discussion which followed some issues were noted and clarified:
1) At this point a selection of nominees for the panel has already been made.
2) The proposed adjustment to involve an inter-institutional panel rather than a single reviewer is a bespoke arrangement for the CHARM-EU project and will not affect the existing approval process of course proposals in College.
3) Should the CHARM-EU become a sustainable entity the Masters course currently under development would be a first of many similarly collaborative programmes to come on line going forward.
4) CHARM-EU is an opportunity for participating European Universities to try out a best model of delivering inter-institutional PGT offerings by taking on board local regulations pertaining to partner institutions and distilling them into a shared mutually workable blueprint.
5) The title of the proposed Masters indicates an overlap with courses delivered in the SNS but work on the new programme has been carried out in collaboration with that School and with other Schools in College.

There were no additional issues raised and the committee endorsed the proposal.

Decision GS/20-21/005: The committee endorsed the proposal for Council.

GS/20-21/006 Introduction of new Dean
The Dean noted that she had already spoken to almost all members over the past few weeks. She raised the following items of general housekeeping interest to members:
1) Marie McPeak, Education Support Officer, has left for another position in College and Daniel Ferrick is currently filling that role on a part time basis until the position is back filled.

2) A significant volume of email correspondence from PG students, course coordinators, supervisors and other academic staff comes to the Dean’s email account. The Dean has been responding by copying in DTLPs on her replies in order to ensure that they have an overview of issues arising in the PG space within their School.

3) GSC meeting dates, which are noted at the bottom of every agenda page, will also be uploaded on the home page of the Office of the Dean of Graduate Studies to enhance their public visibility.

**Action GS/20-21/006 (3):** Dean’s Secretary to upload meeting dates.

4) Dean’s Secretary will issue Calendar invitations to members.

**Action GS/20-21/006 (4):** Dean’s Secretary to issue Calendar invitations to members.

5) Papers are circulated a week in advance of the meeting, and the agenda closes on Monday of the circulation week. Any documentation targeting the particular agenda needs to be submitted to the Dean at least 2 weeks in advance of the circulation date to allow time for consideration of the submission before being accepted onto the agenda.

6) *Re* existing PGT offerings: the Dean has found that it is not easy to find information confirming which courses are on offer during the academic year and who course coordinators are in a given year.

**Action GS/20-21/006 (6):** The Dean to follow up to capture information on PGT course cessations and course coordinators so that it is available if needed for planning purposes.

7) *Re* new PGT course proposals: DTLPs are invited to proactively source advance feedback in their respective Schools in terms of planned course proposals during the current and following academic year and advise the GSC Secretary accordingly, so that workload within the Office of the Dean of Graduate Studies as well as GSC agenda planning can be structured accordingly.

**Action GS/20-21/006 (7):** DTLPs to source advance information on new course proposals in their Schools and pass it on to the GSC Secretary.

8) Information on assessment and how it has changed in light of the impact of Covid-19 needs to be captured, as part of the overall quality assurance of all programmes.

**Action GS/20-21/006 (8):** The Dean to seek information on assessment changes due to Covid-19 from Schools over the coming weeks.
The Dean concluded by referring to an item on the agenda (GS/20-21/008) in its own right namely that one of the bigger projects members will be asked to support during her deanship will be PG Reform now targeted as a project for “PG Renewal”.

**GS/20-21/007 COVID-19 update**
The Dean praised the extraordinary efforts of the DTLPs and GSU President and Vice President to constructively navigate through consequences caused by the pandemic in College over the recent months. She thanks members for their patience and support in providing information and sharing problem solutions, often under considerable time pressure. She noted the significant volume of queries from PGR students whose research was impacted by the crisis. She invited the Dean of Research to address the issue of research extensions due to COVID-19.

The Dean of Research advised that the university sector had secured €48 million State funding for extensions for PhD and post doc research. Eligible projects must be ongoing but adversely affected and need only a few months’ extensions (normally up to four months) to finalise. Only students who were already registered in March 2020 are eligible for the funding. The government worked out a formula for allocation of the ringfenced funding to each institution whereas the sector itself is now working out a light-touch internal allocation of funding. Funding will be disbursed via the IUA and needs to be claimed by the end of 2020. Trinity stands to receive over €8 million. PhD students externally funded in their final year will stand to benefit the most but self-funded students can also apply for a 2 month stipend. The Dean of Research noted that a smaller funding had already been set aside for the COVID-disrupted research activities from the HEA and the two pots of funding may not be disbursed for the same activities. She expressed her appreciation for the support the sector has been receiving from the recently set up Department of Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science.

In a discussion which followed some issues were noted and clarified:

1) Students on externally funded projects need to receive free extension from their funder in order to be eligible to apply.

2) State funding ring-fenced for research extensions should be publicly recognised by the institution as a “good news” story.

3) Successful application of every individual student should be publicly acknowledged on twitter by students themselves.

4) Funders, such as Research Councils, are happy for the monies for research extensions to be disbursed via the Universities.

5) European projects do not provide for costed extensions and this funding will address that gap.

6) The State funding will also cover post docs, but all applicants will have to show that they are in real need of financial assistance and have unsuccessfully tried other avenues.

7) It is recognised that self funded students have been badly affected, and some find it difficult to pay continuation fees, but the State funding may not be used for fees.

8) The Dean of Graduate Studies added that current extensions on deadlines for thesis submission are granted free of fees, and only final year extensions are
being processed this year. Impact on students in earlier years is recognised and it is anticipated that granted extensions will be put through when students reach the final year.

The Dean thanked the Dean of Research for sharing the “good news” story of the State funding with members.

GS/20-21/008 PG reform update
The Dean gave a verbal update on the PG renewal initiative that many members were involved in last year. She advised that Prof. Cox’s report had been circulated with respect to Action GS/19-20/392.1 from the last meeting in May. The Dean advised that the PG Renewal is only beginning as a project and Dr Cormac Doran, the Assistant Academic Secretary for Graduate Education, will lead out on it. Several meetings with the VP and the Provost have already taken place to identify parameters, review documentation and establish what areas (pillars) should be examined. It is recognized that one of the most challenging issues to be looked into is the IT infrastructure which is less efficient for PG than for UG students. Others are to do with Trinity embracing micro-credentialing, offering flexibility in stacking qualifications (“stackable credentials”), showing diversification in PG student experience, ensuring diversity of contact with stakeholders, etc. Key pillars are currently being negotiated with the VP and the Provost to enable consultations to commence. The Dean promised further updates as the project develops.

Action GS/20-21/008: The Dean to continually update members on the PG Renewal project going forward.

XX GS/20-21/009 Inconsistencies between Calendar regs and library guidelines on plagiarism
The Dean noted some inconsistencies in terms of plagiarism regulations laid out in the Calendar and the Library guide. The issue is around the stipulation in the Calendar asking students to look at the Library guide which states that any plagiarism in PGT dissertation and PGR thesis is automatically a level 4 breach within the remit of the Junior Dean even for students with no prior offences. The Calendar does not contain such stipulation. It was noted that the Calendar regulations prevail over others when in conflict thereby invalidating de facto the stipulation from the Library guide. A working group on plagiarism will be set up to be led by the Junior Dean including the Senior Lecturer/Dean of Undergraduate Studies and herself, with representation from other stakeholder groups. The working group will propose a framework to the USC/GSC for endorsement of the revised regulations in order that a Calendar change can be put through for the following year.

In a discussion which followed some issues were noted and clarified:
1) Concern was expressed by some members that the current guidelines suggest that plagiarism detected in PGT dissertations is automatically a level 4 breach.
2) Some members suggested that there should be a separate (less harsh) regulation for plagiarism within PGT dissertations to that applied to PGR theses.

3) International students on PGT courses may face both English language competence challenges and cultural expectations and norms that make them more prone to breaches of the plagiarism regulations.

4) Should it be decided that plagiarism in a PGT dissertation and PGR thesis is automatically a level 4 breach, students should be well informed and prepared for that from the beginning of their course.

5) The topic of plagiarism is currently well covered in the current Research Integrity module, but this module is available only to PGR students. It was noted that this module (CA7000) is also currently under re-development.

6) It was commented that in the Sciences, instances of plagiarism are more often encountered when students are setting up the background context of their research rather than in reporting the research itself where new knowledge is contributed.

The Sub Librarian for Teaching, Research and User Experience noted that the Library guide should be revised and made more holistic.

The Dean thanked members for sharing their feedback and noted that they will be kept informed as the working group progresses with the policy review.

**Action GS/20-21/009:** The Dean to update members on the working group on plagiarism going forward.

**GS/20-21/010 Graduate Studies Committee self-evaluation survey 2019/20**

The Dean thanked members for completing the annual self-evaluation survey, a requirement for each principal Committee in College, of the GSC work in 2019/20. The main conclusion drawn from the responses was that the committee under the previous Dean was chaired very efficiently and members displayed a high level of satisfaction. The Dean went through the feedback from the survey and said she would continue with the pre-meeting briefing memo, would use a brief PowerPoint presentation to summarise new course proposals and will try to roll out a brief induction for new DTLPs going forward.

DTLP from the School of Psychology raised an issue with respect to the Dean’s clarification that financial matters are not within the brief of the GSC. He noted that PGT courses used to be set up as self-financing and this has changed under the current model which impacts heavily on staffing. He suggested a discussion at a future GSC on the current funding model with respect to PGT courses with a representative from the Finance Committee.

**Action GS/20-21/010:** To schedule a discussion of current financial model with Finance representative either at a future GSC meeting or as a standalone event for those interested in participating.

**XX GS/20-21/011 AOB**

A number of issues were raised:
(i) DTLP from the School of Physics raised a concern that PGR students in his School had received invitation to register at a very late stage this year, and some of them are still not able to register. This prevents them from coming into College, taking modules, conducting research or fulfilling their teaching duties. The most affected are recent graduates from Trinity. Some students were advised to upload their photos to SITS prior to receiving an invitation to register, however they cannot upload their photos due to some technical issues with inactive link.

The Director of Student Services spoke to the issue. She clarified that registration was slightly delayed this year due to the pandemic but currently many more students are registered than at the corresponding time last year. Students cannot receive their ID if their fees are not cleared. ID cards are mandatory for entry onto the College campus. Temporary ID cards can be issued if students have accepted the offer and uploaded their photo. The Director of Student Services asked for the names of unregistered students to be emailed to her to track them through the system.

**Action GS/20-21/011 (i):** DTLP of Physics to email Director of Student Services names of unregistered students.

The GSU VP President confirmed that registration issues are frequent in emails she receives from students. Some international students also are confused if they should fly to Dublin to attend classes as they are getting conflicting information from their School or course of study. The Dean advised that these issues pertain to individual programmes and should be addressed at a local level.

(ii) DTLP from the School of English raised a concern that the Research Integrity module content has not been populated yet although PGR students are being advised to access it.

**Action GS/20-21/011 (ii):** Sub Librarian for Teaching, Research and User Experience to liaise with the Research Integrity module coordinator to populate the module content as a matter of priority.

**XX Section B for noting and approval**

**GS/20-21/012 Structured PhD (Cat 2) generic module in School of Chemistry:** “PGR External: School of Chemistry” from 2020/21

The committee noted that the School of Chemistry was seeking permission to introduce a new module type for the Structured PhD students belonging to Category 2 and called “PGR External” to be made available from 2020/21. Particular iterations of the new generic PGR External module with bespoke titles might be introduced at a later stage.

**Decision GS/20-21/012:** The committee agreed to recommend the proposal to Council from 2020/21.
GS/20-21/013 Structured PhD (Cat 2) generic module in School of Physics: “PGR External: School of Physics” from 2020/21
The committee noted that the School of Physics was seeking permission to introduce a new module type for the Structured PhD students belonging to Category 2 and called “PGR External” to be made available from 2020/21. Particular iterations of the new generic PGR External module with bespoke titles might be introduced at a later stage.

**Decision GS/20-21/013**: The committee agreed to recommend the proposal to Council from 2020/21.

GS/20-21/014 PGT course title change from MSc in “Healthcare Infection Management” to “Healthcare Infection” for entry from 2021/22 (School of Medicine)
The committee noted a memo from Prof. Kumlesh Dev (DTLP in School of Medicine) seeking a title change of the MSc in Healthcare Infection Management to the MSc in Healthcare Infection for entry from 2021/22 in order to adjust the course title better to the course content.

**Decision GS/20-21/014**: The committee agreed to recommend the proposed course title change to Council from 2021/22.

**XX Section C for noting**

There were no agenda items for Section C to note.

There being no other business, the meeting ended at 11.45am.

Prof. Martine Smith

Date: 1 October 2020