



**GRADUATE STUDIES COMMITTEE**  
Minutes of the online meeting held via Zoom  
at 3pm on Thursday 10 March 2021

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**XX = Council relevance**

***Present (Ex officio):***

Professor Martine Smith, Dean of Graduate Studies

(Chair)

Directors of Teaching and Learning (Postgraduate) as follows:

Professor Rachel Mary Mc Loughlin, School of Biochemistry and Immunology

Professor Mary-Lee Rhodes, Trinity Business School

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 Deirdre Ahern, School of Law

Professor Cian O'Callaghan, School of Natural Sciences

Professor Hongzhou Zhang, School of Physics

Professor Ladislav Timulak, School of Psychology

Professor Prof. Daniele Pevarello, 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 Gisèle Scanlon, Graduate Students' Union President

***In attendance for all items:***

Ms Breda Walls, Director of Student Services

Ms Fedelma McNamara, Director of Internationalisation, TCD Global

Dr Cormac Doran, Assistant Academic Secretary, Graduate Education, TT&L

Mr Martin McAndrew, Postgraduate Student Support Officer, Senior Tutor's Office

Dr Geoffrey Bradley, Information Technology Services Representative

Ms Siobhan Dunne, Sub Librarian for Teaching, Research and User Experience

Ms Ewa Adach, Administrative Officer, Graduate Education – Zoom access support

Ms Laoise Quinn (Academic Affairs, TT&L): Minute-taking

Ms Ewa Sadowska (Academic Affairs, TT&L): Secretary to the Committee

***Apologies***

Dean of Research: Vacant



Directors of Teaching and Learning (Postgraduate) as follows:

Professor John Boland, School of Chemistry

Professor Ashley Clements, School of Histories & Humanities

Professor James Hadley, School of Languages, Literatures & Cultural Studies

Professor Kathleen McTiernan, School of Linguistic, Speech & Communication Sciences

Professor Manuela Kulaxizi, School of Mathematics

Professor Kumlesh Dev, School of Medicine

Professor Mary Hughes, School of Nursing and Midwifery

Professor Cristin Ryan, School of Pharmacy & Pharmaceutical Sciences

Ms Abhiswetta Bhattacharjee, Graduate Students' Union Vice-President

Ms Patricia Callaghan, Academic Secretary, Head of Trinity Teaching and Learning, (TT&L)

*In attendance for individual items:*

Prof. Anil Kokaram (School of Engineering)

for item GS/20-21/070

Prof. John Gallagher (School of Engineering)

for item GS/20-21/071

Mr Michael Flynn Prof. Maximilian Schormair (Trinity Business School)

for item GS/20-21/072

This was an additional meeting set up to discuss three PG course proposals to be funded under HCI Pillar 3. The Dean noted that she had exceptionally permitted two of the proposals to be considered in academic terms without the financial information included, but she underlined that proposals cannot go to Council until all aspects of resource implications have been approved by the Faculty Dean. She noted that there have been delays in reviewing proposals due to severe staff shortages and workload pressures within the Faculty Office. Given the unique pressures of HCI programmes, this mitigation process has been set in place, although it was hoped that all approvals would have been available in time for the meeting.

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**GS/20-21/070 A new strand proposal (HCI Pillar 3): New strand in Computational Engineering to restructured MSc/PGDip/PGCert in Electronic Information Engineering**

The Dean welcomed Prof. Anil Kokaram (Course Director) from the School of Engineering and provided a brief overview of the proposal in a short PowerPoint presentation. The proposal is to restructure the MSc in Electronic Information Engineering to a 60 ECTS taught component and a 30 ECTS research component. She noted the current structure of 50+40 ECTS was out of alignment with the 60/30 structure and incompatible with Framework model for PGCert, PGDip and MSc options and thus required adjustment. An additional 10 ECTS to make up the 60 ECT taught component is enabled by a new compulsory module in Computational Methods. Overall, learning outcomes of the revised Master course will remain unchanged and the dissertation module is reduced to the standard 30 ECTS.



Existing (traditional model) entry to MSc is retained, with the option of PGDip as an exit award. There are also two new entry routes to PGCert in Electrical Information Engineering and to PGDip in Electrical Information Engineering. The course can be taken over 1 year full-time, or part-time over 2 or 3 years, depending on progression points, and Computational Engineering is a new strand within the parent course.

There are three application routes: direct entry to 1-yr part time PGCert (exit with PGCert, or progress in Year 2 to PGDip, and in Year 3 to MSc), or direct entry to 1-yr full-time PGDip, with potential to progress to MSc in Year 2 or direct entry to 1-yr full-time MSc, with exit award of PGDip.

The course structure for the PGCert is 2x10 ECTS mandatory modules and a range of optional modules from which to select, while the PGDip is 2x10 ECTS and 1x5 ECTS mandatory modules and a range of options. Students participate together up to the exit point and mandatory modules are scheduled in Semester 1.

The new MSc will have the same award as its existing revised parent course, although it will include a new taught component in Computational Engineering. Duration, format, delivery, quality assurance and course governance will all remain, as will admission requirements and fees. First entry is September 2021, under HCI P3. The Dean noted that this course is the first of its kind in Ireland and is aimed at preparing engineers to design with data analysis and manipulation in mind (Data Centric Engineering). It concerns solving engineering problems in diverse industries, from control and robotics to motion picture engineering, geophysical modeling and transport. Both admission requirements and academic regulations are in line with existing structures.

Prof. Kokaram thanked the Dean for her summary and a short discussion ensued with Prof. Kokaram's participation. It was noted that the application pathways should be clear and thereby obvious to students which of the three discrete pathways they are entering. The Dean welcomed the move to 60/30 ECTS as the 50/40 structure created some challenges for students who after 50 credits did not progress to dissertation. Prof. Kokaram agreed that this structure will be more transparent for students. He also thanked Prof. Basu for inspiring this new strand and for introducing some interesting new modules, especially in the area of algorithms.

Prof. Basu added that they are enthusiastic at a focus on computational engineering. They had been looking at this area prior to the HCI call and are delighted to have HCI as an avenue to progress their work. He further stated that this focus is particularly interesting in a world where there is a huge amount of data available and the programme merges data and physical modelling, which is unique in Ireland and not common worldwide.

In response to a query, the Dean underlined that the only way a PGCert award can be obtained is when a student enters a PGCert course. On accrual of the PGCert, a student who progresses to the PGDip rescinds their Postgraduate Certificate. They can be re-awarded the Postgraduate Certificate if they do not complete the PGDip. However, failure via direct Postgraduate Diploma entry does not offer a Postgraduate Certificate exit award.



It was requested that Prof. Kokaram forward the course and handbook URL to the Assistant Academic Secretary, Graduate Education as they had been omitted from the course proposal.

The Dean noted that the proposal was well received. There were no additional issues raised and the committee endorsed the proposal.

**Decision GS/20-21/070:** The committee endorsed the new strand proposal (HCI Pillar 3): New strand in Computational Engineering to restructured MSc/PGDip/PGCert in Electronic Information Engineering proposal for Council subject to the course and handbook URL being submitted and also subject to a favourable external review.

**XX GS/20-21/071 A new course proposal (HCI Pillar 3): Postgraduate Diploma in Engineering for Climate Action**

The Dean welcomed Prof. John Gallagher (prospective Course Director) of School of Engineering and she provided a brief overview of the proposed new course, which she noted was at Level 9 on the NFQ with a credit volume of 60 ECTS and will be delivered over one year full-time, and is funded under HCI P3. Delivery will be blended to attract diverse participants.

The new course is described as a multidisciplinary programme to “create experts that can develop, implement and assess climate action measures, and thereby deliver technological, social and organisational solutions to help achieve sustainable development goals”. It will deliver fundamental knowledge to support rationalising trade-offs in energy and resource consumption, within a regulatory environment that supports climate action planning, best practice in measuring technical and environmental conditions and includes capacity building to inform adaptation and mitigation measures for climate action.

The Dean noted that the rationale clearly aligns with global, national and university priorities related to climate action agenda, while in keeping with School and E3 agenda and strategic priorities. The course provides an opportunity to explore the potential of a blended learning approach, with potential transfer to other postgraduate programmes. It targets those in employment, to build capacity within organisations as this agenda grows. Some broadly similar offerings exist, but the unique focus on those in employment and the emphasis on the circular economy and climate change in a life cycle approach makes this course unique and there is a synergy with new PGDip in Circular Economy for Recycling Technologies.

Course structure is 2 x 20 ECT core modules and 4 x 5 ECT core modules, delivered in a range of online, face-to-face and blended models and with a range of assessment approaches. Building on a current Energy Management and Efficiency module, it also includes modules on the Sustainable Green Organisation, Entrepreneurship for Climate Action, Life Cycle Assessment for Engineering Practice, Engineering for the Environment and a Climate Action Project.

The Dean noted that a Level 8, II.1, in Engineering, Mathematics, Science or a cognate



discipline is an admission requirement. There is a pass mark of 50%, with a credit weighted average and an opportunity for supplemental assessment.

There are fifteen selected learning outcomes, including to identify, formulate, analyse and solve complex engineering problems to support sustainability in the context of the climate change - circular economy nexus, to perform detailed analysis, interpretation and design of a novel engineering system, to describe complex engineering activities with the engineering community and with society at large and to undertake independent, original and professional research project that integrates their knowledge and understanding of climate action.

Prof. Gallagher thanked the Dean for her presentation and addressed a few queries in a short discussion which ensued. In the proposal, it had been outlined that supplemental assessment was not permitted. The rationale at the time had been that there was much group-work involved in the course and it had been felt that not participating in group-work in several modules could be detrimental both to the programme and the learning outcomes. However, on review of Section III of Part III of the Calendar, the proposal will be revised to allow for supplemental assessment.

Prof. Gallagher highlighted synergies with two other courses funded by HCI; in particular, he drew members' attention to a new online module in Psychology, which is fully shared with a new professional diploma in the Trinity Business School.

In response to a question from the Postgraduate Student Support Officer regarding assessment and progression, the Dean agreed that the wording on regulation of a postgraduate diploma with distinction should be investigated. The Calendar currently reads, "A distinction cannot be awarded if a candidate has failed any credit during the period of study." It was suggested that the wording should be changed from 'credit' to 'module'.

**Action GS/20-21/071:** Review assessment regulations (Calendar 2020/21, Section III, p.38), currently reading, "A distinction cannot be awarded if a candidate has failed any credit during the period of study." to replace 'credit' with 'module'.

The Dean noted that the proposal was well received. There were no additional issues raised and the committee endorsed the proposal.

**Decision GS/20-21/071** The committee endorsed the new course proposal (HCI Pillar 3), Postgraduate Diploma in Engineering for Climate Action, to Council subject to financial support from the Faculty Dean and positive external review and subject to revision of the assessment component.

## **XX GS/20-21/072 A new course proposal (HCI Pillar 3): Professional Diploma in Sustainable Development for Business**

The Dean welcomed Mr Michael Flynn (Director of Executive Education, TBS) and Prof. Maxmillian Schormair (prospective Course Director) from Trinity Business School and provided a brief overview of the new course proposal.

Targeting the business community in response to increasing demand for sustainability,



and environmental and sustainability-related regulation, this Professional Diploma, has occupation-orientated qualifications, including apprenticeships. The 30 ECTS course credit volume is made up of 4 x 5 ECTS modules. It addresses business decisions that take multiple dimensions of value creation into account simultaneously (social, ethical, economic, political).

The course is HCI P3 funded and aligns with the strategic priorities of Government, of the University and of the School. The target market is mid-level executives across a range of areas (multidisciplinary) with a Level 8 qualification and relevant experience. The course includes a 1 x 10 ECTS module – a Sustainability in Action project, whereby students research and design a sustainability project for implementation within their organisation. This blueprint for action is designed to ensure impact.

There are 6 learning outcomes - Explain societal impacts of organisations and their role in achieving sustainability targets, Develop strategies and action plans in response to current sustainability challenges of organisations, Analyse theoretical and practical concepts associated with sustainable development for business, Evaluate ethical, social, economic, ecologic and political factors in decision making to support sustainable business, Communicate and interact with multiple stakeholders to support positive sustainability action and Enable structural as well as behavioural changes and explain own influence as a change maker in organisations.

There is a pass mark of 50% with no compensation across modules, a penalty for late submission and one attempt at supplemental assessment.

The Dean confirmed that this is the first time this type of professional diploma has been offered in Trinity but envisaged that the offering will ultimately grow into a portfolio of professional diploma offerings under the CPD umbrella.

Mr Flynn thanked the Dean for her summary and both he and Prof. Schormair addressed queries on the proposed course. It was queried whether a distinction award was possible as it had been referred to within the document, but not within the Calendar 3 entry. Prof. Schormair confirmed that a distinction is possible and that they would update the Calendar entry accordingly.

Mr Flynn addressed a query on the rationale for having the same course fee for EU and non-EU students. He noted that as per MBA and executive MBA programmes, organisations which typically fund their employees to undertake these programmes do not acknowledge a difference between two groups and that the fee is set at a level that reflects what would be the norm for non-EU students.

The Assistant Academic Secretary, Graduate Education welcomed the inclusion of competitor analysis within the document, and on observing that the competitors listed are international, queried whether Irish competitors had also been analysed. Mr Flynn noted that the two main Irish competitors, UCC IMI and UCD Smurfit, are benchmarks in the local market and that off-shore competitors are mainly UK and Europe-based. He stated that companies will generally compare Irish offerings to top-ranked business schools in Europe when deciding on a suitable programme.



It was requested that Mr Flynn and Prof. Schormair forward the course and handbook URL to the Assistant Academic Secretary, Graduate Education as the URLs had been omitted from the course proposal.

The Information Technology Services Representative noted that Trinity Online Services has a small role to play in the course and queried as to whether this should be referenced in the proposal document. Mr Flynn acknowledged the involvement and will review and update as necessary.

The Dean noted that the proposal was well received. No additional issues were raised, and the committee endorsed the proposal.

**Decision GS/20-21/072:** The committee endorsed the new course proposal (HCI Pillar 3), Professional Diploma in Sustainable Development for Business, to Council subject to a favourable external review and subject to the course and handbook URL being submitted to the Assistant Academic Secretary, Graduate Education.

The Dean thanked all for attending the meeting, noting her appreciation to members giving the extra time to go through the course proposals. She also stated that the usual March meeting would take place on 25 March 2021, 10am.

There being no other business, the meeting ended at 3.45pm.

Prof. Martine Smith

Date: 10 March 2021