School of Languages, Literatures and Cultural Studies

Undergraduate Studies Committee

Wednesday, 13th June 2018, 1pm in 4097

| Present: | Rachel Hoare (DTL UG/Chair), Claire Laudet (HoD) Department of French, Sarah Smyth (HoD) Department of Russian and Slavonic Studies, Susana Bayo (HoD) Department of Hispanic Studies, Balazs Apor (Director Centre for European Studies) Igor Candido (Department of Italian Jürgen Uhlich (Department of Irish and Celtic Studies) Pádraig de Paor (Department of Irish and Celtic Studies) |
| In attendance: | Rima Fitzpatrick (SAM) Yvonne Canning (EO) |
| Apologies | Mary Cosgrove (HoD) Department of Germanic Studies, Anne Fitzpatrick (HoD) Department of Near and Middle Eastern Studies |

1. Minutes of previous meeting (enclosed)
   The minutes of the previous meeting were agreed as an accurate record.

2. Matters arising
   HoD Russian reported on the BSL executive decision to abolish Business Studies with Polish and the intention not to recruit 2018-2019. This will need to go to council and UGSC which will delay the abolition for another year. There has been no rational given by BSL executive for the above decision. If the above goes ahead - ES and MEELC will be the only programmes to offer Polish (which is worrying).

3. Director's report
   The DTL UG discussed various practices of dissertations within the school and the options for harmonising the Capstone project (20 Credits) across the School.
   **Capstone** – committee agreed that additional work is needed to prepare for 20ECTS capstone, the DTL UG suggested School wide workshops on topics like research methods, ethics, work with databases etc. It was agreed that idea is great but such workshops are to be optional to students.
   **ACTION:** Rachel to draft capstone learning outcomes, assessment, suggested supervision guidelines/expectations etc. Rima to look into if there is a slot available in the timetable when all SS students + a room are available.

**Disability / LENS reports** will be on SITS from 2018/19. For 2018/19 access to reports with ability to access and share and given to HoDs, DUGLT, HOS and SAM. HoDs are to share via SITS to appropriate staff, not circulate via email and not have hard copy as this doesn't allow for proper audit trail. From 2019/20 access to LENS report will automatically be assigned to module coordinators.

**ACTION:** Departments to shred any paper copies in line with GDPR and refrain from keeping hard printed copies around.
**Approved Language modules and electives** - the DTL UG reported on a meeting she attended with SAM, SL and Sheena Browne - the electives are standalone modules which will encompass more than language. It is envisioned they will include culture – still a work in progress. Lorna Carson CLCS is currently drafting a template for language electives which will be discussed at an upcoming meeting which will be attended by the DTL UG, HoS and Juergen Barkhoff. It is still unclear which language modules will become electives. Electives will have a fixed slot in the timetable and there may be one or two language electives to begin with. Electives will need to be partnered with other Schools.

**Approved modules:** It is unclear if all School modules will qualify as approved modules. The HoD Russian informed the committee that if permitted the Department of Russian will offer all their modules as approved modules.

**ACTION:** DTL UG will seek clarification on the above.

**Alumni to student / careers evening** will be organised by School beginning of November. Alumni engagement is not formalised yet in SLLCS, there is no database of contacts.

**ACTION:** HoDs were asked to share details of any alumni they are aware of / keep in contact who can be invited to School event.

**Student handbooks** – it was agreed that there is no time to fully overhaul student handbooks School wide and in line with new policy because we have so many programmes and academic staff are less available. It was agreed that dept can continue with current format handbooks, adjust minimally in line with semesters, new assessment etc. Full new handbook template will be ready in HT 2019 for departments / programme offices to use and have ready in time for 2019/20.

**ACTION:** Rachel to inform Central College accordingly.

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4. **Students concerns**
   There was no student representative present.

5. **External examiners policy**
   The DTL UG reported on a meeting she and SAM had with the quality office regarding the access and distribution of external examiners reports.

   Rachel will draft School wide general external examiner role to feature on the website with reference that individual departments are to be contacted for further details;

   A) External examiner reports will continue to be sent to Central College, to one general email address. Quality office will store them on shared drive, in SLLCS folder, subject/programme subfolders to which academic staff, directors of multi-disciplinary / multi-School programme, HoS, DUGTL, SAM will have access to. Rachel as DUGTL will be responsible to ensure all reports are returned and will be chasing up outstanding reports as needed via HoDs.

   **ACTION:** Rima /Rachel to follow up how academic staff can map out access to this shared drive.

   HoDs - If reports come to departments directly please forward on to Quality office.

6. **LENS/Disability report**

   **Disability / LENS reports** will be on SITS from 2018/19. For 2018/19 access to reports with ability to access and share and given to HoDs, DUGTL, HOS and SAM. HoDs are to share via SITS to appropriate
staff, not circulate via email and not have hard copy as this doesn’t allow for proper audit trail. From 2019/20 access to LENS report will automatically be assigned to module coordinators. 
ACTION: Departments to shred any paper copies in line with GDPR and refrain from keeping hard printed copies around.

7. **UG prospectus** – Sorry Rachel, I have very little on this agenda item.

Harmonisation
Year abroad??
Calendar
The school will have a two page spread.

8. **AOB**

The committee were informed that the new TEP administrator is expected to take up their position later in the summer. One of the tasks of the new TEP administrator will be the student handbooks - in line with the updated student handbook policy 2019/2020. The HoD Russian informed the committee that their handbook will be available on their website.

The DTL UG announced that this meeting will be the last that the HoD French Dr Clare Laudet will attend due to retirement. She thanked Clare for her valuable contribution over the years and wished her every success in the future.

Rachel Hoare

Director of Undergraduate Teaching and Learning
School Policy
Late Submission of Coursework

Document date: 3rd October 2018
Version: 1.0

Scope
This document aims to harmonise the procedures in relation to the penalties incurred by students for the late submission of coursework across all departments.

Proposed wording
There are penalties for late submission of written coursework without an approved extension or acceptable explanation (e.g. Medical certificate) as follows:

- Up to one week's lateness incurs a penalty of 10 marks;
- One to two week's lateness incurs a penalty of 20 marks.
- After 2 weeks 0 will be awarded.

Please note that these penalties have been agreed and are applied throughout the School of Languages, Literatures and Cultural Studies.

Implementation
It is proposed to include the proposed wording in the Student Handbooks.
Dear Senior Lecturer,

The Academic Registry has recently undertaken analysis to assess potential models for the scheduling of semesterised examinations from 2018/19.

As the absolute requirement for the scheduling of examinations in Semester 1 and Semester 2 will not be confirmed until early October, data modelling has been based on the requirements for the 2016/17 Annual Examination session (modules and student enrolments). The approach taken, approved by the Senior Lecturer, stress tested the ability to schedule the 2016/17 annual examinations across the assessment periods defined for Semesters 1 and 2 in 2018/19.

- **Semester 1:** December 10, 11, 12, 13, and 14 (5 days)
- **Semester 2:** April 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 30, May 2 (7 days total); and May 1 (AM only) and May 3 (full day) as contingency (not yet approved)

**Assumptions:**

i Model using the 2016/17 annual examination requirement including the disability exam accommodations.

ii New modules for 2018/19 would not be used as not known at the time of modelling.

iii Modelling based on three (3) sessions per day - 09:30, 14:00 and 17:00

iv Students would be scheduled for no more than two (2) exams per day.

v Examinations could be scheduled back to back.

vi Students would not be required to travel between TCD and RDS sites on the same day.

vii Current exam durations applied to modelling (to be reviewed in 2018/19).

viii Full range of approved examination days to be used in Semesters 1 and 2.

ix Schedule to be fully clash checked.

x Specific local requirements would not be considered (e.g., a module requested on a certain date/time).

xi RDS venue would be utilised in first instance, and TCD site used as an overflow including disability accommodations.

xii Modelling based on increased capacity at RDS from 1,800 to 2,800 seats.

**Outcome of Analysis:**
The outcome of the modelling confirmed that the 2016/17 annual examination requirement could be accommodated using the agreed 2016/19 assessment periods (without the need to use contingency days). Therefore, it is expected that the 2018/19 examinations can be successfully scheduled into Semester 1 and 2.

Based on the 2018/19 module dataset received from Schools in March 2018, Table 1 below shows the estimated number of modules to be scheduled into each semester in the new academic year structure. (The full requirement for 2018/19 will not be known until October 5th when the results of the special examinations are known and remaining students can be progressed to the appropriate course year, and enrolled on appropriate modules for 2018/19.)

**Table 1: Estimated Examination Requirement 2018/19 (based on School returns March 2018)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assessment Period</th>
<th>No of modules</th>
<th>Exam Duration</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1 hour</td>
<td>1.5 hour</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Semester 1 (30% of 2018/19 examinations)</td>
<td>240</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Semester 2 (70% of 2018/19 examinations)</td>
<td>563</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
We stress tested the number of modules and exam sittings that could fit into Semester 1 and 2 in 2018/19 using the 2016/17 Annual Examination requirement - which had 1,389 modules. Table 2 below shows the number of 2016/17 modules successfully scheduled into each Semester, based on Model 1 and 2 (see profiles in Table 4 below).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assessment Period</th>
<th>Number of modules that can be scheduled</th>
<th>Exam Duration</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1 hour</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Semester 1</td>
<td>1,019</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Semester 2</td>
<td>1,088</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3: % Distribution of 2016/17 Examinations Sittings into 2018/19 Semesters 1 & 2

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Exam Session</th>
<th>Number of sittings and days</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Annual Examinations 2016/17</td>
<td>61,049 (100%) scheduled over 23 days (BASELINE).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Semester 1 - 2018/19</td>
<td>39,259 (64.3%) scheduled over 5 days.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Semester 2 - 2018/19</td>
<td>42,983 (70.4%) scheduled over 7 days.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Recommendations:
i Council approval be sought for application of Models 1 and 2 for Semester 1 & 2 respectively in 2018/19 (see Table 4 below).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Exam Session</th>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4: Proposed Profile of 2018/19 Assessment Periods

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assessment Period</th>
<th>Semester 1</th>
<th>Semester 2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Model</td>
<td>TCD &amp; RDS</td>
<td>TCD &amp; RDS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Venues</td>
<td>3 (1 x 3hr; 2 x 2 hr)</td>
<td>3 (1 x 3hr; 2 x 2 hr)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No of Exam Days</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exam Sessions per day</td>
<td>12, 13, 14</td>
<td>12, 13, 14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Approved Dates for Examination</td>
<td>December 10, 11, 12, 13, 14</td>
<td>April 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 30, May 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contingency Days / Dates</td>
<td>1 day (December 8)</td>
<td>1.5 days (May 1 (AM only); May 3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Max no of papers student could take per day</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Capacity per Exam Session</td>
<td>5,084</td>
<td>5,084</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Estimated number of modules scheduled per semester for 2018/19</td>
<td>Semester 1 - 240</td>
<td>Semester 1 - 240</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Times</td>
<td>09:30 to 12:30</td>
<td>14:00 to 16:00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>17:00 to 19:00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

I invite USC to consider these options, before a final proposal is brought to Council for approval.

Kind regards,

Jennifer Pepper
Head of Operation / Deputy Director of Academic Registry
The European General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) was introduced on the 25th May 2018. The new regulation regards students’ assessed work (exam scripts and continuous assessment) as personal data. The External Examiner process presents a potential of breach of GDPR where student assessed work is transferred electronically to External Examiners prior to their attendance in College for subject or discipline Courts of Examiners.

The draft procedure is presented to the members of Undergraduate Studies Committee (USC) and Graduate Studies Committee (GSC) to highlight procedures recommended for adoption by Schools to mitigate the potential of a breach to GDPR. Following the incorporation of any amendments to the procedure from academic committees, the procedure will be presented to Quality Committee for final approval, published on the Academic Policies website and communicated to Faculties and Schools.

The Quality Office at the request of Schools has raised the issue of direct access to Blackboard by External Examiners with IT Services and Human Resources. The recent implementation of ‘Grades Journey’ that uploads grades into SITS prior to the Courts of Examiners; prevents access to assessments once ‘Grades Journey’ has been run. IT Services will enquire from Blackboard if ‘read only’ access to assignments is possible and the estimated costs to implement this in Blackboard. If budget and approval of this project is forthcoming the draft procedure will be revised to reflect the relevant procedural information and controls required.
Procedure for electronic transfer to External Examiners of students’ exam scripts and coursework.

1. Purpose
   This procedure is designed in response to operational timeframes that may result from the following College decisions:
   i. the revision of the External Examiner Policy in April 2018 to incorporate remote attendance by external examiners at supplemental Courts of Examiners and on an exceptional basis with the approval of the Senior Lecturer or Dean of Graduate Studies at the annual Courts of Examiner session; ii. changes to the Academic Year Structure that allow for two weeks at the start of the academic year from 2018/19, for reassessment and marking and results to include external examination.

2. Scope
   The scope of this procedure is for the electronic transfer of student exam scripts and coursework for review by external examiners in preparation for attendance at subject, discipline Courts of Examiners prior to the arrival of the external examiner on-site at Trinity.

   This procedure applies to all staff (academic and administrative) who are responsible for the administration of assessment and arrangements of Courts of Examiners.

   Out of scope of this procedure is transfer of scanned copies of student examination scripts and coursework and delivery to the external examiner via courier or secure registered post.

   Linked providers are responsible for the design and external assurance of their procedures under European General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) as a procedure with a statutory basis.

3. Principles
   3.1. Student exam scripts and coursework are regarded as ‘personal data’ under the European General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) that came into effect on 25th May 2018.

   3.2. The external examiner, in order to allow for appropriate preparation, will receive all documents required for the effective conduct of their role in advance of their attendance (physical or remote), at the Court of Examiners.
4. Procedure

4.1. Where exam scripts and coursework are to be transferred electronically the data files should be encrypted and a secure data transfer mechanism should be used. Recommended transfer mechanisms supported by College that should be considered for ease of use by the School and the external examiner include the following:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Platform</th>
<th>Description and where to access more information</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SFTP</td>
<td>SFTP is a secure data transfer mechanism which is suitable for use for the transfer of exam script data. Note: A secure username and password must be used and must be communicated to the external examiner in a secure manner. For more information please refer to the IT Services webpage on SFTP.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HEAnet FileSender Service</td>
<td>The HEAnet FileSender service is a secure file transfer mechanism which is suitable for use for the transfer of exam script data. Where this transfer mechanism is being used the encryption option must be selected. For more information please refer to <a href="https://www.heanet.ie/services/hosting/filesender">https://www.heanet.ie/services/hosting/filesender</a></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Microsoft OneDrive         | Microsoft OneDrive is a secure file storage and sharing service supported by IT Services and which is suitable for the transfer of exam script data. Where this service is being used it is essential to ensure that:  
  • Data are shared carefully with the correct email address.  
  • The ‘require login’ option should always be selected and data must not be shared using an anonymous link. For more information please refer to http://www.tcd.ie/itservices/internet/onedrive.php |

4.2. Options which are not recommended or supported by College include any service not supported by IT Services and/or where a service contract is not in place, where data is not stored in the EU
and where the data is not encrypted in transit. Services which are not recommended include but are not limited to the following:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Platform</th>
<th>Rationale</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dropbox</td>
<td>Is not suitable as Dropbox is a public cloud service</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Googledocs</td>
<td>Is not suitable as Googledocs is a public cloud service</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4.3. Schools should provide detailed instructions to the external examiner on how to access the data depending on the platform used (refer 4.2 above) including how they will be provided with any passwords needed to access the data. Where files are encrypted, the encryption password must not be communicated using the same medium as the encrypted data, i.e. the exam scripts or coursework. Options for sharing the password include person to person phone communication with the external examiner who should be instructed to save the password in a secure place, to dispose of the password after successfully accessing the exam scripts and coursework or at the latest on completion of their examination duties.

4.4. Schools should provide instructions to the external examiner on how to work with the data, including but not limited to: Where data can be stored unencrypted, e.g. locally on one computer, not on any other Internet Services such as Dropbox; Whether or not the external examiner is permitted to make copies/print out the data.

4.5. Schools should provide instructions to the external examiner on suitable security on the computer used by the external examiner e.g. that the computer must:

i. Run the latest most secure versions of software available; ii. Be protected by anti-virus software; iii. Be protected from loss and theft by disk encryption; iv. Be protected by the use of a strong logon password.

4.6. Schools should provide instructions to the external examiner on how to dispose of the exam scripts and coursework on completion of the examination period, e.g. when and how to delete data files and paper copies – a decision is required on whether to dispose of the exam scripts and coursework following (i) the annual session or (ii) the supplemental session. Schools should seek confirmation that the external examiner has
completed the secure data file/paper disposal process or provide the option of returning paper copies to the School at the time of the Courts of Examiners for safe disposal.

4.7. Schools should provide instructions to the external examiner on who to inform if the external examiner suspects that the exam script and coursework data has been accessed/breached by any other individual while in his/her possession. Schools should note that under GDPR the University has a legal requirement to report data breaches to the Data Protection Authority within 72 hours.

5 Resources available to Schools

5.1 Secure your Devices’ can be found at http://www.tcd.ie/ITSecurity/gdpr/checklist.php

5.2 http://www.tcd.ie/ITSecurity/

5.3 Email dataprotection@tcd.ie

5.4 GDPR Online Training on Blackboard
https://www.tcd.ie/itservices/vle/kb/overviewGDPRtraining.php

5.5 https://www.tcd.ie/itservices/staff-email/kb/staff-email-limitations.php

6 Responsibility

Responsibility for local implementation of this procedure rests with the Director of Teaching & Learning Undergraduate and Postgraduate or their delegate(s), e.g. module/subject coordinator or programme Director and associated administrative staff responsible for the assessment of examination and arrangements for Courts of Examiners.

7 Document control

Approval date:

Revision Year:
Self-Assessment

• What aspect of TEP does this resource refer to?
Self-assessment is one type of assessment within the range of assessments of the TEP assessment framework. It can help prepare students for life-long learning, through reflection on their skills and competencies. Such assessment activities enable the development of transferrable skills and graduate attributes in students and make them explicit in the context of their programme of study.

• What is self-assessment?
Self-assessment is defined as ‘the involvement of learners in making judgements about their achievements and the outcomes of their learning’ and ‘identifying standards and/or criteria to apply to their work and the extent to which they have met these criteria and standards.’

• Why use self-assessment?
Self-assessment is one of the most important skills that students require for future professional development and life-long learning. It develops the capacity for students to be assessors of their learning and promotes student engagement in, and learning about, a subject through expressing understanding, making decisions, and justifying judgements. It also helps students reflect on how they view themselves as learners in terms of self-esteem and self-image.

• What are the benefits to teaching and learning?
Self-assessment is a natural extension of a change from a teacher-centred to a student-centred mode of education, which emphasises the active engagement of students in their learning. It enhances deep and lifelong learning and makes students feel that they have some control over their own evaluation, while developing learner autonomy, cognitive abilities, metacognitive engagement, better understanding of content, and increased quality and thoughtfulness on assignments.

• What are the pedagogical opportunities?
Through self-assessment, there is an opportunity to engage students in the ‘assessment dialogue,’ as there are many tacit assumptions that staff make in marking student work, which are not obvious to students who perceive it as part of a ‘hidden curriculum.’ Students can be integrated into the assessment process, and that process can be made more explicit, by providing some training in assessment and/or including students in developing assessments.

• What are the pedagogical challenges?
Students can be reluctant to self-assess, since they feel they lack the necessary skills, confidence, or ability to judge their own work; they prefer and expect to be assessed by experts and see it as
the teachers’ responsibility. Thus, they are afraid of being ‘wrong’ or are too harsh on themselves, and are sometimes uncomfortable with the responsibility. Cultural issues can impact on self-assessment, because for some students, giving themselves a good grade is considered inappropriate or boasting. There is also the issue of how one identifies the ‘self’ in ‘self-assessment.’ It involves one part of the self-assessing, but also another part of the self’s actions and outcomes: ‘it raises some deep questions about the nature of the self, self-awareness and self-monitoring.’ Finally, it may encourage the internalisation of accountability and may be linked to notions of surveillance and social control.

Examples of Possible Approaches

**Assessing the current extent of self-assessment activities**
Schools and/or disciplines may wish to undertake a review of existing assessment practices to ascertain the extent to which self-assessment is already being used in their programme(s). The relative proportions of formative and summative self-assessments already taking place should also be determined, and the extent to which this is ‘in class’ compared to ‘online’ ascertained. Curriculum review should include considerations of how to practically implement self-assessment strategies; e.g. by re-assessing content-heavy modules and promoting flipped-classroom approaches, to free up space for self-assessment activities in-class.

**Desirable conditions for fostering self-assessment**
Successful student self-assessment requires both effective implementation and management. It should be a purposeful and systematic approach integrated into course/module design. The effectiveness of the approaches needs to be monitored through reflecting on the process and the outcomes by both students and academic staff. Staff should spend time preparing students for self-assessment.

**Good practice in self-assessment**
Self-assessment functions optimally when student perceptions are considered, and when there is a clear rationale that is discussed with students, with the process evaluated and modified accordingly. Staff need to be willing to share control of assessment: students are involved in establishing criteria, have a direct role in influencing the process, and guidelines are produced for each stage of the process. Self-assessment is one of a number of complementary strategies to promote self-directed and inter-dependent learning that comes to permeate the whole module/course.

**Some simple ideas to implement self-assessment**
Self-assessment of coursework essays using criteria-referenced approach in psychology: Criteria asked students to assess the extent to which the question was addressed,
organization and structure, quality and relevance of argument, depth of understanding, evaluation of theoretical concepts, and research evidence.

**Self-assessment in first-year sociology:** Marking criteria were included in handbook; teacher feedback was provided without a grade, after which students self-assess and resubmit; bonus marks awarded for accuracy of staff versus student marking.

**Self-assessment of essays by students of a foreign languages:** Assessment criteria negotiated between tutor and students, followed by self-assessment carried out in two rounds.

• **External resources**


[http://www.tcd.ie/CAPSL/assets/pdf/Academic_Practice_Resources/Guide_to_Student_Self_Assessment.pdf](http://www.tcd.ie/CAPSL/assets/pdf/Academic_Practice_Resources/Guide_to_Student_Self_Assessment.pdf)

**Note:** This document is not a statement of formal university policy, but rather a teaching and learning resource produced by the Trinity Education Fellows for the Trinity Education Project.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TEP Project</th>
<th>Fellows:</th>
<th>Resource</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>30.06.17</td>
<td>MW</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Peer Assessment

• What aspect of TEP does this resource refer to?
Peer assessment is one type of assessment within the range of assessments of the TEP assessment framework. During peer assessment, students review and provide feedback on each other’s work and learn from and with each other: this is assessment for learning, not assessment of learning. Examples of peer assessment including grading a peer’s research report, providing qualitative feedback on a classmate’s presentation, or evaluating a fellow trainee’s professional task performance. Such assessment activities enable the development of transferrable skills and graduate attributes in students and make them explicit in the context of their programme of study.

• What is peer assessment?
In peer assessment, students make decisions about each other’s work and decide what constitutes ‘good work.’ This can be done anonymously, randomly, individually, or in a group. Peer assessment and the learning that emerges from it fit into social constructivist models of education. Peer assessment can occur ‘in class’ or ‘on-line’ and can be formative and/or summative.

• Why use peer assessment?
There are great opportunities and advantages in terms of understanding and engagement to learners providing feedback on and assessing each other’s work. Using and/or developing assessment criteria takes students deeper into their learning and allows for feedback and reflection on learning and the sharing of what new meaning appears individually and within the group.

• What are the benefits to teaching and learning?
Peer assessment is a natural extension of a change from a teacher-centred to a student-centred mode of education, which emphasises the active engagement of students in their learning, learner responsibility, metacognitive skills, and a dialogical, collaborative model of teaching and learning. Students become assessors within the context of ‘participation in practice,’ i.e. the kinds of highly contextualised learning faced in life and work. Peer assessment can also dramatically reduce the marking load on academic staff and allow them to devote more time to other aspects of teaching and learning, including managing the peer assessment process itself more effectively.

• What are the pedagogical challenges?
Feedback to students alone is insufficient to promote learning. There can be concerns about quality in terms of effectiveness, acceptability, fairness, validity, reliability, accuracy, and value of student assessments. Students can be concerned and anxious about lecturers/tutors being absent from the assessment process and about the emotional impact of giving and receiving feedback among peers.
• **What are the pedagogical opportunities?**
Through peer assessment, there is an opportunity to engage students in the ‘assessment dialogue,’ as there are many tacit assumptions that staff make in marking student work, which are not obvious to students who perceive it as part of a ‘hidden curriculum.’ Students can be integrated into the assessment process through this mode, for example by providing some training in assessment and/or by including students as contributors to developing assessments. For example, it can help to engage students in discussions about — or, more radically, to help develop — marking criteria that are aligned with the learning outcomes.

Examples of Possible Approaches

• **Assessing the current extent of peer assessment activities**
Schools and/or disciplines may wish to undertake a review of existing assessment practices to ascertain the extent to which peer assessment is already being used in their programme(s). The relative proportions of formative and summative peer assessments already taking place should also be determined, and the extent to which this is ‘in class’ compared to ‘on line’ ascertained. Curriculum review should include considerations of how to practically implement peer assessment strategies, e.g. by re-assessing content-heavy modules and promoting flipped-classroom approaches, to free up space for peer assessment activities in-class.

• **Desirable conditions for fostering peer assessment**
Desirable conditions include: considering and highlighting knowledge and experience; emphasising value in cooperation and the roles involved; establishing trust; discussing student and staff expectations; agreeing on the process; encouraging reflection and reflective discussions; tolerating mistakes and seeking assistance; discussing and acknowledging previous negative (and positive) experiences with similar activities; providing and considering practical suggestions for how to change attitudes; addressing issues of ‘difference,’ e.g. gender, local vs overseas students, culture and religion. In general, students need to accept each other for peer assessment to be effective.

• **Some simple ideas to implement peer assessment**
**Formative:** Students’ draft assessments can be shared with peers and questions can be developed by the students. The ensuing discussion, in pairs or in small groups, enhances learning through exploration of the questions. Students then peer-edit and provide feedback on rounds of drafts of the assessment shared between them in small groups. The criteria for feedback (produced by the lecturer or developed collaboratively with students) are provided. The work under discussion is then compared to the grading criteria; students gain an idea of what merits work of varying degrees of quality. Students submit a piece of writing online (e.g. essay, blog, response) individually or in groups, and then they receive feedback from peers and revise it accordingly. Lecturers should also provide ‘feedback on the feedback’ that students have given each other, i.e. a quality assurance role on the part of the tutor, implemented to reassure students of fairness and to acknowledge any student concerns and provide reassurance.
**Summative:** Any of the above formative assessment strategies can be extended to lead into a summative peer assessment. Students then grade each other’s work, and the lecturer oversees the grading as quality control, and/or staff and student marks split 50:50. Any marks where student and lecturer grades differ significantly are discussed.

**• External resources**
http://www.tcd.ie/CAPSL/assets/pdf/Academic_PRACTICE/Resources/Guide_to_Student_Peer_Assessment.pdf

**Note:** This document is not a statement of formal university policy, but rather a teaching and learning resource produced by the Trinity Education Fellows for the Trinity Education Project.

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