



**Minutes of the Marino Institute of Education Associated College Degrees Committee
(MIE ACDC)**

Thursday 15th November 2018

Present:

Registrar (Chair): Prof. Paula Murphy

Dean of Graduate Studies: Prof. Neville Cox

Dean of Undergraduate Studies/Senior Lecturer: Prof. Kevin Mitchell

School of Education - Head: Prof. Damian Murchan

Quality Officer - Roisin Smith

President of Marino Institute of Education: Dr Teresa O'Doherty

2nd Representative from Marino Institute of Education: MIE Registrar Dr Seán Delaney

Representatives of MIE Course Groupings -

UG Programmes: Dr Julie Uí Choistealbha

International Foundation Programme: Brendan White

Postgraduate Taught Programmes including Further Education: Dr Gene Mehigan

MIE ACDC Secretary - Ewa Sadowska

Apologies:

2nd Representative from the School of Education: Prof. Colette Murphy

In attendance:

Dr Victoria Bruce School Administrative Manager

Vice-President of Global Relations (for IFP item ACDC/18-19/295): Prof. Juliette Hussey

Assistant Librarian for item ACDC/18-19/296 Trinity Library: Geraldine Fitzgerald

As the start of the meeting, the Registrar welcomed Dr Teresa O'Doherty, the new President of Marino Institute of Education and the new Senior Lecturer/Dean of Undergraduate Studies Prof. Kevin Mitchell. Brief introductions by all members followed.

ACDC/18-19/293 Minutes of ACDC of 9th May 2018

The *Minutes* were approved as circulated.

ACDC/18-19/294 Matters arising

Re. ACDC/16-17/281 The Registrar noted that positive feedback had come in from Trinity's insurers for validated students as members of Trinity's societies.

ACDC/18-19/295 Standing item on International Foundation Programme (IFP)

The Vice-President of Global Relations was present for the item and provided an update on the current situation with respect to the 2018/19 IFP admissions. She drew members' attention to the fact that 80 students had registered on the programme. This exceeds the set target of 60 registrations set for 2019 by 33%. The Vice-President of Global Relations underlined that there was potential for continued strong growth into the future.



The Vice-President of Global Relations provided an overview of recruitment strategy objectives for the 2018/19 intake. The Global Relations Office Recruitment and the IFP Programme Manager have worked together to manage and develop coherent admissions strategies and processes for multiple international markets and to ensure applicants are supported in their transition to the programme. Student Recruitment strategy is data-driven and based on applications and registrations achieved during the first two intakes as well as feedback from recruitment visits to target markets in Asia, the Middle East and other multiple markets.

In China, the strategy was to increase by 50% the target recruitment number to 30 students. This target was achieved, and 31 Chinese students have registered on the programme with 30 of whom came via education agents pointing to the success of Trinity's relationship building, quality assurance and training strategy with reputable Chinese agents.

With respect to the Gulf States which have traditionally been a source of students for foundation programmes in Ireland and the UK, the Vice-President of Global Relations clarified that the students were normally sponsored by their governments. She stated that an increase of up to 50% of target recruitment number was aimed for, i.e. 30 students were to come from these countries, and also to attract students to pathways outside the traditional focus on Health Sciences while continuing to support the growth plans of programmes such as Medicine, Dentistry and Pharmacy. New agreements were signed with sponsorship bodies in Saudi Arabia and the UAE. Finally, 36 Gulf students have registered on the programme of whom 9 chose non-Health Science degree destinations such as Global Business, Biological and Biomedical Sciences stream of UG Science, Engineering and Computer Science which are areas of growth for College.

In order to diversify degree destinations, the aim is to develop the IFP as a pathway to degrees within schools with growth strategies such as the Law School and the Business School. To date, 18 students have registered for degree destinations such as Global Business, Business and Law and BESS, 10 students have registered for Computer Science, 8 for Biological and Biomedical Sciences; 4 for Engineering and 2 for MSSIS.

Applications for 2019/20 opened on 31st October. The target is 80 registrations. The strategic initiatives referred to above will further be developed as they have proven successful in delivering students to date.

In terms of progression, the Vice-President of Global Relations commented that it was in line with expectation that not all students would progress into their chosen degree courses in Trinity. Those who did not achieve their Trinity destinations found alternative places in other universities in Ireland and the UK. It was noted that the IFP has a particular dependency on Kuwait students targeting pharmacy which sometimes is beyond their reach as only 3 students out of the original 8 obtained the place last year. The Kuwait government sponsors its students and advises them on their alternative career choices where their primary destination course proves unavailable.



The IFP Manager spoke to his report and responded to queries from the floor. He clarified that two IFP-originating students failed biochemistry in the 1st year medicine and were repeating the year. The IFP biology and chemistry modules would therefore be reviewed this year in order to make changes to their content to better prepare IFP students for the medical degree course. The IFP Manager also explained that capacity-wise MIE was in good position to cater for the increased intake of IFP students. Sixty bedrooms in the student accommodation apartments were reserved this year for new entrants and the fulltime staff numbers were also increased. A new science laboratory was opened for all science modules and offered enhanced flexibility for experimental teaching on site. It was also noted that some students had changed their course destinations while on the IFP.

An issue of supports for under-age students was discussed. Due to different education systems in their home countries world-wide some applicants to the IFP come below the age of 18 years when arriving in Ireland. The committee was reassured that the under-age students were offered accommodation on the MIE campus or with families. Additional measures to support such students would be further discussed in Marino.

It was noted that some staff were new to teaching on this programme in year 1 and their teaching experience subsequently informed enhancements put in place for year 2. Students valued their experience of lab sessions conducted in Trinity last year. Accordingly, MIE would be keen to continue the practice of a full day of labs in physics, biology and chemistry in Trinity on an annual basis. It was noted that IFP students might have a particular difficulty with their English competency (for example Chinese students) and that the in-house English module, which accounted for 30% of the IFP, was especially enhanced to cater for all English language competencies.

A few comments from the floor were made to note that once on degree courses in Trinity, the IFP-originating students could avail of various student supports with academic writing, English language skills, counselling services available to all students including the international ones. It was noted that the IFP-originating first cohort is now in year 2 but it is numerically small. Its progress through the years should be monitored. It would be important to track those students to establish how they perform as a whole cohort. Relevant Schools should be alerted that they have the IFP-originating students amongst its international cohorts in order to support and monitor them more efficiently to enable them to succeed. The role for the Global Office in a communication network between the Schools and the IFP should be made more specific.

The Registrar thanked both parties and stated that the Trinity IFP had grown impressively over the three intakes and that the fast rate of growth appears to set to continue.

Action 1: Representative(s) from student services in Trinity to be invited to the ACDC meeting to advise on supports available to international students with a view to enhancing opportunities for linking supports during transition to Trinity if required, and to broaden School awareness of the needs of the IFP-originating students and increase targeted supports for them via reporting through the USC.



Action 2: The Vice-President of Global Relations and the MIE representative of the IFP to provide their respective updating reports for the next meeting.

ACDC/18-19/296 Trinity Library - Geraldine Fitzgerald (Assistant Librarian) to update

Ms Geraldine Fitzgerald, Assistant Librarian, attended the November meeting to update the MIE members on Library developments relevant to their students and staff. Firstly, she noted a number of practical issues to do with registration of Masters students from MIE with Trinity which impacts on the students' access to the library. She emphasised a significant role played by communication between the admissions staff in Trinity and its MIE counterpart staff, and that communication should be enhanced going forward. She clarified that borrowing on students' behalf was not permitted.

Secondly, Ms Fitzgerald talked members through the main developments listed on her memorandum circulated for the meeting. She drew members' attention to the the introduction of new borrowing entitlements for staff and students, new dynamic 3D maps to help users navigate physical collections more easily, a new reading list system to be rolled out to staff over the next year to provide live links from reading list entries to the catalogue encompassing references to books, journal articles, websites and digital objects, and TARA (Trinity's online research repository). Re the latter she explained that TARA was now operational to receive research from MIE academics and some had already uploaded their publications. Staff can upload directly onto TARA, and Masters dissertations could also be uploaded, and that students should avail of that opportunity to publicise their works.

The Registrar thanked Ms Fitzgerald for her valuable updates on the recent developments in the library.

ACDC/18-19/297 Standing item on the QQI Quality Assurance of Linked Providers

a) Re-initiation of Approval of Quality Assurance Procedures Process

The Quality Officer noted that the approval process of the quality assurance of MIE policies and procedures had been re-initiated at the beginning of the academic year following approval of a revised policy and procedure entitled 'Approval of Linked Providers' Quality Assurance Procedures' by Board in June 2018. The Quality Officer and the Registrar met with the new President and the MIE Registrar at the beginning of the academic year. The MIE intention is to submit its policies and procedures early in 2019 with a view to having the approval process completed either by the end of the current academic year or at the beginning of the next academic year.

b) Qualifications & Quality Assurance Amendments Act 2018 (International Education Mark and Protection of Enrolled Learners)

The Quality Officer referred to the Amendment Bill as it pertained to the MIE. She noted recent completion in October of the second stage of the Qualifications and Quality Assurance (Education and Training) (Amendment) Bill 2018 in Seanad Éireann, which will amend the Qualifications and Quality Assurance (Education and Training) Act 2012. She advised that the Bill contains measures to establish a new national Learner Protection Fund. She noted that in the original draft MIE was not exempt from contributing to the Fund. The MIE President clarified that MIE had applied to be exempt and was awaiting the decision.



c) QQI Green Paper on Assessment of Learners and Learning (dated March 2018)

The Quality Officer advised that the due date for responses to the Green Paper was the 1st December 2018 and invited MIE to provide feedback to QQI in relation to the paper. She also noted that she had attended earlier during the week a conference on assessment aimed at exploring the QQI Green Paper organised by the QQI in collaboration with the National Forum. She undertook to disseminate information on similar conferences to MIE going forward.

d) External Examiner Enhancements

The Quality Officer noted that the resources page on the designated website for external examiners on the Trinity Teaching and Learning site had been recently updated. The resources now contain a revised report template and newly approved academic policies and procedures. The Quality Officer focused on the Procedure for the Transfer to External Examiners of Students Assessed Work, and Advisory Guidelines on European General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR). She stated that in line with GDPR, introduced in May 2018, students' assessed work, including examination scripts, continuous assessment, and research theses should be treated as personal data. The External Examiner process presents a potential for breach of GDPR where students' work is transferred for assessment to External Examiners prior to their attendance in College for subject or discipline Courts of Examiners or when Examiners wish to retain for example a thesis beyond one year. The Quality Officer recommended that the MIE consult with its Data Protection Officer and review its internal systems used for uploading student work to ensure that they are GDPR-compliant.

***ACDC/18-19/298 Standing update on communication & inter-institutional collaboration
Senior Lecturer/Dean of Undergraduate Studies on policy and procedure issues relevant to MIE***

The Senior Lecturer/Dean of Undergraduate Studies noted that Trinity Education Project (TEP) was in an implementation phase, and in response to a query stated that opportunities might arise going forward to involve MIE staff to contribute their views to committee work. He stated that TEP-created new entry/exit degree programme routes would need to be communicated to IFP students. He noted a huge appreciation reflected in external examiners' reports for constructive formative feedback routinely given to MIE students which should be expanded as a standard teaching practice under TEP in Trinity. He also referred to the aim of expanding under TEP academic foundation skills such as writing for academic purposes, statistical literacy, presentation skills, ethics awareness, peer assessment aptitude which would be incorporated into academic modules and taught from year to year during the student degree programme. He emphasised the importance of implementing a capstone project in the final undergraduate year under TEP. The MIE President noted that all undergraduate degree programmes in MIE already had assessments in place which could be treated as capstone projects.

ACDC/18-19/299 To consider Revision to Rules for Borderline Marks

The MIE Registrar spoke to his memorandum and clarified that where students in an undergraduate final year of their degree (or on postgraduate professional courses as research Master's would be exempt) have a pass mark that is borderline (i.e. 49%, 59%, and



69%), the Court of Examiners should consider if the students' grade may be rounded up to the next grade. The basis for doing this relates to having passed all exams, having a preponderance (more than 50%) of grades in the next grade level and having the next higher grade level on specific components of work. Based on recommendations from the external examiners and on discussion among staff in MIE, the MIE Registrar proposed that the rules for rounding up be relaxed from the academic year 2018-19 for the Bachelor in Education, Bachelor in Science, Professional Master in Education and Professional Diploma in Education - FE (2 Year). For all courses the rule on having a preponderance of grades in the next grade band in the last two years is to be relaxed to a requirement to have "a preponderance of module grades in the final year at the next higher grade level." Where there is a Senior Sophister year the requirement is to be added that Senior Sophister placement grades must be at the next higher grade level. Other rules remain as they are.

In a short discussion which followed comments were made that staff should be encouraged to mark across the whole 0-100% mark spectrum, especially beyond 70% and below 40%, spreading it in both directions to avoid mark inflation. Grading up beyond the 70% should also be encouraged in freshmen years in order to better reflect student performance and enhance motivation. It was noted that various schools in Trinity had different approaches to borderline cases, and the final year of a degree programme was taken as the most important for determining the students' final degree mark. In response to a query, the MIE Registrar clarified that around seven students would have benefited should the new regulation have been applied to the last cohort. The committee approved the proposal.

ACDC/18-19/300 To consider Module specification on Transition to Higher Education

The MIE Registrar was seeking the committee's recommendation for approval by Council for MIE to offer a *Transition to Higher Education* module to all undergraduate students (on courses offered through the medium of English). He explained that the need to develop that module had arisen from the Irish Government's *National Strategy for Higher Education to 2030* and from the observations made by academic staff in MIE. The module would be non-credit bearing taken by all first-year undergraduate students in their first semester. Although students will not receive ECTS credits for it, it will be recorded on the transcripts of those who have passed it. Passing the module is a requirement but the module is not part of students' credited degree programme (B.Ed. or B.Sc.). Previous versions of the module have been used informally with students on the Bachelor in Science (Education Studies) in previous years.

In a short discussion which followed the Registrar suggested a couple of minor changes to the text of the proposed module. There was some concern expressed as to the additional workload given that the module would not be for credit which was addressed when the MIE Registrar clarified that it would only require 2 extra hours per week. He also emphasised that completion of the module in year 1 (normally in the first semester) was ideal as the module provided foundation skills and competencies to be utilised in other academic modules. Should students not be in a position to complete the module in year 1, they should be completing it in later years prior to completing the programme. The MIE has a policy on attendance which will be applied to this module. The committee approved the proposal.



ACDC/18-19/301 To consider Level 7 Exit Option

The MIE Registrar was seeking members' recommendation for Council approval to include in the progression regulations for BEd and BSc students a statement to say that "In exceptional circumstances (typically related to medical/health, financial or professional circumstances), where a student has successfully completed all requirements of years 1, 2 and 3 of the course, the student may exit from the BEd or BSc course with a level 7 (pass degree) award. A student who wishes to apply for exiting with a level 7 degree should apply to the Registrar's Office to do so at the earliest possible opportunity and should supply relevant documentation to support the request."

The MIE Registrar explained that a request for an ordinary pass degree had recently been made by a student but because the option was not in MIE regulations, it could not be considered. It is anticipated that only a very small number of students would be availing of the new regulation allowing for an Ordinary Bachelor's degree.

In a short discussion which followed a number of issues were raised. The Registrar requested that an NFQ level 7 grade descriptor be drafted. A clarification was offered that level 7 award would be an exit one and students must especially apply to request it. The clause on re-entry into the degree programme and rescinding the exit award was to be removed from the regulation. The committee approved the proposal.

Action 3: MIE is to draft an NFQ level 7 grade descriptor.

ACDC/18-19/302 To consider revision to B.Sc. (SF) Module on Adolescence

The MIE Registrar was seeking the committee's recommendation for Council approval to change the assessment of 2nd year work placement on the *Adolescence* module of the B.Sc. programme from being an oral presentation to a report of a reflective journal. The percentage weighting of 20% remains the same. The MIE Registrar argued that the current oral presentation of the student's learning from work placement three months after completing placement was not academically sound. The recommended change should be a more efficient and effective way of assessing the work placement to be achieved through a report (synthesis of learning) of students' reflective journal maintained during work experience (summative, assessed) as well as feedback to peers (formative, non-assessed). The committee approved the proposal noting that it be revised in line with the Registrar's feedback.

ACDC/18-19/303 To consider External Examiners' Reports

The MIE Registrar spoke to his circulated memorandum, and drew members' attention to the nine circulated reports:

- | | |
|---|--|
| 1. BS. (Education Studies) | Dr Cathal de Paor |
| 2. BSc (Early Childhood Education) | Dr Cathal de Paor |
| 3. BEd | Dr Thérèse Dooley (Temporary - Annual) |
| 4. BEd (Presentation Notes) | Prof. Paul Conway (Supplemental) |
| 5. Prof Dip in Ed (Further Education) | Dr Cathal de Paor |
| 6. Professional Master of Ed (Primary Teaching) | Prof. Pádraig Ó Duibhir |
| 7. Master in Education Studies | Dr Andreas Stylianides |
| 8. International Foundation Programme | Dr Barbara Skinner (EAP) |



In relation to the BEd report, the MIE Registrar clarified that one report was submitted from a temporary examiner who had been approved by the Senior Lecturer when the external examiner became suddenly ill in June. The regular external examiner attended in September, but no report has been submitted to date (as was the case for the last two years). Instead, a signed copy of the PowerPoint presentation used by the examiner at the Court of Examiners' meeting was included. It was noted that the presentation was inadvertently showing a student name and the decision was taken to delete that report from the committee papers in line with the GDPR and committee members were asked to delete it from their files/devices.

Members noted that the content of the reports was overwhelmingly positive with examiners commenting on the high standards, the quality of feedback especially the formative one, and the level of development across years of the courses. The MIE Registrar clarified that MIE was analysing the reports at two levels namely to identify areas of growth and improvement across all courses and at individual modules. External examiners' recommendations were being addressed through cross-staff and course-specific meetings.

Action 4: All members to delete BEd Presentation Notes from circulated committee papers

Action 5: MIE Registrar to submit MIE response to external examiners' reports to a future committee meeting

ACDC/18-19/304 AOB

- (i) The MIE Registrar advised that a proposal for a new Master's course in Further Education would be submitted to the next meeting or to the meeting in May.
- (ii) The MIE ACDC Secretary advised that meetings in 2019/20 might have to start at 10am.

There being no other business the meeting ended at 11am.

Date 15th November 2018 Registrar _____