



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

Thursday 14th November 2019

Present:

Registrar (Chair): Prof. Paula Murphy

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

2nd Representative from the School of Education: Prof. Joanne Banks

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 -

International Foundation Programme: Dr Barbara O'Toole

Further Education: Dr Julie Uí Choistealbha

UG Programmes: Dr Joan Kiely

Postgraduate Taught Programmes: Dr Gene Mehigan

In attendance:

Associate Director Recruitment TCD Global (for IFP item ACDC/19-20/326): Declan Coogan

IFP Programme Manager (for IFP item ACDC/19-20/326): Brendan White

School of Education Administrative Manager: David Byrne

MIE ACDC Secretary - Ewa Sadowska

Apologies:

Dean of Graduate Studies: Prof. Neville Cox

Vice-President of Global Relations (for IFP item ACDC/19-20/326): Prof. Juliette Hussey

School of Education - Head: Prof. Damian Murchan

TTL Observer (Assistant Academic Secretary): Linda Darbey

The Registrar welcomed new members to the committee i.e. Dr Joan Kiely and Dr Barbara O'Toole nominated at the MIE President's request to better reflect the representation on the committee of the recently changed leadership structure. The Registrar noted that the proposed change of membership aligns with the existing *ex officio* roles under the current Terms of Reference in that Dr Julie Uí Choistealbha will represent Further Education, Dr Joan Kiely Undergraduate Programmes, and Dr Barbara O'Toole the IFP. The IFP Programme Manager Brendan White, like the Vice-President of Global Relations, will attend only for the item on the IFP. Dr Gene Mehigan will continue to represent PGT programmes. The new members briefly outlined their new leadership roles in the MIE.

ACDC/19-20/323 Minutes of ACDC of 9th May 2019

The Minutes had been approved as circulated.

ACDC/19-20/324 Matters arising



Re. ACDC/18-19//306 Action 1 The Registrar noted that the invitation of the Director of Student Services would be deferred to a future ACDC meeting to report on how best to track progression of IFP students as a separate cohort over the course of their study in Trinity.

Re. ACDC/18-19/315 In response to a query, the Registrar confirmed that the IFP graduation ceremony would be organised in Trinity, in January, most likely together with the Further Education graduation ceremony, precise date to be confirmed.

Re. ACDC/18-19/321 Decision 1 The proposed external examiners were approved by Council in May 2019.

ACDC/19-20/325 Trinity Library - Geraldine Fitzgerald (Assistant Librarian) to update

The Assistant Librarian for Education updated members on Library developments relevant to MIE students and staff. She reported no issues to do with registration of Master's in Education Studies (MES) students from MIE this year. She advised that at the MIE request, Library instruction for new MES students had taken place in Trinity Library on two Saturdays, i.e. the 7th September and the 9th November. She further noted that information on Library services is available on its website: www.tcd.ie/library. She also underlined that the Library was constantly evolving and that new borrowing entitlements for staff and postgraduate students had increased to 50 items but noted that MIE students were mostly using online resources. In response to a query she clarified that IFP students do not have access to Trinity Library. Finally, she referred to the appointment of a new librarian in MIE earlier in the year and noted that a professional link between the two sides had been established.

The Registrar thanked the Assistant Librarian for her valuable updates on the recent developments in the library, and at that point the Assistant Librarian left the meeting.

ACDC/19-20/326 Standing item on International Foundation Programme (IFP)

The Registrar noted that two reports on the IFP Programme had been received for the meeting i.e. from TCD Global and MIE. While the programme continues strongly with 66 students registered this year, it is down from 80 last year (i.e. 20 over the target of 60) and less than the target of 100 students for this year intake. The reports focused therefore on two main issues i.e. decreased recruitment to the course and decreased progression rate from the IFP to Trinity programmes, and on initiatives to address the issues for sustainability of the IFP going forward. The Registrar invited the IFP programme Manager to speak to the item first. He underlined that the volume of applications and queries for the IFP had been high and challenges were related to managing the high volume of applications and conversion of applicants from offer holders to registration. Several sponsored students from various countries did not accept offers. Feedback suggests that other foundation programmes in Ireland experienced similar difficulties in terms of reaching targets this year.

The IFP Programme Manager drew members' attention to a widening geographical recruitment market illustrated by more diversified countries of origin on the current IFP cohort. Registered students came from China (26), Kuwait (15), Saudi Arabia (7), Turkey (5), Oman (3) and Russia (3), and (one each) from Ukraine, UAE, Brazil, Iraq, Japan, Kazakhstan,



and Mexico. The countries of origin show a broadening appeal of the IFP to diverse markets around the globe. He also stated that intended degree destinations have become more diversified this year and include apart from the traditionally popular but high requirement course in Medicine, also degree programmes outside health sciences such as Computer Science, Engineering, Global Business, Biological and Biomedical Sciences, Law and Business, BESS, PPES and Physiotherapy. There were even queries for the first time about Film Studies.

Declan Coogan, Associate Director Recruitment TCD Global, who attended in lieu of the Vice-President of Global Relations, added his comments on the 2019/20 admissions issues. He drew members' attention to the fact that a considerable number of sponsored applicants from Kuwait did not attain the IELTS score required for English language and could not proceed. He referred to other issues negatively impacting on the target number of registrants namely

- 1) Over-dependence on the market in China: Chinese applicants are especially sensitive to progression rates and once these fall the number of Chinese applicants also goes down;
- 2) The need to further diversify recruitment markets beyond China and traditionally sponsoring countries of the Middle East;
- 3) There is a relatively high number of applicants entering the IFP with only the minimum English language requirement. MIE had taken measures to address the issue such as an increase in support classes throughout the year in academic English and a reduction in average class sizes from 22 to 17 students.
- 4) Interest in the 5-year long Pharmacy course in Trinity has gone down amongst applicants and there is no student on this year's IFP applying for the course which might have something to do with a perception out there that Trinity's Pharmacy course is much more challenging than that of other Irish universities. Pharmacy being a 5-year programme in Trinity might be a contributing factor to a drop in demand.

Members noted with appreciation a number of concrete strategic initiatives for the coming year put in place already in MIE to enhance recruitment success which include transfer of management of admissions processes from Marino to the student recruitment team in Trinity, cooperation with sponsorship bodies in the Middle East to restore previous ratio of applications, a review of potential for a pre-sessional English programme to help students reach required level, targeted campaigns in multiple markets to continue diversification strategy and reduce reliance on China and Middle East, promotional visits and campaigns in countries such as China, UAE, Kuwait, Qatar, Lebanon, Russia, Ukraine, Turkey, Ghana, Nigeria, the Philippines, Singapore, Malaysia and Thailand during the next recruitment cycle and further development of processes in the MIE to improve progression rates from the IFP to destination degree programmes in Trinity.

Members focused then on last year's decrease in progression rate from the IFP into Trinity programmes in comparison to the previous year. Of the 80 students who registered with the IFP last year, 74 completed the programme. Of these, 46 met requirements to progress to full time degrees in Trinity in 2019/20. Forty students met their first choice undergraduate



and 6 met their second-choice undergraduate requirements. Of the 40 who attained their first choice, 38 proceeded to register and of the 6 who attained their second choice 3 proceeded to register for a total of 41 registrations. There were particular challenges for three students from Kuwait who achieved the academic grades but did not meet the conditions of the interview stage with Medicine. As requested by the Kuwaiti Ministry of Education, TCD Global are working with the School to ensure greater clarity around the expectations of the interview process.

It was noted that IFP students not achieving the target academic results for high requirement degree programmes in Trinity were being taken by other HEIs which indicates robustness of Trinity IFP programme and its high academic standing on the Dublin 3rd level recruitment market. Several students who progressed to other institutions were as follows: one to UCD (Bachelor), 1 to NUIG (Bachelor), 5 to RCSI (Bachelor), 1 to Monash University (Bachelor), 1 to UCL (Bachelor), 1 to UCD (Foundation). Nevertheless, members acknowledged that the progression rate from a foundation programme is an important factor in application decisions in countries such as China and improving it will be a focus of pastoral care and other processes in Marino going forward.

The MIE Programme Manager underlined that IFP students sponsored for a particular degree programme i.e. especially Medicine were unlikely to switch to an alternative degree course in Trinity as that would deprive them of sponsorship. MIE has enhanced its communications during the year with IFP students to counsel them on options and alternatives to their chosen degree destinations. Early interviews with the School of Medicine to assess suitability of applicants for the course were going to be put in place. It was noted that mock interviews were in place already.

The MIE President stated MIE was very well resourced with academic staff on the IFP this year. Additional staff had been recruited to cater for the targeted number of 100 students. These staff are in place now and will remain so even though the target has not been achieved thereby increasing favourably the staff-student ratio on the programme. The MIE President also noted that the IFP would undergo a full programme review this year and would address (i) entry (ii) course content (iii) teaching and learning and (iv) the student experience. Recruitment targets and progression rates into Trinity programmes will also be considered. The Quality Officer asked if the review would be conducted using the Quality Procedure submitted to Trinity for approval. This was confirmed by the Registrar MIE.

The Registrar thanked the Associate Director Recruitment and the IFP Programme Manager for their reports and committee members for a thorough discussion around the issues identified in the reports, and at that point they both withdrew from the meeting.

Action 1: The Vice-President of Global Relations and the IFP Manager to provide their respective updating reports for the next meeting.

Action 2: To invite the Director of Student Services to a future ACDC meeting to report on how best to track progression of IFP students as a separate cohort over the course of their study in Trinity.



ACDC/19-20/327 Standing item on the QQI Quality Assurance of Linked Providers

The Registrar invited the Quality Officer to provide an update on the Quality Assurance of Linked Providers.

a) Update on the approval of MIE QA procedures

The Quality Officer noted that the review process of the quality assurance procedures, required under the 2012 QQI Act for approval by Trinity, was still in progress. Feedback on the MIE-submitted documentation was provided this week and it is anticipated that a meeting to discuss this feedback will be scheduled in the near future, after MIE have had an opportunity to consider it. The MIE Registrar stated that the process has been a challenging learning curve for MIE staff and expressed his gratitude for the feedback received from the Quality Office and other Trinity academic and administrative staff involved.

b) Update on National Qualifications Register

The Quality Officer advised that Trinity is listed as the awarding body on the QQI National Qualifications Register, which replaces the ILEP Register managed by the Department of Justice & Equality. She advised that MIE will be listed on the Register as a provider of teaching for awards validated by the University of Dublin and Trinity College Dublin, and that only validated programmes that appear on the NFQ will be listed on the Register.

c) To note: EUA Report: Student-centred learning: approaches to quality assurance (September 2019)

The Quality Officer drew the Committee's attention to the newly published EUA Report.

Parenthetically, the Quality Officer advised members that the date for Trinity's institutional review has been confirmed for the week of 23 November 2020 and that a review of MIE will take place afterwards. She also referred to a roll out of the International Education Mark (IEM) due to take place in 2022, that a self-assessment exercise against the new QQI code of practice including incoming, outgoing and transnational education would need to be covered, and that MIE would have to apply directly to the QQI.

The MIE President reported that an unexpected audit by HEA on staff and student mobility took place recently in the MIE, and that initial informal feedback was positive. An official report was being awaited and would be published in the public domain and brought to a future ACDC meeting.

ACDC/18-19/328 Standing update on communication & inter-institutional collaboration by Senior Lecturer/Dean of Undergraduate Studies and the Dean of Graduate Studies

The Registrar invited an update relating to the item from the Senior Lecturer/Dean of Undergraduate Studies who advised that there had been no recent policies and procedures to report on of relevance to MIE. He stated however that TEP was being imbedded: first in the area of Science and moving currently to Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences. Work was concentrating on one of TEP strands i.e. Partners in Learning which deals with the pedagogy of teaching and assessment and aims to develop a tool (i.e. a software app) allowing staff and students to see an assessment spectrum not only across any UG programme but also



across a number of courses. The app will make an assessment map visible and enable staff to map and rationalise assessment across courses and students to better plan their workloads in advance of assessment deadlines. The Senior Lecturer/Dean of Undergraduate Studies explained that TEP resulted in the reduction of module credit volume from 15 to 10 and frequently from 10 to 5 but no corresponding reduction of assessment load followed. It is intended now to institute a cultural change in Trinity by increasing formative assessment in class and reducing the traditional dependence on final examinations and essays given that the end of semester examination session had been reduced in duration forced by semesterisation. The Senior Lecturer/Dean of Undergraduate Studies noted that an increased number of “smaller” modules with 5 credit volume have increased a number of assessments overall and resulted in fragmentation of courses at the cost of their curricular integration. Members appreciated that tracking assessment by an app would be of great help to students to prudently schedule their workload over the semester.

The Registrar thanked the Senior Lecturer/Dean of Undergraduate Studies for his update. She acknowledged apologies from the Dean of Graduate Studies. There were no postgraduate issues reported on.

ACDC/19-20/329 MIE Analysis of the ISSE Survey results for 2018/19

The Registrar invited the MIE Registrar to speak to the item. MIE participates in the annual Student Survey of all higher education institutions. The MIE Registrar stated that the Irish Survey of Student Engagement invites students on first year undergraduate, final year undergraduate, and taught postgraduate courses to respond to over sixty questions grouped by a number of engagement factors. With respect to the profile of respondents, the MIE Registrar stated that undergraduate students (62.6% of first years and 55.1% of final year students) were more likely to respond to the survey than taught postgraduate students (26.2%). Respondents were predominantly female (83%) and only 17% were male. Almost all students who responded were Irish domiciled. Three quarters of respondents (75.5%) were aged 23 years or younger. All respondents were studying the field of Education and 88.4% were fulltime students. Over 77% were studying for an undergraduate honours degree, 16.2% were studying for a taught Masters degree and 6.1% of students were taking graduate certificate/diploma courses.

The MIE Registrar spoke to his circulated *Analysis of Results* for 2018/19. He stated that Marino achieved a response rate of 46% to the survey which is the highest in its sector and the third highest nationally. In response to a query, the MIE President explained that participation in the survey was heavily promoted amongst students with the help of the student union.

The highest indicator score for all respondents in MIE were for the quality of interactions (38.4/60), higher order learning (33.8/60), and reflective and integrative learning (31.5/60). The lowest indicator scores for all respondents in MIE were for staff - student interaction (12.1/60) and quantitative reasoning (14.1/60). Overall the indicators for 2018/19 are similar to the indicators for 2017/18, with most showing the same indicator scores or single-point differences. The exceptions were Supportive Environment (from 23 to 26 out of 60), Effective Teaching practices (from 30 to 32 out of 60) and Quantitative Reasoning (14 to 12



out of 60). The MIE Registrar also highlighted that 86.9% of participating students said that if they could start over again, they would definitely (52.3%) or probably (34.6%) again choose the MIE.

Attention was drawn to the apparent anomaly that staff-student interaction scored low whereas the quality of interaction scored very highly (38.4/60).

The Senior Lecturer/Dean of Undergraduate Studies congratulated MIE on great results and noted that staff – student interaction was also an issue in Trinity especially in year 1. The MIE Registrar explained that a majority of students in MIE intend working in the area of teaching or education and most would have their career paths reasonably clearly mapped so there is no great need for guidance counselling or staff assistance in that domain. However, some guidance counselling has already been put in place enabling students to discuss their academic performance and possible career opportunities with staff. Advisory clinics with staff were also available to students through their placement tutors.

Members focused on the issue of quantitative reasoning which received one of the lowest indicator scores for all respondents in MIE. The MIE Registrar noted that outside of mathematics and research methods modules, no specific module would be dedicated to promoting quantitative reasoning. MIE might therefore consider putting more emphasis on reading and analysing statistics in modules when quantitative research is being used to support particular educational approaches, claims or initiatives. This would be done to provide additional opportunities to develop students' quantitative reasoning.

The Quality Officer noted that ISSE has been rebranded into StudentSurvey.ie. She also commented that non-indicator questions from the survey should be given due consideration and additional analysis of the results be carried out by cohort/programme and that the report on the analysis should be published by MIE as a quality enhancement measure.

ACDC/19-20/330 MIE participation in PATH Open Learning initiative for 2019/20

The MIE Registrar spoke to his circulated *memorandum*. He noted that the PATH initiative was funded by the Department of Education and Science and Open Learning scholarships are available for students drawn from underrepresented target groups. Four members of Leinster Pillar 1 (Dún Laoghaire Institute of Art Design and Technology, MIE, National College of Art and Design and University College Dublin) have offered members of local communities places on modules of their existing programmes where spare places are available under the Open Learning initiative. Eligible students on such modules may apply for PATH funding to support the cost. The MIE Registrar clarified that for the first time in 2019/20 MIE is participating in the scheme. Students enrolled in MIE may audit a first-year module or take it for credit. Up to three places may be offered on a module subject to spaces being available. A transcript is issued to students who successfully complete one or more modules for credit, but no award is available to participating students from either MIE or from its accrediting University, Trinity College Dublin, the University of Dublin. Candidates may enrol in up to four modules per semester. In the academic year 2019/20, to date one student has signed up to take four modules on BSc courses, two in semester 1 and two in semester 2.



In response to a query, the MIE Registrar explained that auditing a module is attending it without taking an examination. The Senior Lecturer/Dean of Undergraduate Studies noted that PATH might be linked to the CPD process of micro credentialling that might be developed in Trinity as part of its new strategic plan and which would enable participants to build up their mini- certifications in a specific topic area.

ACDC/19-30/331 To consider: external examiners' reports for 2018/19

The MIE Registrar spoke to the item. He noted that MIE had now received all external examiners' reports for 2018/19, namely

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| 1. Bachelor in Education | from Dr Brian Murphy |
| 2. Bachelor in Science (Education Studies) | from Dr Cathal De Paor |
| 3. Bachelor in Science (Early Childhood Education) | from Dr Cathal De Paor |
| 4. Further Education | from Dr Cathal De Paor |
| 5. Master in Education Studies (Intercultural Leading and Learning and Early Childhood Education) | from Dr Emer Ring |
| 6. Master in Education Studies (Visual Arts, Inquiry-Based Learning and Leadership in Christian Education) | from Dr Anthony Hall |
| 7. Professional Masters in Education | from Prof Pádraig Ó Duibhir |
| 8. Trinity International Foundation Programme (Path A excluding mathematics) | from Dr Barbara Skinner |
| 9. Trinity International Foundation Programme (Path B plus mathematics) | from Dr Brien Nolan |

The MIE Registrar clarified that the reports will be considered by programme boards in MIE in advance of Academic Council meeting in January 2020 and a response to each report will subsequently be presented at a further ACDC meeting during the academic year.

The Senior Lecturer/Dean of Undergraduate Studies noted that the reports were overall very positive but that two issues of concern stand out namely that there is a strong reliance on examinations as a dominant form of assessment and that there is some criticism expressed about the teaching of Irish. The MIE Registrar confirmed that both issues were being looked at and would be fully addressed in the MIE response.

Action 1: MIE Registrar to submit a MIE response to external examiners' reports to a future committee meeting.

ACDC/19-20/332 Nominations for External Examiners on Bachelor in Science (Early Childhood Education) from 2019/20 to replace Dr Cathal de Paor

The MIE Registrar spoke to the item. He noted that Dr Cathal de Paor is the current external examiner on three programmes in MIE, i.e. Bachelor in Science (Early Childhood Education), Professional Diploma in Education (Further Education) and Bachelor in Science (Education Studies) with his term due to expire at the end of 2019/20. However, since Dr de Paor was appointed as external examiner, the Bachelor in Science (Early Childhood Education) has expanded considerably in size. The MIE Registrar was therefore proposing to nominate a replacement external examiner for the Bachelor in Science (Early Childhood Education) and to make this appointment retrospective from the 2019/20 academic year in order to reduce



the external examining workload on Dr de Paor and to offer his successor an opportunity to avail of Dr de Paor's experience from examining the course. Three nominees were put for consideration for the replacement position with the intention that only one will be appointed. Given that only two CVs i.e. those of Dr Sheila Long (Institute of Technology Carlow) and Dr Sheila Garrity (NUI Galway) had been circulated, the Committee was in a position to choose only between the two candidates. Members noted that both CVs were strong but given that Dr Garrity had more relevant experience as external examiner in various institutions and sat on numerous committees it was recommended to support her nomination for Council.

Decision 1: Dr Sheila Garrity was endorsed for Council as external examiner. The MIE ACDC Secretary to submit the nomination to the December Council for approval.

ACDC/19-20/333 AOB

There was none.

There being no other business the meeting ended at 10.50am.

Date

14th November 2019

Registrar
