



Trinity College Dublin
Coláiste na Tríonóide, Baile Átha Cliath
The University of Dublin

A meeting of the Undergraduate Studies Committee was held on 20 March 2018 at 2.15pm in the Boardroom.

Present: Professor Gillian Martin, Senior Lecturer/Dean of Undergraduate Studies (*Chair*)
Ms Patricia Callaghan, Academic Secretary
Professor Aidan Seery, Senior Tutor
Professor Kevin Mitchell, Associate Dean of Undergraduate Science Education
Professor Kristian Myrseth, School of Business
Professor Paula Colavita, School of Chemistry
Professor Nicholas Johnson, School of Creative Arts
Professor Derek Sullivan, School of Dental Science
Professor Stephen Minton, School of Education
Professor Alan O'Connor, School of Engineering
Professor Alice Jorgensen, School of English
Professor Rachael Walsh, School of Law
Professor Elizabeth Nixon, School of Psychology
Professor Cathriona Russell, School of Religions, Peace Studies and Theology
Professor Stephen Matterson, Director of TSM
Professor Michael Wycherley, School of Social Sciences and Philosophy
Professor Philip Curry, School of Social Work and Social Policy
Professor Frank Wellmer, School of Genetics and Microbiology
Professor Rachel Hoare, School of Languages, Literatures and Cultural Studies
Ms Siobhán Dunne, Library Representative
Ms Alice Mac Pherson, Education Officer, Students' Union
Ms Sally Anne McCarthy, Student Representative

Apologies: Professor Kevin O'Kelly, Dean of Students
Professor Derek Nolan, School of Biochemistry and Immunology
Professor Mike Brady, School of Computer Science and Statistics
Professor Peter Cherry, School of Histories and Humanities
Professor Pauline Sloane, School of Linguistic, Speech and Communication Sciences
Professor Paul Eastham, School of Physics
Professor Joe Harbison, School of Medicine
Professor Naomi Elliott, School of Nursing and Midwifery
Professor John Walsh, School of Pharmacy and Pharmaceutical Sciences
Professor Mark Hennessy, School of Natural Sciences
Professor Vladimir Dotsenko, School of Mathematics

In attendance: Mr John O'Neill, Director, Academic Affairs Office, Trinity Teaching & Learning; Ms Marie McPeak, Academic Affairs Office, Trinity Teaching & Learning; Dr Ciara O'Farrell, Senior Academic Developer, CAPSL, Trinity Teaching & Learning; Ms Leona Coady, Director of Academic Registry; Assistant Professor David Shepherd and Assistant Professor Fainche Ryan from the School of Religions, Peace Studies and Theology, for USC/17-18/059; Ms Mary McMahon, TEP Project Officer, for USC/17-18/062

The Senior Lecturer/Dean of Undergraduate Studies opened the meeting and noted apologies from members.

USC/17-18/056 Minutes of the meeting of 20 February 2018

The minutes of the meeting of 20 February 2018 were approved.

USC/17-18/057 Matters arising

USC/17-18/051 The proposal for a “2+2” Articulation Agreement for a B.A. in Physics between Trinity College Dublin and the University of Science and Technology Beijing was approved by University Council at its meeting on 7 March 2018. It is envisaged that some students may commence the programme in 2018-19.

USC/17-18/052c The revisions to “The Educational Objectives of the Moderatorship” and the “General Regulations” sections in Calendar 2018-19, Part II were approved by University Council at its meeting on 7 March 2018.

USC/17-18/052e A proposed derogation to Council-approved progression and awards regulations in respect of Nursing and Midwifery was approved. Off books with assessment will be available for students registered for Senior Fresh year 2018-19 until AY 2020-21 for the phasing out period of the existing curricula. The revised curricula will be implemented from September 2018 and will run concurrently with the existing curricula (pre September 2018) until the existing curricula come to their conclusion.

USC/17-18/058 Update to External Examiners Policy

A memorandum from the Director of Academic Affairs, dated 16 March 2018, had been circulated. The Senior Lecturer/Dean of Undergraduate Studies invited the Director of Academic Affairs to speak to this item.

The Director of Academic Affairs noted that the current External Examiner Policy, approved by Council in June 2015, had been revised to take account of the new progression and awards regulations, which are being introduced in 2018-19 and which allow the repeat of all academic years. The revision took into account requests from Schools seeking clarification on the College position in respect of remote attendance by External Examiners at annual and supplemental Courts of Examiners.

The scope of the policy, Section 4.3, has been expanded to apply to remote attendance by external examiners in exceptional circumstances at Annual Courts of Examiners and to allow for remote attendance at supplemental Courts of Examiners for undergraduate and postgraduate taught programmes. “Section 7.6 Remote Attendance by External Examiner” has been added to the policy, providing guidelines on the circumstances where an external examiner may attend remotely and noting that permission must be sought from the Senior Lecturer/Dean of Undergraduate Studies or the Dean of Graduate Studies, as appropriate, in these cases. It provides instruction on the conduct of the Court of Examiners where the external examiner attends remotely and the method for capturing this in the Court documentation. The “Related Documents” section has been expanded to include a link from IT Services regarding information on technology infrastructure.

The Director of Academic Affairs noted that in addition to requesting the approval of USC members, the revised policy would also be considered at Graduate Studies Committee. Once approved at both committees, the revised policy would be sent forward to University Council for approval. If approved, it will be published on the Trinity Teaching & Learning website, where it will replace the current External Examiner Policy.

A member queried if remote attendance by external examiners should be considered standard or exceptional for Supplemental Courts of Examiners. In response, it was highlighted that the policy enables an external examiner to attend the Supplemental Court of Examiners either physically or remotely. The Senior Lecturer/Dean of Undergraduate Studies noted that the need to attend physically may depend on local requirements, e.g., some departments hold vivas where it would be expected that the external examiner be present physically.

It was also reiterated that the external examiner should be physically present at Annual Courts of Examiners, although the provision for remote attendance applies where exceptional circumstances arise at Annual Courts of Examiners.

Members sought clarification on whether the updates to the policy would be communicated to current external examiners. It was noted that this was a matter for the College, but that a communication to external examiners regarding the new progression and awards regulations and other relevant changes arising out of the Trinity Education Project is planned and that the revised policy could potentially be included in this communication. The Senior Lecturer/Dean of Undergraduate Studies agreed that College would work with Schools in order to tailor any communication sent to external examiners.

One member noted that some schools may find making materials available to a remotely attending external examiner ahead of time challenging due to time constraints at examination periods. It may also prove difficult to present any materials produced at a Court of Examiners in real-time. It was noted that this policy is to facilitate Courts of Examiners and that programmes must implement it and choose appropriate actions based on local practice.

USC approved that the updated External Examiner Policy go forward to Council.

USC/17-18/059 Proposal for a new Undergraduate Course B.A. in Religion

The proposal for a new Undergraduate Course, B.A. in Religion, together with a memorandum from the Head of the Confederal School of Religions, Peace Studies and Theology, dated 15 March 2018, had been circulated. Professor David Shepherd was welcomed to the meeting to present this item.

Professor Shepherd noted that, historically, the Confederal School of Religions, Peace Studies and Theology has offered two awards at undergraduate level: the Moderatorship in World Religions and Theology and the Moderatorship in Catholic Theological Studies. Following the Quality Review of the School in 2017, the University Council established a Taskforce to implement the recommendations of the reviewers, whose mandate included the creation of a single undergraduate programme leading to a B.A. The programme being presented to USC is to replace the existing two programmes with first intake of students to take place in 2019/20. Professor Shepherd noted that Religion was chosen for the programme and award title as it is the most commonly used by professional bodies associated with the discipline.

The new programme in Religion will align with the Single Subject entry route available from 2019-20 and students will choose from two exit pathways in order to be awarded a B.A. in Religion or a B.A. in Religion with a Minor. Students will choose from one of three specialisations, which are based on the expertise of staff in the School. The specialisations afford students the opportunity to focus in Theology, or on the cultural study of Religion, or to take a broader perspective through the study of Religion and Theology. The specialisations will not be part of the award title, but will be noted on the student transcript. The course proposal presented the core curriculum, including mandatory and optional modules, which would be taken by students pursuing each of the specialisations.

In discussion, a member noted that the title of 'Religion' is strongly tied to the Leaving Certificate experience of Religion and this may have a negative impact on recruitment for the course. It was noted in response by Professor Shepherd that the marketing will clarify that this programme focuses on the cultural study of Religion. Another member noted that the title and available specialisations may be reviewed depending upon interest in the new course.

In response to a query on whether or not the discrete specialisations would be available as part of the Joint Honors route, it was confirmed that incoming students from 2019/20 would apply for "Religion" in this entry mechanism.

A member commended the course proposal for its diversity of assessment, but noted that many of the 5 ECTS modules had a great deal of assessment and questioned if there was scope to reduce the number of essays or the word count of the essays. The Student Representative concurred, noting that there were a large number of essays for Junior Fresh students in particular. Both Professor Shepherd and the DUTL from the Confederal School undertook to review this in light of feedback.

Another member emphasized that there must be meaningful discussion of assessment across programmes and years of programmes to ensure balance. Programme-led assessment is a key tenet of the College Assessment Framework. Programmes must undertake to review assessment with this and the new Academic Year Structure in mind. Student feedback has also indicated that students want less labour intensive, more authentic assessment.

A query arose with regard to the recruitment of Non-EU students as it was not clear from the documentation if this would take place. It was pointed out in response that there are currently Non-EU students on the existing courses and that they would review this detail within the new course proposal.

Whilst the proposal is fully compliant with the TEP programme architecture, it was felt that it would be improved by clearer labelling to indicate where a module is compulsory or optional within a particular specialisation pathway.

Professor Shepherd and the DUTL from the Confederal School were asked to withdraw from the meeting to enable members to discuss whether the proposal should be recommended to Council and sent out for external review. It was highlighted that the full approval process will need to be completed no later than April so that the new programme can be included in the CAO Handbook for 2019/20 entry.

After discussion, Professor Shepherd and the DUTL from the Confederal School rejoined the meeting and were informed that USC approved that the proposal, with the recommended changes, proceed to external review and then go forward to Council.

a) Proposal for Cessation of the B.A. in Catholic Theological Studies from 2018-19

A late item was added to the agenda from the Confederal School of Religions, Peace Studies and Theology requesting a cessation of the Catholic Theological Studies undergraduate programme from the Academic Year 2018-19. Professor Fáinche Ryan was invited to the meeting to speak to this item.

The cessation was being sought on the basis that the number of applicants to the programme had fallen. In 2017-18 only 2 students had registered on the Single Honors programme and no students had registered for the TSM subject. The total number of first preferences for 2018-19 for the Single Honors programme is 3 and only 1 first preference has been given to the TSM subject. These are much lower than the number of first preferences given for the subject in 2017-18. It was further noted that the introduction of the proposed B.A in Religion in 2019-20 will improve recruitment capability and this would allow staff in this area to prepare for this implementation.

The Senior Lecturer/Dean of Undergraduate Studies noted that the application for cessation was incomplete and that USC could only approve the request in principle as it was necessary for approval to be obtained from the School Executive, as well as the TSM

Management Committee. It was being considered at this meeting of USC in order to enable Council approval ahead of CAO deadlines.

USC approved the cessation of the Catholic Theological Studies programme in principle. This request must be approved by the School Executive of the Confederal School of Religions, Peace Studies and Theology, as well as by the TSM Management Committee before going forward to Council. The Director of TSM suggested that the approval of the TSM Management Committee might be sought electronically.

USC/17-18/060 Proposal to change Subject Title of TSM/Joint Honors Jewish and Islamic Civilisations from 2019/20

A memorandum from the Director of TSM, dated 19 January 2018, had been circulated.

The Director noted that the TSM Management Committee had approved a subject title change proposal from the School of Languages, Literatures and Cultural Studies, at its meeting on 13 December 2017. The proposed title change amends the current subject title from 'Jewish and Islamic Civilisations' to 'Middle Eastern, Jewish and Islamic Civilisations'.

The amended title reflects the broadness of the approach to the Middle East. A number of modules currently taught do not include a particular focus on Judaism and Islam. Where Judaism, Bible and Islam are taught, they are naturally contextualized within the wider history and culture of the Middle East. The change will also facilitate the eventual development of more intensive language focus, particularly in Arabic and Modern Hebrew.

USC approved that the change of Subject Title for 2019-20 go forward to Council.

USC/17-18/061 Preliminary CAO Applications Data for 2018-19

The Senior Lecturer/Dean of Undergraduate Studies provided an update on Preliminary CAO Applications Data for 2018-19.

The Senior Lecturer/Dean of Undergraduate Studies brought members through the available statistics and key issues arising from the Preliminary CAO Applications Data. It was noted that there has been a decrease of 4.5% in the total number of CAO applications compared with 2017-18: this decrease is across all applicant types, including standard Leaving Certificate, widening participation groups, and A-level applicants. Across the third-level sector, there has been decrease in first preferences to Arts/Social Science; Science/Applied Science; and Administration/Business. Programmes that have seen an increase are Education and Law.

While a fall in applications for third-level education is not unusual during times of high employment, there is still a call for concern locally, particularly due to the overall 8.4% decrease in first preference applications across many programmes in Trinity

There has been a significant decrease in first preferences to History, Sociology and Social Policy, Mathematics, Political Science and Geography, and Computer Science.

First preferences for Engineering with Management have increased 35% with Engineering overall seeing an increase of 5%. Due to the introduction of the new Science entry routes, it is more difficult to ascertain whether there has been a change, the Associate Dean of Undergraduate Science Education advised that in their review of the preliminary data there is virtually no change from 2017-18, which, in itself, might be viewed as a positive.

Within TSM, German has seen a significant increase in first preferences, while English, Classical Languages and French have seen their first preferences decrease.

The profile of applications by country has to be confirmed, but the information available at present shows a decrease in applicants from the Republic of Ireland, Northern Ireland and the United Kingdom, with applicants from other EU countries increasing. The fall in the number of applications from Northern Ireland (-20%) is disappointing due to the outreach that has taken place. The impact of this drop on overall first preferences was also noted: most applicants from Northern Ireland would have courses in Trinity as their first preference. Both this decrease and the 10% decrease in applicants from the United Kingdom, together with the 10% increase in other EU applicants suggests that Brexit is impacting student recruitment. In the case of Northern Ireland and UK applicants, this is likely to be related to fee uncertainty.

The Senior Lecturer/Dean of Undergraduate Studies asked members for comment on the statistics, noting that other universities have been increasing the visibility of their offerings through advertising and that, currently, EU student recruitment is reliant on one member of staff and a small number of student ambassadors.

One member stressed the need for marketing, noting that competitor institutions are promoting aggressively, using the rankings from 2017 as a focal point. Another member noted that in their subject they have held a number of subject-focussed sessions at the weekend for prospective students as applicants are keen to gain an insight into what a course is really like. Members noted that the lack of resources dedicated to EU student recruitment is evident.

Another member noted that the issue of high rents and the cost of living in Dublin is likely to be having an impact on applications. It was also felt that the impact of a digital campaign may be weakened unless improvements are made to some of the websites within College: these should be the primary point of information for prospective students. A number of members felt that investment in the website to ensure it works on digital devices would be beneficial.

Academic buy-in is a concern as many would see an investment in product and services as more valuable than an investment in promotion. A member noted that the perception of mass advertisement as being the solution is not necessarily correct. Many prospective students gain insight through discussion with peers or student ambassadors when choosing a course.

In response to a query on whether or not there is a strategy for the 'change of mind' period, where there is an opportunity to increase the number of first preferences, the Senior Lecturer/Dean of Undergraduate Studies noted that resources were being made available to support this. It was also noted that there were over 6000 applicants to the CAO who had not yet entered any course choices.

A member queried if intake quotas were seen as an issue as many courses have met or gone over their quota. Another noted that lower accommodation costs for campus housing would give a public relations boost.

The Senior Lecturer/Dean of Undergraduate Studies informed members that the Preliminary CAO Applications Data for 2018-19 had been on the agenda for discussion at the previous meeting of Council, but due to time constraints, was postponed to the next meeting.

USC/17-18/062 Trinity Education Project

a) Progression and Awards - Revised proposal for the Award of a Gold Medal

A memorandum from the Chair of Sub-group 6, dated 15 March 2018, had been circulated.

The Chair of Sub-group 6 noted that following presentation of the initial proposal for the award of a Gold Medal at the USC meeting on 21 November 2017, TEP Sub-group 6 and the TEP Steering Committee had given further consideration to the proposal.

It had been confirmed that all attempts at assessment, including re-assessment, should be considered when making a recommendation for a Gold Medal. However, the thresholds for making the recommendation had been revised. Model 1 had been revised to allow programmes to recommend an award of Gold Medal where a student achieves an overall degree award mark of 75% or above only; the original proposal had stated that programmes could set the overall degree mark at either 70% or 75% or 80%. The revisions to Model 2 allow a programme to recommend that a Gold Medal be awarded where the overall degree mark is 75% above, with a minimum of 70% in each named component of the degree award (e.g., major subject and minor subject, or subject 1 and subject 2 in joint honors programmes).

It was noted that Dentistry, Law and Medicine had voiced concerns about their programmes being able to meet the revised criteria for the award of a Gold Medal; specifically, the requirement that a student must achieve an overall degree mark of 75%. Dentistry had agreed to expand the range of marks used at the higher level to support the attainment of Gold Medals. Law and Medicine were invited to submit the details of their concerns and these were discussed by Subgroup 6 at its meeting on 6 March 2018.

The Law School argued that degree results of 75% or greater were exceptionally rare and that a threshold of 75% might deny a student a Gold Medal if they achieved just one II.1 result in any one of the 12 modules taken at Sophister level. The School felt that it was best placed to determine outstanding academic performance and that it was concerned about the risk of grade inflation if the new proposal were to be implemented.

The School of Medicine outlined its current method of recommending a Gold Medal and advised that eligible students must get four first-class honour results in their five 4th and 5th year exams and at least a II.1 grade in their remaining assessment. The incorporation of clinical elements leads to a truncated marking scheme, which limits the achievement of higher marks. In addition, Gold Medals are awarded to the top one or several students each year, effectively on a relative and competitive basis, rather than an absolute, individual basis as in other programmes. Further, in accordance with Irish Medical Council recommendations, Medicine has agreement in principle to work towards the inclusion of Public Health and Primary Care in the final degree award calculation. Until such time as they have revised the calculation of the final degree award accordingly, (60/40), they were seeking to retain their current criteria for the award of a Gold Medal.

In considering these concerns, Subgroup 6 agreed that the additional 2% required by Law students to be considered for a Gold Medal was not insurmountable. It felt that local marking ranges within the 0-100 scale should be reviewed in order to make a 75% more attainable, thereby further promoting excellence and outstanding achievement at degree level.

In relation to Medicine, Subgroup 6 recommended that the status quo apply until such times as the inclusion of Public Health and Primary Care had been implemented, at which point there should be alignment with the new proposals as presented.

A member queried whether it would be possible for other Schools to request derogations to portions of the revised proposal, specifically that all attempts at examination be taken into consideration towards the recommendation of a Gold Medal. It was stressed in response that any derogation for Medicine would be limited in time, i.e., until such times as the final years had been reconfigured.

The Director of Undergraduate Teaching and Learning from the School of Law registered the disappointment of the School with this decision and queried when the recommendations will be implemented. It was confirmed that, if approved, the recommendations will apply to new entrants in Phase 1 programmes in 2018-19 and to new entrants to Phase 2 programmes in 2019-20. The Senior Lecturer/Dean of Undergraduate Studies acknowledged that there will be period during which both sets of criteria will be in place, i.e., for those on old programme architecture and those on new architecture.

USC approved that the following recommendations from Subgroup 6 on Gold Medals go forward to Council:

- Gold Medals should be awarded on the basis of the final, overall degree award mark (which will be calculated on a 30/70 basis over the final two years);
- All attempts at assessment (Semester 1, Semester 2, reassessment and deferrals) may be counted towards the award of a Gold Medal;
- Two models for the award of a Gold Medal are proposed:
 - Proposed Model 1: Overall degree award mark only (with the overall degree mark set at 75% or above). Programmes to determine the mark at which a Gold Medal is recommended.
 - Proposed Model 2: Overall degree award mark (with the overall degree mark set at 75% or above), and a minimum of 70% in each named component of the degree award (e.g., major subject and minor subject, or subject 1 and subject 2 in joint honors programmes).

The status quo will apply to Medicine until their final years have been reconfigured, at which point they should align their award of Gold Medals with the new proposal.

b) Progression and Awards - Nomenclature of awards in new programme architecture

A memorandum from the Chair of Sub-group 6, dated 15 March 2018, had been circulated.

The Chair of Sub-group 6 noted that following discussion of the nomenclature of awards at the USC meetings of 12 December 2017 and 23 January 2018, USC is asked to approve the recommendations for the award of degrees within the new programme architecture as presented in order to bring these recommendations forward to the next meeting of Council.

During the discussion at the January USC meeting around the use of 'with' and 'and', whereby 'with' referred to a major with minor degree and 'and' referred to a joint honors degree, it had been suggested that the terms 'major' and 'minor' be included, as appropriate, on the degree parchment to signify the level of specialisation in each of the two subjects.

Subgroup 6 had reviewed examples of degree parchments and transcripts from other Irish and international universities and ascertained that there was a great variety of practice in the examples reviewed. In some instances mention of the major award only was included on the parchment; in others the course name and minor award were included; some examples made no reference on the parchment to either major or minor subjects. In the majority of cases these details were included on the student transcript.

Subgroup 6 was proposing that no changes should be made to the degree parchment for major and minor and joint honors awards within the new programme architecture – in these cases the award will say "Subject 1 and Subject 2". It was agreed, however, that the student transcript should clearly state the distinction between the levels of specialisation for each subject, i.e., subject (major) with subject (minor) and subject and subject (joint honors award).

A member observed that a majority of employers do not look at degree parchments and that the inclusion of the details on the transcript was important as these were used by employers most often.

It was noted that the word 'professional' would not be included on parchments or transcripts for programmes that fall into this category.

USC approved that the recommendations for the nomenclature of awards go forward to Council.

c) Academic Year Structure - Leaving Certificate Re-checks and Junior Fresh Transfers

A memorandum from the Senior Lecturer/Dean of Undergraduate Studies, dated 15 March 2018, had been circulated.

The Senior Lecturer/Dean of Undergraduate Studies noted that with the introduction of the new Academic Year Structure in 2018-19, consideration will need to be given to how we manage (a) the issue of Leaving Certificate rechecks and (b) first year internal transfers.

The outcomes of the Leaving Certificate re-check process are scheduled to be published during the week commencing Monday 8th October, 2018, which is Week 5 of teaching term in the new academic year structure. In the current academic year structure, it falls in week 3 of teaching term.

Under the Memorandum of Understanding with the CAO, all HEIs agree that no internal transfers may take place until after the CAO admissions season has officially ended, i.e., following the publication of the Leaving Certificate recheck outcomes in October. In 2018, the season will close on Wednesday 17th October, i.e., during Week 6 of teaching. Re-check students have a right to a place over transfer students.

It is current practice that we accommodate students who receive sufficient points upon re-check, unless the course is full, in which case they are given the opportunity to defer until the following year. The timeline for re-checks means that students who accept a place would most probably be joining the course in Week 7, which is considerably later than at present. Some of these students may already be in a Trinity course, whilst others may be moving from another HEI. They will have course work to catch up on, will possibly have missed assessment deadlines, and face the prospect of further end-of-semester assessment, all of which will place them under significant pressure. They could be given the option to defer their place to the next academic year, but, if they decide to take up their place, it would also be essential to flag that the lateness of the start in the course cannot be cited as grounds for poor performance in assessment.

If we were to require all recheck students to defer to the following year, e.g., on academic grounds, we would not be able to proceed with first year internal transfers.

If we wish to continue to provide a transfer option to new entrant Junior Fresh students and to continuing and non-Junior Fresh students (who miss the 1 August date), seeking to transfer into the Junior Fresh year of a different course we need to consider how this can be managed within the new academic year structure. Currently, there are two transfer windows: one in week 3 and one in week 8 (this would be week 10 in the new academic year structure). A possible approach is to have one transfer window only requiring students to submit applications by the end of Week 4. This would allow the review of transfer applications in parallel with the processing of the rechecks. Discussions with Schools/Departments on availability of places would take place towards the end of Week 5 or the start of week 6, with offers being made in week 6 once the admissions cycle has closed

As with the re-check students, if allowed to transfer, students would effectively be joining the new course in Week 7, more than half way through the first semester. These students would also have to be informed clearly that a transfer cannot be cited as grounds for poor performance in assessment.

The alternative option is not to allow any JF transfers. Whilst the new common architecture will provide more flexibility for some students who may not be entirely happy with their course choice, by enabling them to take up another subject as a minor, it will not address the issue of a student who wishes to pursue a completely different programme of study. Although the number of students affected by this is small, not permitting transfers could also impact on retention figures.

The Senior Lecturer/Dean of Undergraduate Studies advised that this item would need to go forward to the next meeting of Council in order to meet Calendar deadlines.

A member noted that allowing re-checks and transfers so late in the term may impact on assessment, particularly in modules that rely heavily upon continuous assessment. It was noted that programmes accepting transfer students or recheck students may need to establish contingency plans for assessment in Semester 1 of the JF year.

The Education Officer from the Students Union felt that having one deadline would decrease confusion amongst students regarding the deadlines.

USC recommended that the Calendar Entry be amended to align with the new academic year structure and to provide one transfer window during Michaelmas term for JF new entrants and for continuing and non-JF students seeking to transfer into the JF year of another course. Transfer applications will have to be submitted by the end of week 4 of Michaelmas teaching term.

USC/17-18/063 Update on compliance with the TEP architecture

The Senior Lecturer/Dean of Undergraduate Studies invited the Academic Secretary to speak to this item.

The Academic Secretary circulated a draft hard copy of the TEP Architectural Compliance Report form for Phase 2 Programmes, noting that basic information must be gathered from courses to ensure that any new courses are identified for inclusion in CAO information for 2019-20. The information is also necessary in order to ensure that programme architecture and exit award pathway details are included in the Prospectus and any other promotional materials, which will be made available to prospective students from September 2018. Council will need to approve the information for 2019/20 ahead of both of these deadlines.

A member queried if programmes are required to offer all exit award pathways. It was noted that the exercise is primarily to see how programmes are fitting into the new programme architecture and where further action is necessary, staff from Trinity Teaching and Learning will be in contact with the programme.

Another member noted that there was confusion around the Multidisciplinary programme architecture, some staff had thought that where a Multidisciplinary award was not offered a course could not avail of the Multidisciplinary entry route. It was confirmed that this was the case.

A member commented that there was not enough space in the form for programmes to provide additional details. It was confirmed that an additional section for comments would be added to the draft document.

It was noted that this process should facilitate conversation around learning outcomes and the need to update learning outcomes in the context of the awards that will be offered. It is likely that there will be a need for programme, subject and minor-level programme learning outcomes to be identified.

A member commented that some courses, such as BESS may find it difficult to establish programme-level outcomes.

In response to a member's query on whether programmes must specify a specific set of modules for a minor award, it was confirmed that it is up to the programme to determine the constellation of modules that would lead to a minor award, ensuring also that the modules being provided must be academically coherent and at levels appropriate to the award.

A member queried how a student may take up a third subject in their course and it was noted that a student may decide to take a number of modules in another subject to the value of 20 ECTS in the SF year and then choose to take further modules in that subject in the Sophister cycle in pursuit of a minor.

A member queried how students may gain access to a new subject outside of the Approved Modules and Trinity Electives. It was noted that a group was being set up to look at this issue, including the question of quotas and that this will be a matter for future discussion.

Queries arose in regards to balancing the credit load across subjects across semesters, where some subjects may teach 20 ECTS in Semester 1 and 10 ECTS in Semester 2 and whether this would be allowed. It was noted that this would have to be examined further in the context of timetabling constraints.

The draft TEP Architectural Compliance Report form will be amended based on the discussion and after meetings with representatives from several Schools. Once the document is finalised, it will be circulated to members for completion with a view to approving submissions at the next USC.

USC/17-18/064 Any other business

USC/17-18/065 Minutes

USC noted the following minutes

1. Minutes of the Royal Irish Academy of Music, Associated College Degrees Committee (RIAM ACDC), Wednesday, 1 November 2017

USC/17-18/066 Items for noting

USC approved the following item:

1. Proposal for a module in Business Studies for the TAP Foundation Course, together with memorandum from the Foundation Courses to Higher Education Co-ordinator, dated 15 March 2018.