

TEACHING FELLOWSHIPS 2013 – 2014



**NUI MAYNOOTH
CENTRE FOR TEACHING
AND LEARNING**

FOREWORD

Professor Philip Nolan
President



I am very pleased to announce
the NUI Maynooth Teaching and
Learning Fellowships 2013 – 2014.

2-3

These awards demonstrate our institutional commitment to innovation and development, and to identifying, developing and mainstreaming good practice in teaching.

We know as members of university staff that student engagement and student success require constant attention on our part to how we teach and how we foster student learning. We know also that we face real challenges with increasing class sizes, constrained resources and increasing expectations on the part of students and society. The Fellows see beyond those challenges and constraints and each of them is working on new, clever and creative ways to enhance learning. This important work will gain particular focus in the coming years as the Curriculum Commission reports, and we work to implement its recommendations. The Commission has drawn extensively on the work of the Centre for Teaching

and Learning and the previous Teaching and Learning Fellows, and we will continue to use this expertise as we engage in the most significant curricular development in the history of the university.

I look forward to seeing the outcome of these projects over the course of the Fellowship programme, to hearing about successes and lessons learned, and to understanding how the approaches used might be more widely implemented, to the benefit of all our students. I would like to congratulate all staff involved, and thank them for their particular commitment to teaching in the university. It is highly commendable that such busy people give of their time and energy over and above the norm to work on enhancing teaching in a formal and structured way. I ask the entire university community to support them in their important work.

**Philip Nolan
President**



As part of NUI Maynooth's on-going 4-5
commitment to enhancing the
student experience and the learning
environment, this year seven Teaching
and Learning Fellowship grants were
awarded across the University.

The Centre for Teaching and Learning awarded six Fellowships and the Access Office has awarded one Fellowship.

The NUI Maynooth Teaching and Learning Fellowships are designed to address the strategically important themes of student engagement and/or the first year experience. The Fellowship scheme, now in its third year, highlights the University's continuing commitment to excellence in teaching at both undergraduate and postgraduate levels. The Fellowships are designed to recognise and acknowledge individuals and groups who make an outstanding contribution to the student learning experience, to promote cross disciplinary dialogue and to further support and stimulate innovative activity in Teaching and Learning across the University.

The Fellows come from a range of disciplines which include, Applied Social Studies, Business, Chemistry, Education and Early Irish.

The Fellowships are for a period of one year (2013-2014) and the Fellows will be supported through collaboration with staff from the Centre for Teaching and Learning (CTL). Each Fellow will present a report on their project, and present their work at CTL's Showcase Event in May 2014.

I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate the Fellows and wish them every success in the year ahead.

Dr Úna Crowley
Director of the Centre for Teaching and Learning



NUI Maynooth is one of the leading Irish universities in terms of the diversity of its student body.

We have established an outstanding reputation as an institution which welcomes students of any age, from a variety of social backgrounds and with a range of disabilities and special requirements. One of our key achievements has been in supporting students from diverse backgrounds to succeed in higher education. It is particularly impressive that students who access the University through the HEAR scheme (which provides additional points for students from disadvantaged backgrounds) have a higher completion rate than other students.

A large part of our success in supporting students from diverse backgrounds to succeed in higher education is attributable to the development of integrated and innovative approaches to teaching and learning that support inclusion. The NUI Maynooth Teaching Fellowships acknowledge the importance of the student learning experience and by stimulating exciting innovation in this area are also contributing to student retention, academic achievement and progression.

Crucially the Fellowships also aim to embed such developments in the mainstream fabric of the University thereby contributing to the development of NUI Maynooth as an inclusive campus which will enrich the learning experience for all students.

The Access Office congratulates the successful Teaching Fellowship applicants. We look forward to further exciting developments that support our diverse student body and enhance the teaching and learning experience for staff and students at NUI Maynooth.

Ms Rose Ryan
Acting Director of Access
Maynooth Access Programme

Department of Management, School of Business

Investigating Case Based Multiple Choice Questions for Assessing Large Group Teaching

DR CHRISTINA DONNELLY

From my current teaching experience, I have been challenged by the assessment of my undergraduate classes. I do appreciate that the practice of assessments at Third Level is extremely important and rarely disputed. However, assessments do raise problems when class size tends to increase and the format/type of assessment required may need adaptation in order to assess a student's knowledge and level of understanding. Trends are showing that student numbers are increasing, student demographics are wide ranging and resources are being stretched.

According to Gibbs (2010) "assessment makes more difference to the way that students spend their time, focus their effort, and perform, than any other aspect of the course". I have explored various innovations for assessments, with the use of technology and multiple choice questions (MCQs) being highlighted as the main ways of coping with larger group teaching (Gibbs, 2010).

I therefore want to combine the use of innovative technology to assess students using MCQs. Though the use of MCQs has been typically employed in more science related programmes to date, some are being introduced to Social Science programmes as of late.

The advantages of good MCQs include low grading costs, perceived objectivity, and availability of comparative statistical analysis. The contested disadvantage to MCQs according to Scouler and Posser (1998) is the belief that MCQs "commonly mis-orient students to adopt a surface approach involving memorising". However, debate within extant literature on alternative assessments, suggests that free response systems (essays) may not in fact measure higher levels of understanding over that of MCQs (Buckles & Siegfried, 2006). Well structured and highly developed MCQs, although they require more time in set up, can be aligned with the first four levels of Bloom's taxonomy (1964), and may prove just as robust in evaluating students' in-depth learning as free response systems.

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One way to eradicate the idea of the Souler and Posser (1998) argument on surface learning and memorising is through MCQs based on case studies. A case study is a representation of a real life experience and is utilised in the teaching of Business Subjects as it connects students with the real life experiences of firms and sharpens their thinking (Breslin & Buchanan, 2008). Essentially "case based learning is embedded in constructivist theory as students make meaningful connections between prior knowledge and the case materials" (Martin et al., 2008).

The focus of this fellowship project will be on the use of an alternative assessment method in the form of case based MCQs, to assess higher level learning in large groups using Optical Mark Reader (OMR) technology. This is a new way of capturing student understanding by using a quantitative method to assess qualitative business content.

I propose to roll out the use of multiple choice question assessment method as the end of term examination in an Arts module titled MN103 Introduction to Marketing and Sales (with class size average ranging between 480-509). This will be the only mode of assessment within this module starting Semester One 2013/14. In addition, MCQs and case studies will be used during the semester to support and test current understanding of material being covered.



Dr. Christina Donnelly (LLB, MSc., PhD) is Programme Director for Marketing in the School of Business, and currently lectures on Introduction to Marketing and Sales, Consumer Behaviour, Brand Management and International Marketing. Although Christina's core research interests are small to medium-sized enterprises marketing, data analytics (dunnhumby / Tesco Loyalty Card Data) and consumer profiling, Christina has an increasing interest in the area of large class teaching and case based assessment as a result of her current study on the Postgraduate Diploma in Third Level Learning and Teaching.

Department of Early Irish Medieval Irish Literature and Landscapes

DR ELIZABETH BOYLE

Medieval Irish literature is suffused with complex ideas about the relationships between people and places. A genre of texts known as *dindsenchas*, often incorporated into other literary genres, sought to explain how certain places came to be given their names, and those names were often linked retrospectively to heroic figures and events from Ireland's prehistoric past. The Medieval Irish Literature and Landscapes project is a live teaching experience which will enable students to enhance their appreciation of medieval Irish texts and the societies in which they were written. Participants will be taken to a series of significant local sites in order to read in the landscape selections of medieval Irish texts which feature descriptions of, or origin-tales for, those places. Thus, participants will be able to relate their knowledge of medieval Irish literature to geography and landscape history. Witnessing medieval Irish literature as a textual embodiment of the local landscape will add resonance to their everyday interactions with the places in which they live, and will motivate students to explore other aspects of Ireland's rich literary culture.

Participants will visit three important sites which are the subject of many medieval Irish texts:

- 1. Tara, where students will read selections from the many texts which refer to that place as the seat of Irish high-kingship.**
- 2. Howth, where they will read passages from 'The Destruction of Da Derga's Hostel' and 'The Siege of Howth'.**
- 3. Glendalough, where they will read passages from the 'Life of St Kevin'.**

This project will facilitate critical thinking on the part of the students into the close interactions between people and place in the Middle Ages. Aspects of the medieval Irish landscape have changed rapidly in recent centuries, and our cultural perceptions of the landscape have also changed radically – for example, what was once perceived as wild and inhospitable is now considered to be aesthetically pleasing.

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10-11

Visiting the sites described in medieval Irish literature will permit students to see the landscape through the eyes of the authors and to engage with medieval texts on their own terms. As a result of this interaction with the historical landscape, the students will produce creative responses to the places and texts.



This project has the potential for expansion in a number of areas. In particular, I propose collaboration with targeted local schools to engage pupils in ideas about the interconnectedness of literature and the landscape in early medieval Ireland. This access project would encourage school pupils to undertake creative writing projects for which they invent twenty-first-century *dindsenchas* for the places in which they live. In short, pupils would be invited to think as imaginatively as medieval Irish authors about how and why a place might have been given its name. This creative writing project would educate students about early Irish literary traditions while simultaneously allowing them to engage with ideas about the ongoing interaction between literature and landscapes.

Dr Elizabeth Boyle joined NUI Maynooth in 2013 as Lecturer in Early Irish. Previously, she was a Leverhulme Early Career Fellow in Anglo-Saxon, Norse and Celtic, at the University of Cambridge (2009-12), and a Marie Curie Fellow in Early Irish at UCC (2012-13). She has published widely on early medieval Irish intellectual and religious culture, and has been involved in numerous initiatives to engage school pupils, and the wider public, in thinking about medieval history and culture.

Chemistry Department

Peer Teaching and Learning Evaluation of Threshold Techniques in Organic Chemistry

DR. FRANCES HEANEY
DR. TRINIDAD VELASCO-TORRIJOS
MS. RIA COLLERY-WALSH

This proposal aims to add value to the student experience in the organic chemistry laboratory. Chemistry students with a fundamental understanding of core techniques are highly valued in the workplace. The curriculum in NUIM offers laboratory sessions in modern facilities. However, students can be trapped into a superficial understanding of the experiment with a “following the recipe” attitude rather than critically thinking about the techniques involved so submerging a valuable learning opportunity. This proposal presents a student centred environment facilitating a deeper understanding of experimental techniques.

The approach builds on the virtues of peer teaching in the University sector especially the experience gained within the department during the implementation of the 2012-2013 CTL Fellowship “Peer-Teaching to Enhance the Learning Experience in the Chemistry Laboratory”.

Students engaged enthusiastically with this pilot project, prior to which they did not partake in peer teaching or make a formal presentation. An exit survey established that students gained much on the level of personal development. They worked well together and improved their understanding of the topic by shouldering the responsibility of teaching to others. The survey indicated students would value more structured guidance for the delivery of their teaching, and requested grading of their efforts in peer teaching.

Reflecting upon the student input, and in line with the aspirations of the CTL to provide opportunities for student centred independent learning, we present our application on Peer Teaching and Learning Evaluation of Threshold Techniques in Organic Chemistry.

Implementation is planned as follows. Practical sessions for – one hundred 3rd year chemistry students to take place on Wednesday – Friday afternoons. The students will be assigned to teams of four members.

Chemistry Department

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12-13

Each week one team will peer deliver a presentation on the specified technical skill(s). In advance of the practical class each group will be requested

- **to attend a formal timetabled slot to receive guidance in advance of the presentation**
- **to submit an electronic version of their presentation to the academic in charge for feedback prior to the delivery to their peers**
- **to provide, for Moodle upload (by the academic), reference material their peers may access, at levels both to assist in understanding the technique or to stimulate further reading – texts, primary literature or digital resources**
- **to articulate for their peers the learning outcome of their topic**
- **to prepare a bank of MCQs, and the corresponding answers, to test the knowledge and examine the understanding by their peers of the material presented**

At the end of the modules, students will be examined by a random set of MCQs, peer written, and supplemented by the supervising academic. To facilitate assessment students will take the exam with the use of “clickers”. The grades from this exam will contribute to the continuous assessment of the module.

In short, the steps envisioned are: structured guidance – to tease out the learning outcome and to assist with difficulties in subject matter; peer teaching – to offer opportunity for self-directed learning and sharing of information; assessment of learning outcomes to offer the students an insight into “how to test what you thought you understood”.



Dr Frances Heaney is a graduate from Queen’s University Belfast. In 1990 she attained a PhD in Chemistry under the supervision of Professor Ron Grigg. After two years as a post-doctoral researcher in Trinity College, Dublin, she was appointed to the staff at the National University of Ireland Galway. She was appointed to the National University of Ireland Maynooth in 1999 and is currently senior lecturer in the Chemistry Department.



Ria Walsh graduated from UCD with a BSc in Occupational Safety and Health Management in 2003. She completed a Postgraduate Diploma in Higher Education in 2009. Ria is currently Chief Technical Officer in the Chemistry Department NUI Maynooth.



Dr Trinidad Velasco-Torrijos graduated with a BSc in Organic Chemistry from Universidad Autonoma de Madrid (Spain) in 1998. She completed her Ph.D in the University of Bristol (UK) in 2002. She carried out postdoctoral work at Ghent University (Belgium) and University College Dublin, as a Marie Curie Fellow from 2004-2006. Trinidad was appointed as a Lecturer in Pharmaceutical Chemistry at NUI Maynooth in 2007. She is coordinator of the BSc. in Pharmaceutical and Biomedical Chemistry.

Trinidad's research interests focus in the field of Organic and Carbohydrate chemistry. In Teaching and Learning, Trinidad's interests include peer teaching and Context and Problem Based Learning.



Department of Applied Social Studies

'Researching Practice in Practice' Community Work and Youth Work Collaborative Research Project

DR. HILARY TIERNEY & CIARA BRADLEY

Both youth work and community work are suffering serious cutbacks as a result of decreased Government funding. Projects are closing and provision being restricted across the country while demands for accountability and evidence of outcomes are increasing. Now more than ever, graduates need to be able to demonstrate their capacity to make a significant contribution to the organisations within which they work from the beginning.

The proposed project works with the second year students of the MA in Community Work and Youth Work as part of their already established modules on Research Methods for Community Work and Youth Work Practice, Fieldwork Placement and the Final Year Research Project. The project proposes to bring these three modules together in a thematic way focussed around the work that the student does on fieldwork placement and the research needs of the project/the discipline. The project intends to work to provide a theoretical and practical introduction to research within the professions of community work and youth work, develop

students' research skills in the context of professional formation and contribute to the work of community & youth work organisations through the production of quality small scale research with practitioners and organisations.

The proposed project focuses on building on current relationships with community based youth work and community work organisations and building new relationships with such organisations around the country. In addition to current fieldwork practice placements, students will undertake their final year research project on an agreed topic that is also of relevance to the organisation and their work and/or the development of the discipline. The output of the project will be the delivery of the research project and associated reports/other materials on the agreed theme between the Department, the organisation and the student. The students will spend some 20 weeks of second year in the field.

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16-17

In summary, the 'Researching Practice in Practice' addresses the themes of:

- 1. Exploration of alternative assessment methods**
- 2. Students as co-enquirers and producers of knowledge**
- 3. Motivating students**
- 4. Learning outside of the classroom (including blended learning)**
- 5. Supporting students in transition**
- 6. Creating awareness of transferable skills and their application**

It also meets the University's strategic goal of creating sustained partnerships with the community we serve as well as the Department's aim of producing graduates who are professionally competent in the field of community work and youth work.



DR. HILARY TIERNEY

My professional passion is community work and youth work's contribution to creating a more just and sustainable world. I co-ordinate the DSocSc and the final year of the BACYW programmes. My practice and research interests relate to youth work and community work practice with a particular focus on the theory practice dynamic.

My doctoral thesis examined professional fieldwork and supervision utilising a unique narrative inquiry with an action twist methodology to identify supervisors metaphors in practice. I see this fellowship as an opportunity to collaborate with Ciara, colleagues, students and the wider sector to develop research capacity underpinned by the values of the practice.



CIARA BRADLEY

My current research interests lie in developing critical community work and youth work practice using creative and innovative methods including narrative approaches which I honed during my doctoral research. I coordinate the Masters in Community and Youth Work programmes. Collaborative research practice, underpinned by the principles of community work and youth work, is both the subject and the method of our investigation as we engage collaboratively with both students and community organisations to creatively address issues of inequality and injustice. We believe that this project will contribute to the emerging discipline of research in community work and youth work.

Chemistry Department

Development of Lab based Practical Teaching for Chemistry Science Education Students

DR KEN MADDOCK

This project aims to promote practical based teaching skills amongst Science Education students. The Chemistry Department has run revision classes for second level students on the practical component of the chemistry Leaving Certificate for the past 12 years, with approximately 600 students attending per annum. In 2011, through interaction with the Science Education students, I recognised a lack of engagement in their course that targeted the practical component of the Leaving Certificate. They had the theoretical knowledge but not the actual practical knowledge of how to prepare and demonstrate Leaving Certificate experiments.

As such, I invited them to demonstrate at our revision practical classes during the January 2011 break. The Science Education student feedback from this session was very positive. The Science Education students found the session invaluable as it gave them confidence in lab teaching to second level students, something that they have minimal chance to do in their teaching training schools due to timetabling. In the academic year 2012/13 I developed this idea further.

That year I assessed their teaching and preparation for the revision practical sessions as a full module of fourth year Science Education chemistry. As part of the assessment I invited the students to give feedback on what they found useful but also got them to create resources that would help with the teaching of the programme. The resources they developed were of a very high standard and this showed me that the students also had a very good understanding of what helps second level students learn.

When the Chemistry Department's external examiners reviewed this module, both by looking at the materials and projects and also by interviewing the Science Education students, they were full of praise for the module.

What I propose to do as my fellowship project is to further develop this module. Our January Revision Programme only teaches 12 of the 22 compulsory Leaving Certificate chemistry practicals and none of the 10 junior cert chemistry practicals so I have identified a major deficit in practical knowledge amongst our Science Education students.

I propose to use the fellowship to teach these outstanding practicals to the Science Education students. The Science Education students will be heavily involved in developing and designing the practicals covering all aspects of Risk Assessment, purchasing of chemicals and equipment and coordinating practical classes; these transferable skills will further help them in their future careers. As our January labs are full to capacity, I propose to ask the fourth year students to teach these practical classes to the second year Science Education students, through peer teaching, something that will be beneficial to all parties. Second years will be commencing their school placement teaching in the second semester, which involves teaching Junior Certificate science. Of the 2013 graduating class many have already gained employment and of those I talked to, all have commented that the practical teaching module really stood to them in the interviews as no other teacher training college offers such extensive lab based teaching experience.



Dr. Ken Maddock is Chief Technician in the Chemistry Department; he is heavily involved in outreach from the Department to the wider community. He has previously taught the chemistry component of the Certificate in Science to access students and presently lectures "Trends in the Periodic Table" to first year Chemistry Students. Ken is the Departmental organiser for the January revision classes in Chemistry where he is going to implement his fellowship ideas.

Education Department

Introducing a model for supporting student-teachers with a disability on teaching placements and promoting inclusive practice: the 'Disability Awareness and Education' phase

MAEVE DALY & DR CATRÍONA O TOOLE

This project emerges from concerns among staff that students with disabilities are often well-supported within the academic environment but that more can be done to support students' development as teachers in the professional practice environment. A key goal of professional teaching-practice placements is to enable students to acquire the skills, knowledge and behaviour to become 'fit to practice' as competent teachers. Through this project, researchers propose to begin the process of adopting a model for supporting student-teachers with disabilities on their professional placements. Researchers plan to use a model of support developed at UCD School of Nursing, Midwifery and Health Systems Ireland (in collaboration with UCD Access and Lifelong Learning) as a blueprint for this work. It is proposed that the model will be adapted to the circumstances of NUIM student-teachers on professional placement

in education. This project aims to unearth differing needs of students with disabilities in the school context versus the clinical context of nursing practice through a consultative process over the course of this project and then to progress towards meeting these needs.

The model for nurses recommends Disability Awareness Raising and Education as a key supportive component for students on professional placements. The current project proposes to begin a process of adopting a model of support with the implementation of Disability Awareness Raising and Education activities, thereby specifically addressing the issues of diversity and inclusiveness within the Education Department. This project specifically aims to identify useful resources, materials and support structures that act as facilitators of learning for students with disabilities in the school context, thereby enhancing learning experiences of students on professional placements.

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20-21

This project involves leading staff and students through a structured problem-solving process with a four-phase framework in the development of disability awareness seminars appropriate to the needs of NUIM student-teachers and staff.

This framework includes:

1. Problem identification:

focusing on describing and operationally defining problems to be addressed by the intervention. Systematic review of literature on supporting adults with disabilities at third level and in the workplace is undertaken to identify best practice and formulate questions for focus group discussions with participants. Samples of staff and students are recruited and selected. A needs analysis is conducted with key stakeholders (e.g. students, programme coordinators and school placement supervisors).

2. Problem analysis:

focusing on collection and analysis of data. Thematic analysis is used to identify pertinent content for tailoring training seminars to the needs of staff and students. Additional data is collected through semi-structured interviews with stakeholders in other departments and services. Information booklets are compiled based on best practice guidelines from the literature review.

3. Plan implementation:

training is implemented with relevant staff and students through workshop-style seminars. Key information is disseminated arising from collaborative work with other support services surrounding students including disability and health services.

4. Plan evaluation:

involves the selection of outcome measures to evaluate effects of intervention and gain feedback from participants. Future directions for support are identified.

This project is underpinned by the social model of disability, which sees disability as socially constructed by physical and attitudinal barriers and marks an important shift from the medical model of disability, which takes a within-person-pathology view of disability (Oliver, 1996). The consultative nature of this project seeks to identify contextual barriers and facilitators for student-teachers with disabilities in our quest to support all students in achieving key competencies required for practice as competent teachers in our education system.



Maeve Daly is a practicing Educational Psychologist and Lecturer in Education at NUI Maynooth. Maeve currently lectures in areas of Child Development, Educational Psychology and Special Educational Needs & Inclusion in the Education Department and in the Froebel Department of Primary and Early Childhood Education. Maeve supervises and supports second-level teachers and school guidance counsellors in training on professional placements in secondary schools. Previously, Maeve taught mathematics and science at second-level and worked as a Resource teacher and Learning Support coordinator at St. Andrew's College, Dublin.



Dr Catriona O'Toole is a registered psychologist with the Psychological Society of Ireland, and a chartered psychologist with the British Psychological Society. She has been involved both in research and practice with various psychological services in Ireland and previously worked in the field of Early Childhood Education both in Ireland and the Netherlands. Her research and teaching focus on areas of child and adolescent development, learning, special educational needs and inclusion.



Department of Management, School of Business

Sharing Learning & Teaching Expectations, Experiences and Best Practice on MSc Taught Masters Programme in the School of Business

DR MARIAN CROWLEY-HENRY

My Fellowship Project will review the learning and teaching expectations and experiences on a taught postgraduate offering (MSc in HRM/HRD) in the School of Business in NUIM over an academic year from a myriad of perspectives in order to develop best practice materials, templates, suggestions and guidelines for programme directors, teachers and students. Specifically, the study aims to explore:

1. The learning experience as relayed by a sample of postgraduate students through focus groups at three time periods (facilitated by CTL NUIM) during the academic year (pre-orientation; end semester 1; end semester 2), taking into consideration their pre-course expectations and experiences as well as their during course experiences with the content and teaching and learning strategies employed/required.

2. My own reflections and critical self analysis as teacher and programme manager with regards to the different teaching strategies employed, perceived student engagement and feedback received. This is to be explored through a self reflective journal and critical self analysis of video recording of a sample class.

3. Input from other teachers/lecturers on the programme with regards to their teaching strategies, perceived student engagement and feedback received, as relayed during programme board meetings at three time points during the academic year (orientation, end semester 1, end semester 2).

4. Third party observations from peers/observers with regards to teaching strategies employed during classes from sitting in on classes and reviewing video recording of class.

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24-25

5. Objective third party analysis of teaching strategies, student expectations and content to align with best practice in the industry and/or required in order to achieve professional accreditation (via CIPD – Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development)

The research objective is to get an overview of the learning and teaching expectations and experiences on a MSc programme from different perspectives over an academic year in order to develop and share best practice. The materials developed (e.g. focus group questions, programme board meeting check lists, developed templates for lecturer preparation materials (e.g. class plans); staff and student feedback templates; observation templates) during the study will be made available to be shared across the university, in other departments that wish to undertake programme reviews of teaching and learning experiences from a multi stakeholder perspective (student, teacher, programme manager, observer, independent third party – CIPD in this instance). It is envisaged that the findings would provide recommendations for teaching and learning on taught MSc programmes which would be summarised in a check list for incoming students and for teachers in order to avail of best practice and improve programme delivery and the teaching and learning experience.

This research would reflect the learning challenges faced by participants and highlight facilitators which aided participants in their transition to postgraduate learning in following the same cohort of students over the duration of their taught MSc. Likewise, it would include the teaching challenges and facilitators faced by the teachers over the course of their taught modules with that class. This would have a bearing on student attraction and retention at postgraduate level, in addressing specifically the learning and teaching concerns and challenges the diversity of participants may have, and how these could be better managed from the outset and throughout the programme delivery. Many postgraduate offerings are short term in nature. In the School of Business, all MSc programmes are one year in total, with the possibility of completing the programme over 2 years if part time. During this very limited time, students are faced with new subject content, with a new environment (especially if coming external to NUIM undergraduate programmes), and new peers. This research, though the collection of data from students on their learning experience during the programme, would explore the technical (actual teaching content), contextual (NUIM, classrooms) and social aspects (through induction, group work, peer learning) that postgraduate students face and which impact on their respective learning experiences.



Dr Marian Crowley-Henry (BBS, MSc, PhD, PGDIP HE, Academic Assoc CIPD) is the programme director of the MSc HRM/HRD in the Department of Management, School of Business. Since 2010, she has been lecturing in Human Resource Management, Organisation Theory and Design, and International Management in NUIM. Her research interests are in the fields of international HRM, migration, gender, careers and identity. Marian completed the PGDIP Higher Education in NUIM in 2011.

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