TRINITY COLLEGE DUBLIN
COLÁISTE NA TRÍONÓIDE, BAILE ÁTHA CLIATH
THE UNIVERSITY OF DUBLIN

TRINITY FEASIBILITY STUDY IN ADMISSIONS
APPLICATION GUIDE 2014

Table of Contents

Foreword

'The adoption of broader criteria for college admission – using a process called holistic admissions – will send a clear message to the young people of Ireland that the gates of Trinity and all universities are open wider than ever before to those who bring excellence in all its forms'.

(Dr. William R. Fitzsimmons, Dean of Admissions and Financial Aid at Harvard, speaking at the launch of the feasibility study, 14 January 2013).

The 'points system' has been in operation for almost forty years, and during that time there have been persistent criticisms of it. While its transparency is its greatest strength, it is not always fair, and it puts an enormous amount of pressure on applicants because everything depends on a single set of examinations. Leading international experts (and universities) suggest that a holistic approach is better, in other words, looking at an applicant in a broader context.

This feasibility study is Trinity's attempt to assist in the development of national policy by seeing if there is a fairer and a better mechanism for admitting students to third-level. It is an attempt to see whether, on a small scale and in a strictly controlled way, it might be possible to admit students using a range of assessments (including the Leaving Certificate), with the results published and shared throughout the sector.

It recognises the importance of having a Leaving Certificate examination that is fit-for-purpose and supports the reforms that are currently underway at second-level to ensure a more positive educational experience. It also recognises and values the great work and commitment of the teachers at primary and post-primary level throughout Ireland. Teachers, parents and students face enormous pressure because of the points system, but the reality is that they are not responsible for it. Responsibility lies with the higher education institutions which designed (and insist upon) the system used to admit students, and the feasibility study is one attempt by the institutions to take responsibility for this and see if there is a better and fairer way. That is why it is unfair to refer to 'CAO points' – the CAO operates superbly the system it is asked to operate, but it did not create it.

The new admissions route tested here seeks to complement the role of the Leaving Certificate and the teaching community, by working with the Central Applications Office (CAO) to examine whether some approaches which have succeeded internationally might work in Ireland.

The study is being conducted on behalf of the third-level sector, and the results will be shared and published. We encourage parents, teachers, and especially students, to engage with this study and help inform national policy in the area.

Dr. Patrick Geoghegan
Dean of Undergraduate Studies, Trinity College Dublin

The New Admissions Route

'The best approach [in a fair admissions system] is not to use a single indicator or score. It is better to use a comprehensive set of predictors in the hope that the weaknesses of one might be compensated by the strengths of another'.

(Professor Steven Schwartz, author of the UK government's report on 'Fair Admissions to Higher Education', 18 May 2012)

Key points

■ There are a total of 25 places available through this new route: 10 in History (TR003), 10 in Law (TR004) and 5 in Ancient and Medieval History and Culture (TR028).

■ Trinity is looking to reward **potential** alongside academic ability, a key factor which is not always recognised in the current system.

■ All personal information will be removed from applications before they are considered by the Trinity Review Panel.

■ Applicants can **opt-out** of the feasibility study if they wish.

■ A key objective is to **encourage students** to apply for courses they might never have considered before because they thought the points were too high.

■ There are **no** interviews.

■ Applicants are advised not to seek assistance with completing the Trinity Application Form from Guidance Counsellors, parents or other family members to give a clearer sense of each individual. Please note that Trinity College has advised Guidance Counsellors not to draft or edit applications.

The majority of places on the three courses involved will be filled in the traditional way using Leaving Certificate points alone. Applicants to the three courses involved in the study will have the option of using the new admissions route, or opting out of the study, in which case they will remain eligible for the majority of the places allocated in the traditional way.

The three scales which will be used to assess applicants in the study are as follows:

(a) Leaving Certificate results.

(b) Relative Performance Rank (RPR) – the performance of the applicant relative to other applicants from their school. This scale looks at the performance of the applicant in the Leaving Certificate compared to every other Leaving Certificate candidate in their school in that year.

(c) Personal and Contextual Data – provided via supplementary materials submitted by the applicant.

Names of applicants, any identifying information, and the names of schools attended, will be made completely anonymous before being evaluated by the review panels.

What Trinity is looking for

Trinity is looking for students with academic ability and potential from all over the country – students whose real, overall ability is not always captured in a single points total. The key advice to applicants is to be honest in their application, and write it themselves. Trinity is not evaluating grammar, vocabulary, or writing style. It is looking for an honest piece of self-reflection by the applicant, what they would like to study, and why. If an applicant gets a relative, teacher, or friend, to write the application for them it breaches the terms of the application. In addition, it would not be in the

best interests of the applicant as it would not be what the review panels are looking for and so would prove counter-productive.

How the applications will be evaluated

All applications will be evaluated at a number of stages, including by a formal review panel which will include external and independent observers. All three scales will be evaluated equally in the process, with applicants ranked in order. The process will also be reviewed at each stage to ensure that it has been anonymous and free from any external interference.

Who can apply

The Trinity Feasibility Study in Admissions is for Irish Leaving Certificate applicants under the age of 23 as of 1st January 2014.

Courses within the Study

The courses involved in the study are: History (TR003) – 10 places; Law (TR004) – 10 places; Ancient and Medieval History and Culture (TR028 – 5 places).

Applying to the Study

Applications to the Study comprise (a) a CAO application and (b) a completed Trinity Feasibility Study Application Form. The Trinity Application Form can be changed at any time up to 17:15 on 1st March 2014. Applicants should avoid use of characters such as &, * or similar in the online application as they will not be visible for assessment. Neither should any reference be made to personal, identifying information in Sections 1, 2 or 3, such as school name or place of residence.

Trinity Feasibility Study timeline

From November 2013	Read the Trinity Feasibility Study Application Guide. Make a CAO application at **www.cao.ie** Fill in the online Trinity Application Form at **www.cao.ie**
1st February 2014	Apply to CAO by 17:15, selecting one or more of the courses involved.
1st March 2014	Complete all elements of the Trinity Application Form.
April-June 2014	Trinity Feasibility Study Application Screening.
August 2014	Leaving Certificate exam results. CAO offers. Successful Trinity Feasibility Study Applicants notified by CAO. Accept CAO offer.

Trinity Feasibility Study Application Guide

When you have read this application guide, you are ready to complete your online Trinity Feasibility Study application at **www.cao.ie**.

1. Set up your CAO account

Before proceeding with a Trinity Feasibility Study application, set up your CAO account and then log into the account to select your course choices. Click the 'Add Level 8 Course Choice' button on the My Application page.

Course Choices (stored on the CAO computer)

N.B. An application should not be made for any course without first consulting the information literature of the institution offering that course.

Level 8 Course Choices:

None selected.

Add Level 8 Course Choices »

2. Enter your course choices

Enter your course choices in order of preference 1-10.

Level 8 Course Choices | Courses

No courses selected.
Please enter all your course choices below, in order of preference.

You may type the course codes directly into the boxes below or click on the `Courses` button to select course codes.

N.B. Enter all courses for which you wish to apply.

N.B. Applicants applying for course(s) with options should enter the course(s) below and enter their options later.

TR003
1.

TR028
2.

Click 'Continue with Course Choices' button once your course choices are entered.

9.

10.

Reset

If you are a **Deferred Applicant** from last year, tick the following box: ☐

You will breach the conditions of your deferred place if you enter more than the single deferred course code on your application.

In that event, you will forfeit the guaranteed place and enter the 2013 competition for places in the normal way.

Cancel   Continue with Course Choices »

3. Trinity Feasibility Study in Admissions Application Form

If you select any of the courses that are part of the Trinity Feasibility Study in Admissions (History/TR003, Law/TR004 or Ancient and Medieval History and Culture/TR028) you will immediately be automatically brought to a page to decide if you wish to take part in the Study.

Trinity Feasibility Study

What is The Trinity Feasibility Study in Admissions?
The Trinity Feasibility Study aims to identify and admit students who are enthusiastic and passionate about learning, motivated and suitable for their chosen courses, and with the academic ability and potential to be inspired by everything that Trinity College Dublin has to offer. It uses a range of materials to make an assessment about the academic ability and potential of each applicant, aiming to match the right person to the right course. It is very important that you complete this application independently of your school Guidance Counsellor, parent or other family member so that the Trinity College Assessment Panel gets a clearer sense of you as an individual. Trinity College has advised Guidance Counsellors not to become directly involved in drafting or editing individual applications. All applications will be made completely anonymous before evaluation.

The majority of places on each course will be filled in the traditional way using CAO points alone. Twenty-five places are set aside for this study and these places will be filled using a combination of Leaving Certificate results, Relative Performance Rank (RPR), and information provided in the Trinity Application Form. The courses involved in the study are: History (TR003) – 10 places; Law (TR004) – 10 places; Ancient and Medieval History and Culture (TR028) – 5 places. Relative Performance Rank refers to your academic ranking within the Leaving Certificate cohort in your school when results are published. Further information on the study and guidelines for applicants are available at:
http://www.tcd.ie/Admissions/undergraduate/

Who can apply?
The Trinity Feasibility Study in Admissions is for Irish Leaving Certificate applicants under the age of 23 as of January 1 2014.

Should I apply?
Applicants to the three courses in the Feasibility Study (TR003, TR004, TR028) in 2014 have the option of taking part in the study, and submitting the Trinity Application Form, in which case they will compete for all of the regular places on the course filled in the traditional way, as well as the places set aside for the study, or opting out of the study, in which case they will compete for all of the places allocated in the traditional way.

When applying for TR003, TR004 or TR028 applicants will be required to opt in or out of the Feasibility Study. Once the course is listed a Yes/No tab will appear and they must indicate 'yes' or 'no' before they can proceed. Once they have submitted their course choices applicants will log back into 'My Application' where they will be able to submit the information required for the Trinity Application Form.

Do you wish to be considered for the Trinity Feasibility Study in Admissions?
○ Yes
○ No

Ticking yes means you have read and accept the Trinity Feasibility Study Terms and Conditions.

An application to the Trinity Feasibility Study in Admissions consists of:
1. Your CAO application and
2. The online form which must be completed by 17:15 on 1 March 2014.

You can make changes to your application at any time up to 17:15 on 1 March 2014. Please note, failure to answer all relevant sections will affect your eligibility for the Trinity Feasibility Study in Admissions.

Cancel   Update Selection »

Trinity Feasibility Study Terms and Conditions
To be considered for the Trinity Feasibility Study you must agree to the following:
• I certify that the information I have supplied in the Feasibility Study application is correct.
• I understand that failure to complete the application form fully and / or accurately may negatively affect the outcome of my Feasibility Study application.
• I understand that no changes or additional information can be included in my Feasibility Study application after 1st March 2014.
• I certify that my personal essay is my own work.
• I understand that checks will be carried out to ensure that I have written my personal essay myself. I understand that if my personal essay appears to have been copied from another source or written or part written by someone other than myself that my application to the Feasibility Study will be negatively affected.
• I understand that any of the information supplied as part of my Feasibility Study application is subject to verification and review. Where I am found to have given false or misleading information, I understand that I will not be considered for the Feasibility Study.
• I understand that some details of my Feasibility Study application will be used for research purposes, but these details will be anonymised and none of my personal information will be identifiable

Close

When the terms and conditions link is clicked, a 'pop up' will appear:

You must answer **"Do you wish to be considered for the Trinity Feasibility Study in Admissions?"**

Once you click the 'Update Selection' button, you will be brought back into the 'My Application' page.

⌂ Home	★ My Application	✍ Apply	⌕ Courses	▯ Handbook	☎ Contact

Thursday, 26 September 2013 12:11   As Gaeilge | Print Page

Downloads

HEI contact details

Applicant Scoring

FETAC Information

Entry to Medicine

Points

HEAR/DARE/SIF

Demo Application

About Change of Mind

Alert Lists

Your Trinity Feasibility Study status has been updated.

You have until the 1st March to complete the Trinity Feasibility Study.

Notes:
1. You indicated that you wish to complete the Trinity Feasibility Study. All information is to be submitted online by 17:15 on 1 March, 2014
2. Please ensure that you post all your supporting documents to CAO.
   Certified copies of results of 2014 examinations (excluding Leaving Cert & FETAC) must be provided to CAO as soon as they become available. All documents must be clearly marked with your name and CAO Number. Please read pages 11-13 of the 2014 CAO Handbook for further instructions.

A section will appear under the Qualifications and Assessment Section on the My Application page.

If you answer 'Yes' to the Feasibility Study, you must scroll back down to the Feasibility section and click on the 'Complete Study' button that will bring you into the Feasibility Study Page. Up until the 1st March 2014, you will have the option to change your mind if you wish to opt in or out of the Feasibility Study by clicking the 'Edit Option' button in the Feasibility Study section.

If you answer 'No' to the Feasibility Study, you will be brought back to the My Application page. You will have until the 1st March 2014 to change your mind and complete the Feasibility Study and you can do so by clicking the Edit Option button.

Trinity Feasibility Study

Applicants to the three courses in the Feasibility Study (TR003, TR004, TR028) in 2014 have the option of taking part in the study, and submitting the Trinity Application Form, in which case they will be eligible for all of the regular places on the course filled in the traditional way, as well as the places set aside for the study, or opting out of the study, in which case they will remain eligible for all of the places allocated in the traditional way.

You have until 17:15 on 1st March 2014 to edit this option and complete the Feasibility Study.

Edit Option »

Trinity Feasibility Study

You indicated that you wish to complete the Trinity Feasibility Study.

All information is to be submitted online before 17:15 on 1st March 2014.

Complete Study »

Edit Option »

The Application Form may 'time out', so please draft your content outside of the form and paste it in when it is completed, to avoid loss of content.

Trinity Application Form

The Trinity Application Form has three purposes:
- To provide information on your interest in specific courses and in Trinity College.
- To demonstrate your ability to express yourself through an essay.
- To provide any additional information that you think will support your application.

If you have questions regarding this form please contact the CAO on (091) 509 800.

Please complete the following form and click on the 'Submit' button when you have finished.

If this form is taking too much time to complete, you may save your details and continue on to complete the form.

If you wish to prepare your personal statement and then copy and paste it into the relevant text boxes on this page then you may do so. You are advised to use a plain text editor such as Notepad.

Section A - Applicant Information

Q1. Academic interests
Please outline the courses you would like to study at Trinity and why?

Characters left: 586 (You may enter up to 1000 characters.)

This is some test text This is some test text This is some test text This is some test text This is some test text This is some test text This is some test text This is some test text This is some test text This is some test text This is some test text This is some test text This is some test text This is some test text This is some test text This is some test text This is some test text

(Please click the save buttons at regular intervals to avoid browser time outs.)

Save

Q2. Why Trinity?
Please explain what in particular about Trinity has influenced your decision to apply?

Characters left: 300 (You may enter up to 300 characters.)

(Please click the save buttons at regular intervals to avoid browser time outs.)

Save

Q3. Why You?
Please explain what you think makes you suitable for this/these course(s)?

Characters left: 300 (You may enter up to 300 characters.)

(Please click the save buttons at regular intervals to avoid browser time outs.)

Save

Section B - Essay

Please write an essay (3,000 characters) on a topic of your choice or on one of the options listed below. This personal essay helps us to become better acquainted with you as a person and student, apart from subjects studied, exam results, and other objective information. It will also demonstrate your ability to express yourself. Please note applicants are strongly advised to write their essay separately in Notepad and then insert it into the form, to avoid loss of content.

1. Using a favourite quotation from an essay or book you have read in the last three years as a starting point, tell us about an event or experience that helped you define one of your values or changed how you approach the world. Please write the quotation at the beginning of the essay.
2. Describe a character in fiction, a historical figure, or a creative work that has had an influence on your decision to study your preferred subject, and explain that influence.
3. Discuss some issue of personal, local, national, or international interest and its importance to you.
4. Evaluate a significant experience, achievement, risk you have taken, or ethical dilemma you have faced, and its impact on you.
5. Topic of your choice.

Characters left: 3000 (You may enter up to 3000 characters.)

(Please click the save buttons at regular intervals to avoid browser time outs.)

Save

You must click the declarations before you can submit.

Section C - Required Declarations:

☑ I certify that all information provided in this admission process is my own work, and I understand that this information will be stored by the university. I understand that I may be subject to a range of possible disciplinary actions, including admission revocation, or expulsion, should the information be false.

☑ I understand that in the Trinity Feasibility Study, Trinity College Dublin will be admitting students using a holistic approach, and accept that any single assessment strand (e.g. Leaving Certificate or Relative Performance Rank or Trinity Application Form) may not prove sufficient for entry.

☑ I give Trinity permission to contact me at the end of the process with the results of this application

☑ I consent to the use of information included in this Trinity Application Form for research purposes by Trinity College Dublin.

Cancel   Submit »

If you have saved but not submitted your Trinity Feasibility Study Application, a message will appear at the top of the My Application page when you log into your application. Once the Feasibility Study Application has been submitted, there will be no more notes or prompts to complete or submit the study. The Feasibility Study section will remain visible on the My Application page until the 1st March 2014.

ONLINE INFORMATION

Courses: www.tcd.ie/courses

Admissions: www.tcd.ie/Admissions/undergraduate

CAO Points:
www.tcd.ie/Admissions/undergraduate/requirements/entrypoints

Accommodation: www.tcd.ie/accommodation/StudentsandStaff/
Students/TrinityHall

Main TCD website: www.tcd.ie

Virtual tour: www.tcd.ie/virtualtour

Student life: www.tcdlife.ie

Sports clubs: www.ducac.tcdlife.ie

Sports facilities: www.tcd.ie/sport

Student societies: www.trinitysocieties.ie

www.facebook.com/trinitycollegedublin

www.youtube.com/trinitycollegedublin

http://itunes.tcd.ie

https://twitter.com/tcddublin