A meeting of the University Council was held on Wednesday 8 March 2006 at 11.15 am in the Board Room.

Present  Provost, Vice-Provost, Registrar, Senior Tutor, Dean of Graduate Studies, Dean of Arts and Humanities, Dr J Nash, Dean of Engineering and Systems Sciences, Dr A Kokaram, Acting Dean of Health Sciences, Dr N M Marples, Ms M L Rhodes, Dr C J Benson, Mr D McCormack, Mr R Kearns, Mr S Hall, Mr C Larkin.

Apologies  Senior Lecturer, Professor E O’Halpin, Dr P C Conroy, Professor D M Singleton, Dr A W Kelly, Dean of Science, Dean of Social and Human Sciences, Ms F M Haffey, Mr A Gilliland, Ms A Fox.

In attendance  Librarian, Secretary, Acting Academic Secretary.

Observers  Dr S P Wilson, Professor C M Begley, Dr M L Brennan, Dr N M Claffey.

Student observers  Mr J Bertram.

By invitation  Professor J V Scattergood (for Actum CL/05-06/108).

SECTION A

CL/05-06/102  Minutes  The minutes of the meeting of the 15th February 2006 were approved subject to the following amendment: Actum CL/05-06/101 (v): under Lectureship in French and History (permanent), ‘Professor C Dorman’ should read ‘Dr C Benson’.

CL/05-06/103  Matters Arising from the Minutes  A number of matters arising from the Minutes were discussed and have been minuted under appropriate headings hereafter.

CL/05-06/104  Statutes – Chapter XIII (see Actum CL/05-06/083 of 15th February 2006)  The Registrar informed the meeting that the working party set up to assist in the preparation of a draft ordinance is close to completing its work. He undertook to circulate a copy of the draft ordinance to Council members for their input prior to bringing a final draft to the Board meeting on the 5th April 2006.

The Education Officer of the Students’ Union sought clarification on the legal status of the University Council, suggesting that the composition of Council for 2005-06 was not approved by Board at its meeting in July 2005. The College Secretary explained that it was agreed to continue with existing protocols until the Statutes were revised to reflect the new academic structures. The Registrar undertook to appraise the matter and to update Council at its next meeting.

CL/05-06/105  Provost’s Report  The Provost noted that there were no new developments to report to Council.
Incorporating any amendments approved at subsequent Council meetings
**CL/05-06/108 Implementation of the Bologna Process – Learning Outcomes and Level Descriptors**

A paper prepared by Professor Scattergood dated 8th February 2006 on the implementation of the Bologna process – learning outcomes and level descriptors was circulated with papers for the meeting. Professor Scattergood attended the meeting for this item. He introduced the paper, noting the importance of achieving agreement across the College on how our major award types are generically defined in terms of competence. The paper had already been discussed at several fora in College, and comments from these discussions had been incorporated. He thanked Dr Foley, in particular, for his contribution to the process.

Professor Scattergood outlined the national and international developments in relation to learning outcomes and level descriptors. The notion of learning outcomes is widely used throughout Europe and in parts of the rest of the world. The process of learning can be as small as a module or as broad as a degree course, and his paper concentrates on the larger units. Degree courses have traditionally been described using an ‘input-based’ system, which is essentially teacher centred. Learning outcomes by contrast are part of an ‘output-based’ system, and are essentially student or learner centred. The paper is concerned with generic descriptors: specific descriptors can only emerge from specific academic areas.

The production of level descriptors is intimately linked with learning outcomes. As with learning outcomes, there is an extensive range of literature available on level descriptors. Professor Scattergood noted that in framing level descriptors, he consulted a number of sources, including the joint Quality Initiative that produced the ‘Dublin Descriptors’, the National Qualifications Authority of Ireland (NQAI), and the Commission of the European Communities. The Higher doctorate descriptor is in part based on the NQAI criteria, but is largely Professor Scattergood’s own work.

Professor Scattergood brought the meeting through the proposed learning outcomes and level descriptors for each of (i) Ordinary Bachelor’s Degrees; (ii) Honors Bachelor’s Degrees; (iii) Higher Diplomas; (iv) Master’s Degrees; (v) Postgraduate Diplomas; (vi) Doctoral Degrees; and (vii) Higher Doctorates. He noted that since professional awards are subject to validation by external bodies that define criteria which holders of professional qualifications have to meet, it is not appropriate that the University of Dublin should define its own learning outcomes and level descriptors in these cases.

Professor Scattergood noted that there is only one higher diploma offered in College, and as a result it is difficult to generalise learning outcomes. As more higher diplomas come on stream, it might be prudent to revisit the learning outcomes for this award level. He proposed that the next step in the process is to define minor awards such as certificates and diplomas.

The meeting discussed the proposal at length. Professor Scattergood clarified issues relating to the Bologna process, the national and international position in respect of learning outcomes, and the relationship between learning outcomes and the Diploma Supplement. Dr Foley explained that the professional accrediting bodies are switching from a prescriptive-based approach to an outcome-based approach which is more in line with the Bologna process. Professor Scattergood noted that it might be possible to include the definition of learning outcomes on the Diploma Supplement specific to the award type. In response to a question, he commented that in comparison to other Irish universities, Trinity College was more advanced in defining learning outcomes. It was suggested that perhaps Trinity College might share this work with other Irish universities and thereby secure a common approach across the sector.

The meeting discussed the proposed learning outcomes defining Higher Doctorates. It was suggested that allowances should be made for the fact that not all work was peer
reviewed. It was felt that creative work of a higher order should be included in the learning outcomes. In relation to the last learning outcome stated in this award level, it was suggested that candidates for a Higher Doctorate should have to demonstrate ‘by their scholarship’ that they are suited to initiate and contribute to debates on the professional, social and ethical aspects of their fields of learning. Professor Scattergood undertook to consult with Professor Browne on the matter of creative work and how to define this as part of the learning outcomes for a Higher Doctorate.

Council approved the learning outcomes and level descriptors for each of (i) Ordinary Bachelor’s Degrees; (ii) Honors Bachelor’s Degrees; (iii) Higher Diplomas; (iv) Master’s Degrees; (v) Postgraduate Diplomas; (vi) Doctoral Degrees. Council further approved the learning outcomes for Higher Doctorates subject to the inclusion of reference to creative work of a higher level and that candidates for Higher Doctorates should have to demonstrate ‘by their scholarship’ that they are suited to initiate and contribute to debates on the professional, social and ethical aspects of their fields of learning.

The Provost thanked Professor Scattergood for his work to-date, and on behalf of Council invited Professor Scattergood to define learning outcomes for minor awards for Council consideration. He noted that subject to the changes stated above, the approved learning outcomes would be included in the 2006-07 Calendar.

CL/05-06/109 Admissions: Equalisation of A-level grades and CAO points with Leaving Certificate for admission purposes

A memorandum from the Senior Lecturer dated 27th February 2006, together with a memorandum dated 27th February 2006 from the Admissions Officer on the allocation of points to A-level grades to achieve greater parity with the Leaving Certificate had been circulated with papers for the meeting. The Academic Secretary (Acting) introduced this item and outlined the background giving rise to the proposed changes. The introduction of Curriculum 2000 introduced a high level of flexibility into the GCSE A-level curriculum and assessment structure, providing a more student friendly approach to curriculum delivery and assessment. Curriculum 2000 offers (i) a modular curriculum, (ii) the opportunity to take examinations over two years and across as many as eight different sittings, and (iii) the opportunity to repeat a module allowing the student to ‘cash-in’ the best results of the two sittings. A-level students, in addition, can take examinations in different subjects with as many as three different examination boards; the grading system is not subdivided within grades (for example an A grade = 80+; but for the Leaving Certificate an A2=85, A1 = 90 and all other grades have three subdivisions).

The Academic Secretary (Acting) reported that the number of A-level applications to Trinity College presenting three A grades is steadily increasing and as a result the majority of CAO offers to high demand courses are to A-level applications. In 2002, a UK Expert group was established to benchmark the Leaving Certificate against A-levels and this group recommended that a Higher Leaving Certificate subject be equal to two thirds of a comparable A-level subject. This means that six higher Leaving Certificate grades are now more or less equivalent to 4 A-level comparable grades. The Deans’ Committee, the Academic Affairs Committee, and Council considered proposals to address the issue in 2003 and again in 2004. In July 2004 Council recommended the introduction of a 4 A-level requirement for admission purposes. This new admissions requirement was implemented effective from the 2005-06 admission competition. Despite widespread concern that prospective applicants would not have the opportunity to sit 4 A-level subjects, 22% of the 1,535 applicants had 4 A-levels, and 11% achieved four A grades (600 points). In contrast, of the 14,699 Leaving Certificate applicants to Trinity only 0.9% received the maximum 600 points. At a national level, of the 54,069 Leaving Certificate students applying to the CAO in 2005 only 0.3% achieved 600 points.
The Undergraduate Teaching and Learning Committee (UTLC) at its meeting on the 29th November 2005 considered a proposal from the Admissions Officer that College should equalise A-level grades and CAO points with Leaving Certificate grades and points in order to achieve a more equitable distribution of undergraduate degree places between Leaving Certificate and A-level applications. This equalisation would be achieved by means of aligning A-level grades with Higher Leaving Certificate grades and applying a range of points for groups of A-level grades. In this way, for example, 4 A-level grades would be assigned within a 510-600 points range, representing the points range for groups of comparable Higher Leaving Certificate grades. The UTLC recommended, and it was noted by the Heads’ Committee on the 10th January 2006, that the proposed grade and points equalisation system be introduced.

Council discussed this proposal at length. The Provost noted the importance of having an equitable and transparent procedure for admitting students to the University, and the difficulty in achieving equivalence across several second-level qualifications that are presented each year. In response to a question on the implementation of the proposal, the Academic Secretary (Acting) explained that when examination results are transferred to the CAO, A-level applications would be allocated ranges of CAO points in order that they can be compared with Leaving Certificate applications. Places on courses would then be determined based on proportions of eligible applications coming from the Leaving Certificate and A-level examination systems. Once proportions are determined, places on the course in question will be offered to applicants coming from each respective examination system group on the basis of ranking within that group. She confirmed that Trinity College would continue to allocate fixed points to A-level grades for the purpose of determining students’ ranking only, but that these points will not be used to compare A-level students against Leaving Certificate students.

It was suggested that the proposal might continue to confer an unfair advantage in the undergraduate admission competition to A-level applications. The Academic Secretary (Acting) explained that it was necessary to have a system that could be implemented and defended. It would be difficult to defend an assessment of qualifications that was not based on a measurable evaluation of grades and structures. The meeting enquired as to how the change might be announced to the prospective applicants, and the Academic Secretary (Acting) commented that notification of the change would be managed sensitively and timely.

Council approved the proposal to equalise A-level grades and CAO points with Leaving Certificate grades and CAO points effective from 2007-08 in order to achieve a more equitable distribution of undergraduate degree places between Leaving Certificate and A-level applications.

**CL/05-06/110 Junior Freshman Pass Rates 2004-05**  
A memorandum on Junior Freshman pass rates for the academic year 2004-05 from the Senior Lecturer dated 27th February 2006 was circulated with papers for the meeting. Introducing this item, the Academic Secretary (Acting) explained that arising from the data provided in the Senior Lecturer’s Annual Report on Junior Freshman Pass Rates, the Directors of Teaching and Learning (Undergraduate) were asked to investigate the reasons for Junior Freshman pass rates of below 75% and report to the Undergraduate Teaching and Learning Committee. She noted that the pass rates are based on annual, supplemental and special examination results and are calculated on the basis of the number of students passing examinations compared to students registered at the end of Trinity term.

The paper highlighted a number of reasons that would appear to contribute to low pass rates at Junior Freshman level, and these included low points on entry; course not being a first preference choice; lack of motivation which can be linked to course preference. A fall in levels of achievement in key Leaving Certificate subjects, for example,
mathematics or physics, was highlighted as having an effect on pass rates in certain subjects. The difference between student’s expectations of university education and their experience in the Junior Freshman year and the extent to which second level education prepares students for third-level study were also highlighted as possible reasons for low pass rates in the Junior Freshman year.

There are a range of measures in place to address low pass rates at Junior Freshman level, and Schools are aware of the need to become more proactive in marketing their courses.

In the discussion that followed, it was suggested that courses should identify modules where there is a persistently high failure rate and take measures to address this. The meeting acknowledged the range of central supports that are provided to tackle attrition and to help Junior Freshman and other students progress through their studies.

CL/05-06/111 Heads of School Committee  The minutes of the meeting of the Heads’ Committee of the 28th February 2006 were circulated. In introducing this item, the Provost noted that the Heads’ Committee minutes were almost exclusively concerned with a discussion on ARAM, and suggested to defer detailed consideration of these minutes pending the finalisation of ARAM data. He noted that Board had requested a presentation from the Bursar on the final ARAM data, and that the Heads’ Committee is actively engaging with the ARAM Task Force. It was suggested that the Bursar attend a meeting of Council to address the academic implications of ARAM for Council consideration.

CL/05-06/112 Working Group on Modularisation and Semesterisation – Draft Terms of Reference  It was proposed, and Council agreed, this item be considered in conjunction with item HC/05-06/095 of the Heads of School Committee minutes of the meeting of 28th February 2006. Draft terms of reference were circulated. The Provost introduced this item, noting that the working group on modularisation and semesterisation proposes to examine the case for and against, as well as the implications of the adoption of a modular structure for undergraduate and postgraduate programmes, and the organisation of the academic year on a semester or trimester basis in College. The group will take account of pedagogic and organisational issues, student learning and lifestyle issues, and other matters relating to all employees of the College. The group will consult widely within College and, if required, it may also consult outside College. The working group will report to the Heads’ Committee, and based on its findings, it will make recommendations for the consideration of Council and Board.

The proposed membership of the working group is: Council member, Head of School, Dean of Graduate Studies, Director of Teaching and Learning (Undergraduate), Director of Teaching and Learning (Postgraduate), Director of Research, Students’ Union Education Officer, Vice-President Graduate Students’ Union, member of the Partnership Committee, Manager of Academic Practice, and a Chair. Administrative support will be provided by the Senior Lecturer’s Office.

The meeting discussed the terms of reference and proposed membership. It was suggested that the working group should include within its remit the implications of modularisation and semesterisation for non-traditional learners. There was some discussion about the reporting lines of the working group and the proposed membership. It was suggested that the working group should report to the Heads’ Committee and Council. It was further suggested that the membership should include a Faculty Dean, a Fellow, the Dean of Students, the Senior Tutor, and an academic staff member to represent the interests of the general academic population. The Provost contended that it was important to allow the Heads’ Committee to initiate policy and that Council should reserve the right to accept or reject any recommendation on the
adoption of any policy proposed. The working group could co-opt members at different stages of the process.

It was suggested that a programme outlining the consultation process and how this will be managed should be made available early in the process. Some members felt that the Senior Lecturer should chair the working group, while others felt that the chair should be external to the College. The Provost proposed that the Senior Lecturer, as chief academic officer, should chair the working group on modularisation and semesterisation.

Council noted the terms of reference and membership of the working group on modularisation and semesterisation and also agreed to included the impact on non-traditional learners in the terms of reference.

**CL/05-06/113 Higher Degrees**

(i) **Graduate Programmes and the Integrated PhD Concept** This item was deferred due to pressure of time.

(ii) **Proposal for a M.Sc. in Applied Psychology** A new course proposal for a M.Sc. in Applied Psychology was circulated together with a memorandum from the Dean of Graduate Studies dated 28th February 2006. The Dean introduced this item, noting that an extremely positive external review of the course proposal was received. The external reviewer made some recommendations which were taken on board by the course committee. The M.Sc. course will commence in October 2006 and will cater for up to 30 students. The proposed programme will comprise two core modules and four advanced modules, as well as a dissertation. A flexible modular structure will enable the programme to be completed on a part-time basis over 2 years and full time basis over 1 year, and as such is in keeping with the university’s strategy for the provision of lifelong learning. The course has been approved by the Library Committee, the Finance Committee, and the Graduate Studies Committee.

Following discussion, Council approved the proposal for a M.Sc. in Applied Psychology.

(iii) **Proposal for a M.Phil in Comparative Literature** A new course proposal for a M.Phil. in Comparative Literature was circulated together with a memorandum from the Dean of Graduate Studies dated 28th February 2006. The Dean of Graduate Studies informed Council that an external review of the course was received, which was very positive about the course’s academic merits. The external reviewer made some recommendations which were taken on board by the course committee. The structure of the programme is in keeping with that of other M.Phil. programmes in College in terms of entry requirements, number of contact teaching hours, assessment methods, and procedures of examination. By increasing the available pool of possible graduate research students, the development of this M.Phil. programme is in accordance with the OECD recommendations and the College strategic plan. It also conforms to the European Credit Transfer System as outlined under the Bologna Process and endorsed by the Irish Universities Association. The course may also be the basis for an integrated PhD.

The course has been approved by the Library Committee and the Graduate Studies Committee and will be considered at the next meeting of the Finance Committee.

_Incorporating any amendments approved at subsequent Council meetings_
In discussing this proposal, it was clarified that the proposal is formally being made by the Vice-Deanery of Arts and Humanities having been approved by the Vice-Deanery’s Executive Committee, and that the proposal was not considered by the Executive Committee of the School of English. The lead School is the (aspirant) School of Languages, Literatures and Cultural Studies.

Council approved the proposal for a M.Phil. in Comparative Literature.

CL/05-06/114 **Nominations for Appointment** Council noted and approved the circulated information (see Appendix 1).

CL/05-06/115 **Chair of Engineering (1842)** Under Other Business the Council approved the appointment of the External Assessors for the Chair of Engineering (1842) as proposed by the Secretary.

SECTION B

CL/05-06/116 **Information Policy Committee** The Council noted and approved the recommendations of the Information Policy Committee from its meeting of 21st February 2006, and also noted the IS Services Report 2004-05.

CL/05-06/117 **Personnel and Appointments Committee** The Council noted and approved the recommendations of the Personnel and Appointments Committee from its meetings of 30th November 2005 and 8th February 2006.

CL/05-06/118 **Student Services Committee** The Council noted and approved an extract of the recommendations from the Student Services Committee from its meeting of 21st February 2006.

SECTION C

CL/05-06/119 **Higher Degrees—Reports of Examiners** The Council noted and approved the circulated reports of examiners on candidates for higher degrees, approved by the sub-committee of Board and Council on 31 January 2006 and noted by Board on 1 March 2006.

(i) **Professional Higher Degrees by Research Alone**

  MD Michael Harney.

(ii) **Higher Degrees by Research Alone**

  PhD Áine Fanning; Ruth Foley; Mary Frances Hayes; Christopher Logue; Michelle Elizabeth Moore; Timothy Gerard O’Higgins; Fiadhníat Maevé O’Keeffe; Pádraig John Ross; David Wilson.

  MSc Jennifer Banks.

CL/05-06/120 **Graduate Studies Committee – Business requiring approval of the University Council** The Council noted and approved a memorandum from the Dean of Graduate Studies, circulated dated 27 February 2006.

*Incorporating any amendments approved at subsequent Council meetings*
CL/05-06/121 Faculty of Health Sciences The Council noted the following nominations (20 February 2006 to 12 July 2008):

(i) **School of Medicine**
   (a) Director of Teaching and Learning (Postgraduate): Professor M Lawler;
   (b) Director of Research: Professor M J Gibney.

(ii) **School of Nursing – Heads of Discipline** for the academic year 2005-2006:
   (a) General Nursing: Ms F Ryan;
   (b) Psychiatric Nursing – Ms J Morrissey;
   (c) Intellectual Disability Nursing – Mr C Griffiths.

CL/05-06/122 Chairs – Search Committee The Council noted the following changes in membership:

(i) **Professorial Appointment in Psychiatry at St Patrick’s Hospital** (see CL/05-06/099 of 15 February 2006) Mr W Cotter to replace the Hon Mr H Beaumont (St Patrick’s Hospital nominee);

(ii) **Chair in Civil Engineering (1842)** (see CL/05-06/064 of 7 December 2005) Professor M B Jones to replace Professor I T McGovern.

CL/05-06/123 Nominating Committee The Council approved the membership of the following committees:

(i) **Lectureship in Sociology (permanent)**
   Dean, Faculty of Social and Human Sciences
   Professor M A Marsh
   Dr B Torode
   Professor J J R Wickham
   Dr S P A Allwright
   Professor T Fahey (ESRI)

(ii) **Lecturer/Co-ordinator – Global Health (3-year contract)**
   Professor C E M Normand
   Dr S Thomas
   Ms E McAuliffe
   Professor M MacLachlan

Signed ...................................................

Date ...................................................
## Nominations for Appointment

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<th>Department &amp; Subject</th>
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<th>Name and Qualifications</th>
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<th>Termination date (if contract)</th>
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<td>Biochemistry &amp; Immunology</td>
<td>Research Fellow</td>
<td>SCALABRINO, Gaia, B.Sc. (R’ding), Ph.D. (Belf.)</td>
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<td>O’SULLIVAN, Helen Jane, M.A. (Cantab.), M.Phil. (Dubl.)</td>
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<td>Medical Gerontology</td>
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<td>HARBISON, Joseph Augustine, M.B., B.A.O., B.Ch. (NUI), M.D. (N’cle (UK)), M.R.C.P.I.</td>
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Incorporating any amendments approved at subsequent Council meetings