In April 2015 IS Services launched a Digital Capabilities Survey for University staff. The overall response to the survey was good with a total of 381 responses.

- Response Rate: 11% of the overall number of 3489 University staff

Digital capabilities are defined as those that prepare us for living, learning and working in a digital society and include the ability to use digital tools to:

- undertake research, teaching, learning and administration;
- use specialist tools and data sets;
- communicate ideas effectively;
- produce, share and critically evaluate information;
- collaborate, reflect and promote knowledge.

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IS Services 2015 Digital Capabilities Survey Results

Response Demographic

The staff survey targeted the entire Trinity staff community, currently this is a population of 3489 members. In total 381 responses were collected which is a response rate of 11%. The highest proportion of responses was collected from the Academic staff which accounted for 45%, with 69% of all respondents belonging to a Faculty and 31% to Central Administrative or Support areas in Trinity. The breakdown of the staff that responded to the survey is as follows:

What is your current status in College?

Academic Staff 45%  
Administrative Staff 39%  
Technical Staff 8%  
Other 8%

What Academic Faculty or department do you belong to in College?

- Faculty of Health Sciences: 20.0%
- Faculty of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences: 20.0%
- Faculty of Engineering, Mathematics and Science: 30.0%
- Central Administrative or Support Unit: 35.0%
Strategy

The impact of external forces, such as international rankings, publications, student expectations and technical developments, all influence strategy development. In your opinion how important are digital capabilities in supporting the delivery of the following College strategies?
Overall where do you feel College would rank on a scale of one to ten in regard to adoption and use of technology?
Which areas and types of service do you use to help you develop your digital awareness and capability?

The majority of survey respondents who added a comment to this question told us they accessed and used support resources not provided by the University to develop Digital Capabilities. Some representative comments from the responses are noted below:

“Online resources not provided by TCD”

“None of the above. I utilise my own resources in my own time.”

“Internet technology search, youtube videos tech online websites, other interuniversity it forums”

“External training appropriate to my job”

“I consult with colleagues, postdocs and postgrads”
Mobile Device Ownership & Usage

Do you own a mobile device such as a Smartphone or Tablet?

- Smartphone: 88.4%
- Tablet (iPad or similar): 56.5%
- None: 8.6%

Please specify the Operating System (OS) on your mobile device(s).

- Apple based OS
- Android based OS
- Windows based OS

Where do you mostly use your mobile device?

- At home
- While on the move
- At College
What features do you use on your mobile device(s)?

[Bar chart showing usage of various features on smartphones and tablets.]
Do you use social media (Facebook, Twitter etc.) as an academic tool?

Representative sample comments reflecting other uses of Social Media for academic purposes are below:

“My students use social media to circulate this information for me.”

“news and international collaboration”

“Specific twitter account for promoting events and conferences”

“I view and like academic related content in other people’s facebook pages, I follow facebook pages that post about recent advances in science (e.g. IFLScience, TCBE department), I stay in contact with people who I’ve met in scientific conferences”

“Following Funding and Job Updates, Using Researchgate to Find Research”

“Working on research project in social media, and managing the social media pages for the project”

“YouTube for feedback to students”

“Replacement for College’s research database - (=Research Gate)”
How would you like to see College learning spaces adapted for a variety of digital teaching and learning activities with teachers’/students’ own mobile devices?

A sample of responses are below:

*Depends on definition of learning spaces, if I am using a tablet then I could be using anywhere in College, some social areas around College are quite dark e.g. areas of the Arts block.*

*Free easily accessible wifi in all areas*

*They could implement applications to download teaching and learning material, quicker than the current virtual class.*

*Too much of a distraction in lectures - students go onto facebook and email and don’t listen to lecturer*

*Network access for mobile devices should be made easier; in-lecture polls/surveys could be handled from personal smartphones and presented on screen; easily accessible cloud storage for college staff and students for sharing and collaborating on projects and storage of research data
I would like to integrate the blackboard app on to my smart phone.
BUT we don’t have free wifi access in St James's so it would be personally very expensive for me data wise.*

*I would like to create multimedia resources for both patients and students.
Use students to create resources for patients as part of their assignments.*

*Projectors linkable to tablets would be nice.*

*Investment in updating lecture theatres to have sockets available in seating area.*

*Continue to update the wifi system (which seems to have been upgraded in the last few years)*

*Have charge points around campus for those who don't have access to offices.*

*I would like updated software and hardware for labs for the benefit of staff and students*

*if podcasts of recorded lectures were available that would be amazing*

*No, can’t expect students to have mobile devices, or ones suitable for ‘digital teaching’. A personal device isn’t a ‘college learning space’*

*Don’t know but I’d like them to do their exams digitally so I don’t have to read their handwriting.*

*Connecting to the College wireless network is currently extremely difficult to setup, requires far too many steps and specific requirements in terms of how the mobile device is setup and so is consequently under used. Connecting to a wireless network should require nothing else but your college login details, and should be implemented just like any other wireless network.*

*Flexible teaching spaces / cameras for lecture capture - active learning in class - passive learning at home etc*

*I think academic staff should be provided with an Ipad to facilitate greater use of social media.*

*Interactive presentations and Tutorials however overworked staff do not have enough time to prepare this material. College only appreciates efforts in gaining research grants! It would be cool if college websites and college email were more mobile friendly or had mobile versions.*
Better and easier wifi connectivity throughout the campus.

Would like to be able to send lectures / primers direct to students

Interactive web chat zones for specific modules
Record activity / how often accessed
Eportfoli0 rather than paper logbooks for clinical placements (medical students)

Wireless internet capability in all Teaching rooms / Learning spaces

Standardisation of technology in lecture theatres/teaching spaces

I'd like to see multiple displays/projectors suited to sharing screens from tablets/mobiles using wireless tools such as Apple's AirPlay so that students and the lecturer can readily demonstrate what they have on their screen without having to move / plug in etc. participating in lectures by eg "voting" or answering a question

Make it easier to use my own laptop or mobile device to deliver my teaching materials, and connect to relevant online services
Influencing Factors

In practice, how important do you think the following factors are in influencing the delivery of digital capabilities across the College?
What areas and roles in College do you think could positively affect change in College's digital capabilities?
If you could identify 3 things you would like to see developed and delivered to improve Digital Capabilities of the College, what would they be?

The most frequently mentioned items in regard to developments to be delivered to improve Digital Capabilities of the College were improved access and service availability for:

1. Wi-Fi Network
2. IT Training
3. IT Support

A sample of comments reflecting the answers to this free text question are below:

Roll-out of better sharedrive/cloud storage for staff
Increased personal email space
Updating equipment in every classroom
Projectors and computers with internet access in smaller teaching rooms e.g. in Arts Block
Redesign of SITS with a 'designed-by-user approach'
More student/staff/person-centred delivery to meet needs and requirements
More positive and incentivised introduction of Blackboard for teaching of modules
Serious support for the Digital Humanities - resources and staffing
A digital media centre to help prepare content
Protocols around the use of technology that respect work life balance
Greater awareness of the current capabilities on offer
Make the MyTCD.ie portal pages look more modern, not like they are from the 1990s.
Development of smaller apps by students and functions supported by ISS and a move towards agile development and incremental delivery of smaller systems and solutions
Major improvements to make FIS more user friendly
An awareness that academic time is already over committed - no more schemes like FIS or SITS or iExpenses which moved clerical tasks to academics - this would lead to Digital tools which actually enhance our core business
Better calendars and online interfaces for what's going on - the noticeboard is pretty bad
A professional approach to technology and process improvement opportunities, and not the amateur hour that was START
Exams on computers
Better breakout space with power etc for mobile units
Less dense information to wade through to work out what's what digitally- more user friendly info, less tech language
Make timetabling easy and easily accessible
Get the simple things right first, while the black board learning and other tools are fine we don't have any basic things like shared storage or easily editable web services. This delays any implementation of digital communication. The colleg network is way too restrictive to enable efficient use of new technology. Creative a more interactive platform for lectures tutorials

A culture of support across systems not blame
Concluding Remarks

Additional comments or observations relating to Digital Capabilities

A sample of responses are below:

*Digital services are woefully underused due to lack of cooperation/support/knowledge.*

*As someone that operates alone, its difficult sometimes to get the specialist help I need. It would be good if there were a means of doing this.*

*I found this a very simplistic and poorly devised questionnaire, leaving a lot of areas no teased out. For instance, 'not appropriate' was missing from some queries, as were comments boxes. It reads as if you want everyone to say 'Yes, we need lots more funding'*

*TCD has a lot of silos - the IT needs to help improve the interfaces and smooth the business processes*

*Have always felt very supported in my area by IS Services, though wish more of their type of expertise rested in-house. We may be a little too dependant on ISS!*

*Routine engagement with specific areas. It is possible that areas may not even know what digital capabilities that they should be requesting to improve their working practices.*

*Digital capabilities are important for communications and for research but are over-rated in terms of teaching and learning - industry-driven for commercial profit and not for academic excellence which should be the real priority.*

*The website is the most important digital tool this needs to be utilized more. Cloud computing is also something that should be researched*

*We have had an embargo on hiring new staff and we're missing the new graduates, with their fresher skill set. The workforce in my area have very poor computing skills -just enough to do their jobs, but not enough to be innovative. Most would have trouble using a spreadsheet. A very small few have the aptitude or confidence to go online and teach themselves. The small few who show aptitude are relied on to plug the gaps in the workforce and their workload is heavier (from experience)*

*Academic staff still have to buy their own equipment. Tutors get some help. There should be an allowance or tax offset.*

*We don't have any meaningful digital capabilities as there is no qualified personal to develop them and ISS service does its best to prevent us from doing things ourselves rather than help to implement it* 

*TCD is always catching up. Its facilities are old, budgets do not allow for creativity and there is always an excuse. IS do not offer quick solutions.*

*A perennial problem in College is the dissemination of information; policies, procedures, meetings, timetables, flexible training etc. I believe a lot of these issues could be resolved by better access to connected devices and materials. Obviously there’s a limit to what can be supported and finances are constrained but perhaps a move away from static resources like files "locked" on PCs to cloud-shared databases/applications, information resources and feedback mechanisms could help.*