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

Student Counselling

Student Learning Development

&

Student 2 Student Services

Annual Report 2021-22

1st July 2021 – 30th June 2022

Contents

Director's Foreword

2021-22 was the first year since 2019 where students were able to engage more fully in the university experience. As Covid lockdowns eased, in-person teaching, society events, and sports restarted. With this transition there was an accompanying spike in requests for mental health support never seen before in this service. 2,998 students sought support – over 800 more than in any previous year. This is equal to 14.6% of the entire student body – making Trinity a national outlier. As students presented in high levels of distress, the counselling services staff responded quickly with offerings of crisis intervention resulting in a 40% increase in emergency sessions attended. Committing resources to this level of urgent response influences both outcomes and satisfaction, and we are endeavouring to address this gap as an urgent matter.

While average wait times for needs-assessments and first counselling appointments dropped slightly from 2020-21 levels, we had the highest number of students on the wait list ever. To meet the needs of those waiting, we initiated a surge capacity trial where students could avail of 3 free online counselling sessions with a private therapy provider paid for by Trinity. We continue to work with the Director of Student Services and Human resources to find creative means to meet the continuous demand for mental health support services for students. The University has sourced extra space on campus where all of the counselling services can expand their offerings, and this will come on stream in early 2023.

Student Learning Development grew their reach via on-line workshops, one-to-one academic support and lunchtime-short seminars – an amazing achievement with such a small body of providers. SLD's Academic Writing Centre has proven to be a huge success and will continue to grow and develop in the next academic year.

S2S recruited and trained their normal cohort of over 600 mentors, and these offered continuous support to over 4,000 first years throughout the whole year. S2S are leaders in the field of student partnership and offer a model to both the University and other HEI's that is commendable.

As always, the service provided by SCS in 2021-22 remained dedicated, ethical and transparent. All staff strive to provide the best possible service and continuously review and improve what is on offer. Great credit is due to them, particularly when the challenges can be formidable.

Trish Murphy
Director

Mission

Support through collaboration, connection and compassion.
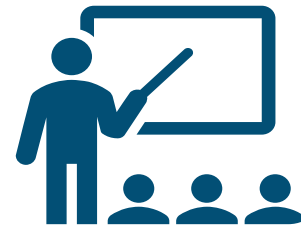
Vision

To be an internationally accredited service, delivering accessible social, academic, mental health and emotional wellbeing services across the Trinity community, keeping students at the centre of everything we do.

2,998 students presented to **counselling**

4,750 first-year students received **S2S** mentoring

5,970 attendances were recorded at **SLD** services

"I think it's a brilliant service, if it wasn't available and wasn't free, I really think I'd be in trouble now, and may have dropped out of my course… realistically my whole life has been changed by the emotional skillset that the service has given to me. I have reclaimed the control in my life."

Service User Feedback Quote, 2022

Student 2 Student (S2S)

S2S mentoring provides social and transitional support for all incoming first year and visiting students.

In 2021-22 S2S underwent significant staffing changes. The S2S Co-ordinator was seconded to the 3SET Project (3rd-Level Services for Engagement & Transformation – a Higher Education Authority-funded Innovation & Transformation Initiative), and an S2S Programme Officer was recruited twice in one academic year.

Despite these challenges, 546 mentors completed their training to support 4,750 mentees during orientation and throughout the year.

S2S Service Levels

	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22
No. First Years Mentored	4,419	4,318	4,322	4,126	4,750
No. Volunteer Mentors	695	763	682	619	546
No. of Peer Supporters	30	32	25	12	0
Total S2S Volunteers	725	764	707	631	546
No. of Peer Supporter – Peer mtgs attended	127	104	89	N/A	N/A

S2S/3Set Highlights

- Piloted additional boundaries training for c.350 mentors

- Evolved collaborations with TILT (anti-bias training) and the JCR

- Collaborated with the Library to improve student experience

- Developed and launched the National Consortium for Peer-Led transition under the auspices of the 3SET Project

- Completed the 3Set pilot project for social, emotional, and academic transition, and began plans to embed the model into the existing S2S Mentor model

- Researched and wrote-up the 3Set National Best Practice Guidelines for Peer-Led Transition

S2S/3Set Student Feedback

1st Year Undergraduates

"S2S was a massive help in settling in."

"the S2S mentors were so friendly and helpful and the online orientation helped."

"General information when we were starting off and feeling clueless, even finding out how to use the library and blackboard helped me feel more at ease."

"Realising that everyone is in the same boat with adjusting was helpful – didn't feel as if you were alone in that."

Mentor Volunteers

"I was really nervous before the training. I was like I'm not going to be able do this at all. And then after the…training, I was ready to hit the ground running. I was like [laughs throughout], 'yes, I feel so good, I'm so ready, give me the first years, I can help them'."

"During like the mentoring experience it was kind of nice to see them like have questions of themselves, that was like, I don't know what I'm doing, I could be completely wrong, and it's like, oh okay, right, it's not just my age, it's just it's everyone. It's everyone transitioning here together."

"When there's a lot of emails coming in from the first years... it was kind of... eye opening to be like, 'oh, you know, you really value my opinions' and the advice I can give, so it's quite rewarding."

S2S Plans for 2022-23

- Begin redeveloping S2S as a student-led, student-facing space in the centre of campus (new premises @ House 47)

- Revise and relaunch the S2S Peer Support programme using the 3SET Model for Innovation in Student Mental Health and Wellbeing

- Remodel the S2S Mentor training in line with student feedback and return to in-person training

- Enhance S2S social media presence for student outreach and volunteer support

- Develop an S2S Strategic Plan 2023-2028 in consultation with S2S volunteers and the SCS Student Advisory Board

- Redevelop 3SET mentoring model in line with student feedback and explore integration with the original S2S mentor programme.

Student Learning Development (SLD)

SLD helps students reach their academic potential by providing a range of academic and learning skills development services.

SLD Highlights 21-22

Total SLD service attendance by students was 5,970 in 2021-2022. This figure includes all workshops, appointments, facilitated groups, the Academic Writing Centre, and 10 PhD Research support groups.

Total SLD Staff comprises 1.9FTE. We rely on 3 volunteers to facilitate weekly appointments and 4 casual staff members to facilitate Writing Centre appointments.

The Trinity 'Academic Writing Centre' (AWC) offered appointments to the PG community as well as the UG community. During the year, 375 students attended 527 appointments. These were facilitated by a trained team of PhD tutors in the AWC. A further 167 students attended at 'Tips Talks' writing workshops which focus on a range of topics specifically related to academic writing.

Peer support groups for research postgraduate students were initiated to provide students with an opportunity to address the challenges that often face doctoral students. The support groups give students the opportunity to share their experiences with each other, leading to increased productivity and improved wellbeing. 41 PGR students participated in 10 groups.

SLD delivered 178 academic and learning skills workshops online, with 4,184 student attendances recorded. Workshops requested by departments accounted for 59% of all student workshop

attendances. Events include PMRC 5 ECTS Module, PG Summer School, Library HITS, PG Transition, in collaboration with colleagues and students across campus.

'Planning & Managing your Research Process' – this 5 ECTS module was coordinated by SLD and was approved by the Graduate Studies Committee in 2021. This module was delivered collaboratively by the Counselling Service, Library and PAS in January 2022. 36 students received credits successfully at the end of the 12 workshops delivered and feedback was delivered to all students on their two mandatory assessments.

SLD Service Levels

	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22
SLD Workshops No. of student attendances (on-site/in schools/online)	3,734	4,058	5,231	5,966	4,184
Academic Writing Centre (individual services only)	n/a	n/a	98	375	525
SLD 1:1 Appointments (includes drop-in learning support)	462	589	346	494	527
Facilitated Writing/Study Groups	n/a	107	280	425	498

Student Feedback on SLD

In the Student Learning Development Team's 2021-22 Survey, 85% of students felt that their concerns had improved, while 92% of students said that they would make a positive change in practice. 83% said that the appointment attended would help them to perform better academically. Here is a sample of feedback comments:

> *"I feel the SLD sessions have enabled me to study more efficiently and plan my time strategically."*

> *"As a new PG student with no third level education, the session gave me confidence and guidance to reach my potential. I intend to attend again."*

"The one thing I regret is that I did not seek help from this service sooner. I wish teaching staff would and tutors could endorse SLD privately to students they see are struggling."

"My appointment showed me clearly what defined an undergraduate dissertation in contrast with the essays that I had been writing up until then."

"We found that I was not using proper academic language and did not answering what the examiner wanted. I have since been careful in answering what the examiner was asking."

"I applied it greatly because I can now see my progress in being critical. I struggled with that but this session has been a tremendous help."

"I started applying more of a structure to my workflow, following a schedule that suited me, and stayed more motivated by breaking work into smaller, conceivable pieces."

"It is difficult to imagine a better experience. The communication was quick and all the information incredibly helpful. Thank you SLD staff!"

"More staff. It can be difficult to get an appointment."

SLD Plans for 2022-23

- The demand for the Trinity Academic Writing Centre is growing year on year. SLD will endeavor to **fully embed the AWC service** via secure staff contracts, and through effective communications & promotion within the University

- Offer **learning paths to UG students** via workshop modules in the areas of Effective Study & Academic Writing. Certificates of attendance to be offered to encourage students to attend multiple workshops

- In 2021-22, 48% of SLD attendances were by PG students. PGs also attended 43% of individual appointments, indicating a demand for tailored PG supports. SLD will reach more PG students affected by isolation through collaboration with the **PG Renewal Programme**, PG Transition Programme, and continuing facilitated writing groups and PG Doctoral research groups. More resources are being sought for PG Academic Skills Support

- Manage the service delivery effectively through 1st Semester, despite a temporary reduction of .4 FTE to 1.5 FTE. SLD will also lose one of our volunteer staff members in Dec 2022

- Deliver the PhD 5 ECTS module, **Planning and Managing the Research Process** (PMRP) in Jan 2023, in collaboration with the PG Advisory Service, Library and the Counselling Service, to

- equip doctoral students with a personalised, reflective approach to their research practice and professional development, including wellbeing

- Continue to improve student reach as part of a **consolidated approach to marketing and branding**, alongside using existing communication channels within the University and with S2S & Counselling

- Improve standard operational procedures e.g. **appointment booking system**.

Counselling

The Counselling Service provides expertise on student mental health to the whole Trinity community and offers therapeutic services to all Trinity students.

Students seeking counselling support grew to unprecedented levels this year, up 50% from 2018. **The percentage of the student body served rose sharply from a 4-year plateau of 11 -12% to 14.6%.** Over 800 more clients sought support than in 2020-21:

Counselling Service Levels

	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22
Total unique Clients	2,008	2,236	2,257	2,160	**2,998**
Total Sessions (incl. 1:1, Group & online)	10,923	13,021	12,425	11,068	**15,313**
Total TCD Enrolment	18,081	18,545	18,982	18,871	**20,566**
% of TCD Students served	11.1%	12.5%	11.8%	11.4%	**14.6%**

One-to-One Clients

	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22
1:1 Counselling Clients	1,822	2,141	2,074	2,038	**2,879**
% of TCD students served	10.1%	11.5%	10.9%	10.8%	**14%**
1:1 appts attended	7,383	9,193	9,679	8,528	**11,419**
Avg. 1:1 Appts per Client	4	4.3	4.6	4.2	**4**

Group Clients

	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22
Group Counselling Clients	341	354	297	225	**255**
Group appts attended	1,395	1,526	1,257	1,248	**1,354**
Group Sessions	225	288	252	282	**323**
Avg. Group Appts per Client	4.1	4.3	4.2	5.5	**5.3**

Online Programme Clients (SilverCloud)

The SCS offers several online Cognitive-Behavioural programmes through the SilverCloud platform, targeting Depression, Anxiety, Body Image issues, Stress Management, Sleep issues, and Resilience-building. Counselling team members provide support and guidance for these programmes via weekly "reviews" conducted by message exchange on the platform. While the covid-impacted years of 2019-20 and 2020-21 saw higher user numbers with less user engagement, 2021-22 saw a return to more normal numbers of users with higher average engagement:

	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22
SilverCloud users	422	607	955	685	**506**
SilverCloud Reviews with Supporter Input	1,609	2,283	1,952	2,099	**2,540**

Emergency Counselling Provision

The SCS rosters 1 counsellor per weekday to provide an open emergency clinic during business hours. These clinics saw a sharp 86% increase in the number or requests for urgent support from the previous year (and a 53% increase on the previous pre-pandemic peak of 2018-19):

	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22
No. Emergency Appts Attended (incl. Telephone, Video & In-person)	588	721	553	595	1,109
No. Clients Attending Emergency Appts	440	540	406	413	698

Note: Emergency appointment are included annually in the "One-to-One Clients" table totals above.

Average (mean) Wait Times & Wait List

	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22
Average wait time for an assessment appointment (working days)	5.4	8.4	10.8	9.6	**10.3**
Average wait time for counselling after assessment (working days)	15	15	23.5	41.8	**27.9**

Average (mean) wait times for an assessment appointment were just above the benchmark of 10 working days, and overall average wait times for counselling after assessment fell sharply from 42 to 28 working days. This is still well below the benchmark of 10-15 days. There was no wait list for counselling after assessment between July – October, but from mid-December wait times increased sharply (21 days). This was due in part to 818 new clients seeking support between Sept – Dec 2021 in addition to the clients who were already engaged with services in September 2021. Wait times for

counselling after assessment peaked in late March (40 days) and fell below 20 days in early May. While average wait times were shorter than 2019-20, the number of students who had to wait to start counselling after assessment was the highest the SCS has ever recorded (448 students at one point in March).

The counselling and admin teams worked during the summer of 2021 to plan solutions for bringing wait times down from 2019-20 levels. These included:

- Introducing Stepped-Care "Support Plans," where clients would be invited after assessment to try self-help, groups and other supports prior to booking a counselling appointment
- Short, check-in phone calls for clients engaging in Support Plans
- Marking high-risk clients for priority access to counselling regardless of when they presented for assessment
- Ensuring that clients have urgent access to counsellors for crisis situations regardless of their wait list status (note: over 1,000 emergency consults provided in 2021-22).

In addition to these measures, **"Surge Capacity"** counselling was added in March 2022, providing some students on the wait list with the option of attending up to 3 online counselling appointments with a qualified counsellor working for a private therapy agency. **175** students registered for this service, attending **397** appointments, which were paid for by Trinity College Dublin.

International Comparison of the SCS's Clinical Load Index (CLI)

The CLI is a measure of "standardised caseload" – or the number of clients a typical counsellor serves within an academic year. This carefully audited distribution of counselling centre staffing levels can be used to compare one service to SCS's worldwide. CLI scores are calculated with the assistance of the Center for Collegiate Mental Health (USA) using 3 key figures:

- **Institutional Enrolment:** The total number of students enrolled at the institution who are eligible for services (Trinity = 20,566)
- **Counselling Centre Utilisation:** The total number of students with at least 1 attended counselling appointment between July 1st and June 30th (Trinity = 2,998)
- **Counselling Centre Clinical Capacity:** The total number of contracted / expected clinical hours for a typical/busy week when the SCS is fully staffed (Trinity = 300)

CLI Scores are broken into 3 zones:
- **Low**: 21 to 65
- **Mid**: 66 to 147
- **High**: 148 - 291

Trinity's SCS CLI score for 2021-22 was **240** (it was 168 in 2020-21). Comparison with other CCMH services is show in the scatterplot below with the blue diamond:

2021-2022 Clinical Load Index (CLI) Distribution (N=626)
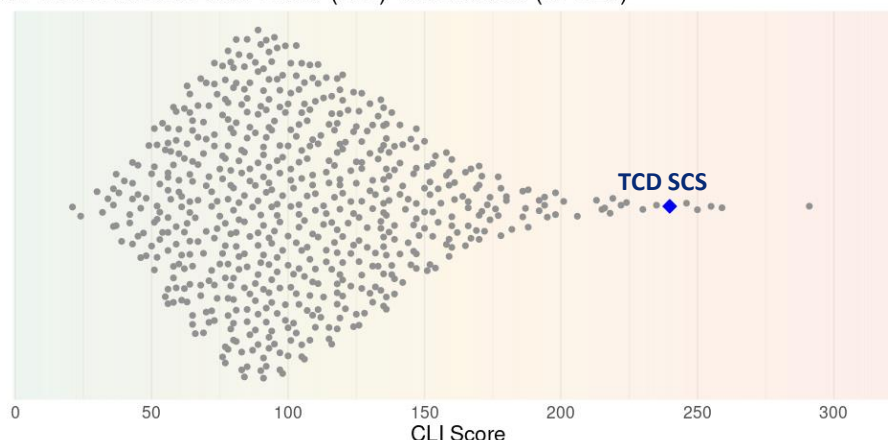
This CLI score is at the extreme high end of the distribution, meaning on average, **Trinity counsellors see more clients per year than counsellors in 99% of the 626 student counselling services contributing to this dataset**. According to CCMH research, services with higher CLI scores are more likely to prioritise "rapid access" services over "treatment"— and have increased crisis intervention demands. In general, services in this zone manage very high demand that consistently exceeds supply and thus are more likely to provide a range of treatment options for students. Centres across this zone are unable to provide weekly individual counselling and will be constantly seeking ways to manage demand and improve efficiency. These findings are validated at Trinity by the extraordinarily high number of emergency appointments requested in '21-22, the necessity of using support plans after assessment, and the fortnightly spacing of routine counselling appointments.

Student Feedback on Counselling

All counselling clients are invited by email at the end of the academic year to complete an anonymous online feedback survey. **430** unique service users responded (14% of all clients).

213 clients gave qualitative feedback, including 330 unique statements. These statements were grouped based on their central meaning (called "Meaning Units"or MUs). The table below shows that while praise for the service remained the largest feedback category, there was a substantial change of over 14% more criticism and less praise than in 2020-21. Notably, most critical comments (54%) expressed dissatisfaction with wait times for appointments – a very strong emergent theme for this year's feedback compared to past years.

Meaning Unit Type	Description	No. Of MU's	Percent of All MU's	Percent Change from 2020-21 Feedback MU's
Praise	Positive experiences of the SCS, including impact on retention, mental health, and student experience	139	42.1	**- 14.1**
Criticism	Negative experiences of the service, incl. wait times	119	36.1	**+ 14.6**
Service Resources	Comments on session limits/spacing, and staff size	51	15.5	+ 2.3
Suggestion	Ideas for improvement of service processes and interventions	21	6.4	- 2.7
Total		*330*	*100.0*	

Select Feedback Comments (anonymised):

Praise

"The counselling service was a lifeline for me. I was attended to straight away when I needed an emergency appointment the very first time a phoned… My counsellor was wonderful and he was a really good listener… It is rare that you find a therapist that 'gets you,' and he really could see and hear the real me."

"I liked everything about the service. My counsellor was very kind and attentive to all my needs. If not for him I don't think I would've finished my education in trinity so student counselling definitely had an integral impact on my college experience."

"It took four years to feel better but I was never once turned away. I think whoever identified me on silver cloud as high risk in first year is responsible for saving my life and I can never repay them enough."

"I got an emergency appointment and I don't think I would still be here today had I not gotten that appointment. My counsellor was fantastic and I wish I could have regular sessions with her as she taught me so much over just a few sessions. Without her I wouldn't have been able to finish out this semester."

"…When I got to my lowest point, I decided to finally call in to ask for an emergency appointment. The receptionist was extremely helpful and provided a counselling session in an hour after the call. I could say, truthfully, that that call saved my life. Thank you to [counsellor name], from me and my family, for calling me and helping me the way she did."

"I have had a great experience both with individual sessions and group sessions. The two have contributed massively to me continuing being enrolled at TCD and working through my feelings."

"I really liked how information that was provided in the session was also emailed afterwards (as a reminder) and how the counsellors were incredibly understanding and compassionate. I didn't like how long the waitlist was for ongoing sessions, however, for a free and helpful service it was understandable and once you get off the waitlist it is easier to stay within the services. The communications with College (between the tutor and counselling services for instance) have been a great help."

"I honestly think the service is brilliant. I've always had great experiences with you. It would be great if there was officially more than the 8 sessions allowed."

"I appreciated having an on-site counsellor at The Lir. I liked having a female counsellor."

"I attended therapy with [counsellor name] and she was absolutely fantastic. She really helped me through so much throughout my final year during covid. Without [her] I would not have gotten through the year as ok as I did and I am so grateful she was part of the Trinity Counselling service."

"I attended the addictive behaviours group this year and it has been a great resource. [The facilitators] are super supportive and encouraging. I think it's really important to have a student group dealing with these issues as other groups can feel a bit alienating, with age differences, ideologies, etc."

"It's such an excellent service, so essential. My counsellor is excellent, incredibly empathetic and compassionate without dictating what to do. I'd be literally lost without. I get the impression that although there is institutional acknowledgement about how many students need the service, it's frustrating that the individual schools don't seem to seek feedback or data … from the counselling service as to what students need and what is it… that is causing them to experience difficulties. It would be great if college took feedback from this service more seriously."

"[Counsellor name] has been an amazing counsellor. You can tell he is in his job to help people and he has been so understanding this year and honestly I wouldn't have made it through the year the same without him. The counselling service saved me this year."

"I think it's a great service, with a variety of different therapy types and specialists. I wish it had better funding from the university because it would be nice not to be limited on the number of appointments I could have, especially since my problems were ongoing… All of the counselors were very kind and helpful, I just wish there had been a greater focus on stability and that the service was given higher priority (and more money) by the college."

Criticisms & Suggestions

"I am aware that wait times are beyond your control, but this can be quite disheartening when a person is going through a hard time and they are forced to wait months for an appointment."

"The wait list is ridiculously long. Could talk more about individual problems rather than just giving generalised CBT methods."

"Need more therapists, it was very disheartening to ask for help and basically be told there is none unless you're suicidal."

"It was awful. I was in a bad place during my SNAP appointment and told I'd be a high priority and get counselling sessions one-on-one after some time. This was before Christmas. 2 months later I'm offered a check-up call that I couldn't do, and then 2 months before the year is up, I'm offered video sessions. Not good at all. I was nervous to go anyways and to not have my needs met made it worse."

"More sessions should be available outside of 9-5 hours for healthcare students on placement."

"I didn't attend the service at trinity except the SNAP where I was advised to see a private counsellor outside the college because the waiting list was two months long (exactly half the semester)… The SNAP service I attended was helpful in pointing me in the right direction but surely the college should be trying to provide a more useful service than waiting two weeks to be told you need to wait two more months at which point the semester is two thirds finished."

"My overall feedback for improvement would be to diversify the counsellor base, it will be great to see more brown, Muslim and ethnically diverse counsellors on board since having that helps the students feel more connected."

"Unfortunately, I wasn't able to avail of in-person counselling due to wait list. My counsellor for the consultation did refer me to free clinics around Dublin which was great though!"

"The wait time is extremely long and inflexible. To then be threatened with being taken off the waiting list if you don't respond to an email is extremely disheartening. Six sessions a year is also an extremely limited amount to work with. Even if the counsellors are helpful, the whole system feels designed to ferry you out the door as quickly as possible."

"Not having direct emails and consistent contact with my counsellor was a bit inconvenient. Instead, everything was mediated through student-counselling@tcd email. Would have liked sessions to be a bit more frequent."

"It was terrible. I have reached out for help in February 2022. It took a lot from me to even contact the service and I thought that this was the toughest bit done. I could not to be more wrong. Getting actual help from the Counseling Service is a mission… I would like to see more professionals, more available appointments and more funding from the University."

"It's so busy, like the hospital waiting lists but I think you guys do your best with what you have."

"Not enough available appointments, the college should be ashamed to have a waiting list in the first place. Completely unacceptable."

Counselling Impact on Student Retention and Net Benefit to Trinity

Quantitative feedback shows that some students indicate the important role SCS/SLD/S2S services play in helping them persist in their courses. All clients are asked to answer the question:

"To what extent would you say that counselling has helped you to stay at college?"

> **N/A (not an issue for me)**
> **1 = Not at all**
> **2 = To a limited extent**
> **3 = One of many factors**
> **4 = An important factor**
> **5 = The most significant factor**

After removing feedback responses for clients who indicated withdrawing from their course and those who were in final year, 102 students rated this question a 4 or 5 and a further 70 chose a 3 rating. Conservatively estimating the per-student income to Trinity in a subsequent year at €8,000 (student contribution & HEA funding – NB: some students bring much higher income to the university), counselling services delivered a potential net benefit to Trinity of €816,000:

> **102** (students rating 4 or 5) **x €8,000** = **€816,000** net benefit to Trinity in 2022-23.

Outreach activities, 2017-22

The SCS provides outreach and preventative supports under the banner "TCD Headspace." These initiatives are targeted at students and aim to improve mental health literacy, reduce stigma, teach skills for supporting mental health & healthy relationships, and educate on available support pathways.

	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22
No. student attendances @ open preventative trainings (incl. Together Consent)	981	1,094	1,981	1,205	1,197
No. student attendances @ in-house mental health trainings	302	180	1,113	625	841
Student Advisory Group Members	40	48	16	20	21

Total Outreach Programme student contacts (excl. social media)	1,323	1,322	3,094	1,850	2,059
No. Trinity Staff Trained	321	333	250	275	300

Together Consent Programme

Founded in 2016, Together Consent is Trinity College Dublin's Sexual Consent Education Programme, based in Student Counselling Services. Together Consent is at the forefront of Consent Education in Third Level Education in Ireland. Three main sexual violence prevention education programmes are provided:
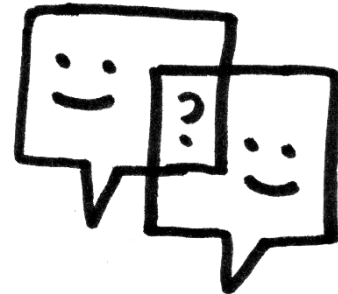
- Consent Workshops
- Consent Plus Workshops
- First Responder Training

Prof. Ivana Bacik TD (centre) launches Together Consent with Ruth McMahon, Trish Murphy, and Aoife Grimes, Autumn 2021

The programme is staff by two team members: a Research Assistant in Sexual Consent Education and Sexual Violence Prevention, and a Student Counsellor for Sexual Consent and Disclosure. As well as running training for different groups in Trinity, the Together Consent Team does outreach to groups who may not attend trainings with education, resources, and assistance.

Together Consent Trainings - 1st July 2021 to 30th June 2022

Training Type	Participant Group	Attendees
Consent Facilitation (Trainers)	Staff and Students	30
Consent	Trinity Hall Residential Freshers	500
Consent	Dominick St. Residential Freshers	75
Consent Plus	TCDSU Class Reps	80
Consent Plus	Society Committee members	50
Consent Plus	TCDSU Ents Committee	10
First Responder	Staff and Student Leaders	80
Dating in Ireland	Postgraduate Students	120
TAP First Responder	TAP staff	30
Residential First Responder	Assistant Wardens/Junior Deans	20
Total		**995**

2021-22 Publications created by Together Consent

All publications are available for download on the TCD Consent website (www.tcd.ie/Student_Counselling/consent)

Publication	Description
"What do we do now?"	Provides advice for staff such as security guards who may be responding to victims in the immediate aftermath of sexual violence. Also provides information on Sexual Assault Treatment Units (SATUs) and Rape Crisis Centres.
"Trauma Informed approach"	Provides advice for staff who are interested in what a trauma-informed approach is, and how they can ensure the work they undertake, whatever the context, has the care of sexual violence survivors in mind.
Updated – "What do I do now?"	Updated this year to reflect changes to the law about Image Based Sexual Abuse (IBSA). Helps to advise a student what steps they can take after they have experienced sexual violence, and what to do if they are a victim of IBSA.
"Disclosure Support"	Contains information from our First Responder Training to inform staff on what happens after someone is a victim of sexual violence, what their response might look like, and how to take further steps to supporting the student.

Further Consent Outreach

Outreach Area	Description
Website	The website (launched September 2021) is a hub for resources on sexual violence prevention and support following sexual violence. It also provides our community with information around our workshops, what activities we are undertaking, and how to get involved.
Videos	Funded by the Trinity Trust, 3 videos were launched in September 2021 and are utilised widely in trainings and within the university community. They are also being translated into Irish Sign Language (part of the Justisigns 2 project).
Online Session for Freshers	An online session for incoming freshers was devised in summer 2022 to be piloted in September 2022. This session, uses a curriculum devised by the Together Consent team, is being created by Trinity Online, with the support of the Trinity Trust. The session covers how unconscious biases and pornography can affect sexual experiences as students begin 3rd Level education.
Action Plan for Sexual Violence and Harassment	The Research Assistant represents Together Consent on the TCD Oversight Group for implementation of the Framework for Consent in Higher Education. She led the development of the Education Action Plan, which forms part of Trinity's Action Plan for Sexual Violence and Harassment, published this year.
SpeakOut Tool	Led by the Together Consent team, Trinity are part of the first cohort of 3rd Level Institutions who have launched the SpeakOut anonymous reporting tool. This online tool allows students, staff and visitors to the University to anonymously report instances of harassment, violence, sexual assault, racism, discrimination, and other forms of abuse.

Student Advisory Board (SAB)

The SAB assists SCS/SLD/S2S in keeping services student-focused. There were 21 students on the SAB - 3 executive officers, 10 ordinary committee members and 8 ex-officio officers from other university organisations. SAB members reviewed their internal recruitment and meeting structures to enable larger membership, and a SAB representative attended the Outreach Team meeting every 2 weeks to advise on outreach activities and act as liaison between the SAB and the Outreach Team.

Counselling Plans for 2022-23

1. Engage in a Thematic Review of services with the College Health Service and Trinity Disability Service.

2. Continue to build group counselling & group support options for students.

3. Re-establish counselling on-campus through acquisition of rooms in the former College Health Service premises after the opening of Printing House Square.

4. Undertake the SHAPE (Suicide, Help-Seeking and Prevention in Trinity) study in partnership with staff in the School of Nursing & Midwifery, The Students' Union and the College Health Service. This large-scale survey of the student body is part of Trinity's implementation of the HEA National Mental Health & Suicide Prevention Framework 2020.

5. Apply for accreditation from the International Accreditation of Counseling Services.

Administration

The Administration Team are vital to ensuring the efficiency and broad reach of all services, providing central admin support and expertise in the management of human resources, finances, compliance, systems and facilities for the Department. The team is also responsible for counselling appointment and waitlist management, including cover of the Services' email, phone lines and reception.

Key Admin Metrics

While there have been increases in clinical staff FTE and in numbers of students attending the Service, the Administration Team FTE remains the same as previous years. The team has nonetheless achieved the following:

- Scheduled over 1,100 same-day emergency appointments (increase of over 500 from previous year), which involves liaising with both clients and emergency duty counsellors.

- Filled approx. 1,800 cancelled/rescheduled counselling appointments with other clients to ensure efficient use of counsellor time (increase of c500 from previous year).

- Sent over 18,235 appointment reminders via the Titanium scheduling system (an increase of over 6700 from the previous year).

Key Achievements

In the transition from the peak of the COVID-19 pandemic into a more established blended service model, the Administration Team played an essential role in continuously improving and embedding flexible processes and systems, such as:

- Continued spotlight on staff engagement in a blended working environment and ongoing time of transition (including hosting a regular online staff coffee break to enhance unity and communication across the team).

- Management of 14 separate recruitment competitions and subsequent on-boarding. Remote/on-site recruitment and induction of sessional workers, volunteers and trainees, including a focus on Health and Safety assessment and training for blended working.

- Management of limited space resources to ensure maximum efficiency in service delivery.

- Development of SLAs with external service providers to develop surge capacity at peak demand times. Development and management of all related referral and reporting processes.

- Hosting of an inaugural Counselling Administrators network event during the PCHEI conference in May 2022, coordination of feedback to the PCHEI executive and subsequent establishment of ongoing email forum for counselling administrators across Ireland.

- Preparation and testing for implementation of online appointment scheduling within Titanium.

- Participation in the pilot project for the ELeave system and feedback to HR.

- Worked in partnership with the Data Protection Office and ITS to improve IT security, particularly in relation to the main email account.

The Administration Team would like to gratefully acknowledge our close work with our colleagues in Human Resources, IT Services and Estates & Facilities, who help us to maintain our high level of service to students.

Staffing & Budget

Staffing Full-time Equivalency

Area	FTE
Admin Team	4.30
Assistant Psychologists[1]	2.92
Counsellors[2]	10.38
Director	1.00
S2S	2.46
Sessional Counsellors[3]	3.49
SLD	1.90
3Set Project (HEA Funded)	1.37
Total	**27.82**

Numbers reported are actual worked FTEs (rather than approved contract FTEs), to take account of vacancies etc.

[1] Additional (third) AP post funded by the Mental Health and Wellbeing Initiative (MHI) ceased June 2022.

[2] Includes 3 x MHI-funded posts totaling 2 FTE in the reporting period.
Includes 1 x MHI-funded sessional counsellor with 0.37FTE in the reporting period.

Budget 2021-22

Type	Amount
Income	€ 582,999
Pay Costs	€2,081,134
Non-Pay Costs	€339,436

Income:
- Includes €377,025.68 HEA Innovation and Transformation funding, part of an award of €1,574,655 over 3.5 years (up to 30/06/2022) for the 3Set multi-institutional project shared between Trinity, UCD, and AIT.

- Includes €151,749 from the Mental Health and Wellbeing Initiative for the 2019-20 academic year.

Pay costs:

- Includes €218,339 as part of the 3Set Project.

Non-Pay costs

- Includes €152,880 as part of the 3Set Project.

The financial year runs 1st Oct to 31st Sept

3SET Project (Third-level Services for Engagement & Transformation)

The 3Set project consisted of three research teams working in partnership to meet one shared goal; addressing the increasing demand for mental health supports in Irish Higher Education Institutions. The project's achievements enriched by intertwining research expertise with practitioner wisdom and student insight, underpinned by evidence-based practices. They have made lasting contributions to student mental health and wellbeing.

The creation of the 3SET National Student Counselling Database will enable better-informed interventions, resource allocation, and strategic planning. A Practice Research Network designed to support the collection, analysis, and dissemination of this data has the potential to become the site of significant collaborative learning between practitioners, academics, research professionals and students. Trinity's Student Counselling Service was a key driver of developing an Irish Standardised Data Set (SDS) and was the first contributor to upload test data for 2021-22 to the National Database.

With the development of the National Student Mental Health and Suicide Prevention Framework, 3Set assisted the HEA in addressing an urgent need for national guidance related to suicide risk and critical incident response in HEIs, and significantly enhanced co-ordinated preventative and early intervention measures aligned with the goal of student success, including suicide prevention (CAMS) training for Student Counselling Service (SCS) staff and a keyword partnership with Text 50808. An Assistant Psychology post was funded by the Irish government to the end of 2021-22 for the implementation of this framework, including the initiation of the SHAPE study.

Through the lens of Peer-Led transition, 3Set has modelled the invaluable contribution that student partnership can make to student success, especially in the design and evaluation of student mental health and wellbeing policies and interventions. There is now a structure in place for peer-led transition programmes nationally to collaborate and support each other, including a shared tool to measure their influence on positive first year and volunteer student experience. The pilot model for social, emotional and academic peer-led transition will now be integrated with the existing S2S mentoring model. S2S will also be using the 3Set Model for Innovation in Student Mental Health and Wellbeing to review and revise the Peer Support Programme before its relaunch in September 2023.

Contact Information

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