



Trinity College Dublin

Coláiste na Tríonóide, Baile Átha Cliath

The University of Dublin

Board Meeting 14 September 2022

This meeting was conducted as an in-person meeting with the majority of Board members present in the Trinity Board Room and one member joining remotely using the Zoom application.

Present: Provost (Dr L Doyle), Registrar (Professor N Cox), Senior Lecturer/Dean of Undergraduate Studies (Professor D Shepherd), Bursar/Director of Strategic Innovation (Professor E Denny), Professor K Ahmad, Professor S Alyn Stacey, Professor L Brennan, Professor S Browne, Mr K Byrne, Professor N Campbell, Ms Z Cummins, Ms G Fullam, Mr D Grouse, Professor D Jones, Professor C Leahy, Ms R Mathews-McKay, Professor R McManus, Professor F Sheerin*, Ms C Staunton, Professor J Walsh.

Apologies: Vice-Provost/Chief Academic Officer (Professor O Sheils), Professor I Arnedillo Sánchez, Professor R A Kenny, Professor A Nolan, Professor L Roe, Mr M Porfirio.

In attendance: Assistant Secretary to the College (Ms V Butler).

(ex officio) Secretary to the College (Mr J Coman), Treasurer/Chief Financial Officer (Mr P Reynolds).

(by invitation) Chief Operating Officer (Ms O Cunningham), Vice-President for Global Engagement (Professor E Stokes).

**Joined the meeting remotely through Zoom.*

SECTION A

The Secretary to the College advised the Board that Ms Sorcha De Brunner, newly appointed Governance Manager in the Secretary's Office, would be observing the meeting online.

BD/22-23/001 Statements of Interest

In relation to item 14. Membership of Committees of Board and Council the Secretary to the College advised the Board that the accepted practice is that statements of interest are not made in relation to the appointment of Board members to committees of the Board on the basis that such appointments are an intrinsic part of Board membership and that there is no personal gain to Board members involved in it. He further advised that if any Board member has an objection to or wishes to discuss a particular appointment that they could contact him or the Assistant Secretary at the break in the meeting and that the Board member who is the subject of the query could be asked to leave for that item.

The Board approved this approach.

BD/22-23/002 Declaration for New Members

The Provost invited the new Board members to make the Statutory declaration for incoming Board Members.

The Provost noted the declarations and thanked the new Board members. She noted the

clear Statutory duty of every Board member in respect of Board confidentiality and that the Statutes set down that the Provost was the only spokesperson for the Board.

Professor McManus joined at this point.

In addition, she noted the potential for financial and reputational damage to the University if any Board member breached the Statutory duty of Board confidentiality, for example in relation to financial or commercially sensitive information given to the Board.

Mr Byrne joined the meeting at his point.

The Provost advised the Board that an annual work programme for the Board would be brought to a future meeting of the Board and reminded all Board members that should there be an item of business on which it is felt broader discussion or consultation is required then any Board member could raise this with the Provost at any time.

BD/22-23/003 Minutes of the Meetings of 15 June 2022

The Secretary advised the Board that a Board member had contacted him to suggest an amendment to minute to BD/21-22/313 of the minutes of the meeting of 15 June 2022 and read aloud the proposed amendment which had been circulated in advance.

Action/Decision

003.01 The Board approved the draft minutes of the meeting of 15 June 2022 subject to the proposed amendment in relation to minute BD/21-22/313 which had been circulated in advance.

003.02 The Board approved the amendment to the Minutes of the meeting of 26 April 2021 (BD/20- 21/252 Election to Scholarship) as circulated.

BD/22-23/004 Matters Arising

It was noted that some matters arising would be addressed under the Provost's Report later in the meeting.

BD/22-23/005 Strategic Plan 2020 – 2025: January to June 2022 Progress Report

Academic Services Division Manager, Michael Slevin and Head of the Data Analytics and Strategic Initiatives Unit, Ms Geraldine Anderson to join the meeting for this item

The Provost welcomed Mr Slevin and Ms Anderson to the meeting.

Mr Slevin introduced this item with reference to his presentation dated 14 September 2022, which had been circulated in advance. He provided the Board with an overview of the implementation of the Plan and summarised any changes which had occurred since the last update was provided to the Board.

The Provost thanked Mr Slevin and noted that many good things had been achieved under the Plan. She also noted that internal and external circumstances have changed since the time the Plan was launched and as such a mid-term review was warranted. In particular, she noted the need to invest in the University's IT infrastructure.

Several Board members welcomed the establishment of the Data Analytics and Strategic Initiatives Unit.

In response to comments from a Board member in respect of Goal 8, the Provost noted that this was an update on what has been achieved to date under the Strategic Plan and that there were many other actions and plans that would need to be revisited and costed and that a review would be needed.

In response to comments from Board members in respect of plans for investing in the IT infrastructure in the University the importance of ensuring early engagement with the user community and input from Board was acknowledged. In addition consideration should be given to interim measures that can be taken to help address the situation.

Several Board members noted the challenges impacting on the Tutorial system including the housing crisis, increased workloads, and the impact of Covid and it was noted that further engagement with the Senior Tutor will be pursued to see if greater involvement in the system can be further encouraged. The Provost also noted the impact of the housing crisis on students and encouraged the student Board members to share their data and daily experiences with the relevant Officers to inform decisions and plans for supports.

In response to comments from a Board member in respect of the International Foundation Programme, the Vice-President for Global Engagement advised that due to careful market analysis the programme had performed well in the current academic year, and it was noted that the Senior Lecturer/Dean of Undergraduate Studies and the Registrar of Marino Institute of Education are co-chairing a working group to review the curriculum and enhance the programme. The importance of providing robust pre-arrival information and of managing the integration of international students on to programmes of study was acknowledged.

The importance of ensuring there is sufficient data to inform decision making was also acknowledged.

The Provost thanked Mr Slevin and Ms Anderson for the update noting that a mid-term review of the Strategic Plan will be conducted.

Action/Decision

005.01 The Board received the update from the Manager of the Academic Services Division and noted the progress on the Strategic Plan 2020-2025 to June 2022.

Mr Slevin and Ms Anderson left the meeting at this point.

BD/22-23/006

Racial and Ethnic Equality Working Group Report 2021/2022 – “The Trinity Tapestry”

Professor Lorraine Leeson, Associate Vice-Provost for Equality, Diversity & Inclusion (AVP-EDI) and Dr Phil Mullen joined the meeting for this item.

Professor Leeson introduced this item with reference to a memorandum from herself and Dr Mullen dated 5 September 2022 which had been circulated in advance. It was noted that the Racial and Ethnic Equality Working Group was established in early 2021 to provide a framework to oversee the development and implementation of an action plan for Trinity College Dublin on race and ethnicity, and to ensure a safe and empowering environment for our students and staff. The action plan, which will build forward from the Report will also draw on the HEA’s Race Equality Implementation Plan 2022-2024 (launched on 8 September 2022) and seek to augment the College Strategic Plan 2020-25.

The Provost opened the item for discussion.

Several Board members welcomed the Report and congratulated the Working Group for their contribution to this item.

In the course of the discussion it was acknowledged that greater levels of dignity and respect training across the College would be beneficial, and it was noted that the Dignity and Respect Policy is under review. Some Board members raised their strong concerns in respect of the potential introduction of anonymous reporting.

Professor Ahmad joined the meeting at this point.

Following comments from Board members the potential for broader inclusion through structural change and the importance of integrating further international student considerations into teaching was acknowledged. The importance of accurately capturing data in a meaningful way was noted.

In response to comments from a Board member, Dr Mullen clarified the consultation process and engagement which had been undertaken when preparing the report.

The Provost thanked Professor Leeson and Dr Mullen who left the meeting at this point.

Action/Decision

006.01 The Board noted and discussed the memorandum from the Co-Chairs of the Trinity Racial and Ethnic Equality Working Group.

BD/22-23/007 Submission of Supplemental Charter of Trinity College Dublin for recognition by Government Order

The Registrar introduced this item and advised the Board that there had been on-going discussion with Department Officials over the Summer months and that arising from this some minor wording amendments to the draft Supplemental Charter were now proposed to the Board for approval.

In response to a query from a Board member, the Secretary to the College advised that the proposed amendments would align the wording of the draft Supplemental Charter more closely with the wording of the HEA Bill 2022 and noted that the previous wording might have precluded the possibility that the Chair of the Board, as an external member, could be chosen by the Board from among the three Board members to be nominated by the Minister of Higher and Further Education, Research Innovation and Science.

In response to a query from a Board member as to the process to be followed should the Bill be enacted, the Provost advised that there is much discussion to be had at Board where such processes as well as proposed Statute changes will be discussed in the coming months.

Responding to queries from a Board member in respect of the number of Fellows in the future composition of the Board, the Provost noted that the wording of the Bill was beneficial in this regard in that it ensured that a specific percentage of Board members would be drawn from the Fellows and she also commended the previous President of the Students' Union (SU) and all of the SU team for effectively securing additional student representation on future Boards.

A Board member advised the Board that representations continue to be made to the Minister and will also be made in the Seanad to ensure that the student members are expressly defined as student representative members.

The Registrar, responding to a query from a Board member in respect of Professional Staff representation in the future, advised that a widespread consultation process is envisaged on all matters relating to the legislation and in respect of which Trinity has discretion, in which context further consideration could be given to this matter. Moreover, amendments to the Statutes are a matter for the Board (and, if the amendments are to chapters of the Statutes, Fellows and the Visitors also) to decide.

The Provost, in response to comments from a Board member, advised that it is envisaged that there will be strong and diverse representation on the Board and that through the University's own processes this can be dealt with effectively.

Action/Decision

007.01 The Board noted and approved the memorandum from the Secretary to the College dated 7 September 2022 and the accompanying revised Supplemental Charter.

The dissent of Prof Alyn Stacey was noted.

BD/22-23/008 External Board Member

The Provost introduced the item with reference to her memorandum dated 12 September 2022 which had been circulated in advance. She invited the Secretary to the College to summarise the process which had been followed to select an external member of the Board.

The Secretary to the College advised the Board that further to the meeting of the Sub-Committee of Board on 13 July 2022, the nine organisations approved by the Board under vacation procedures were invited to submit nominations and four nominations were received by the deadline.

The Board sub-committee met to consider the nominations received on 12 September 2022 and recommended that Mr Paul Farrell be appointed as an external member of Board for a four-year term, 2022-2026 (or alternative date as may be required due to any legislative change).

Responding to comments from Board members in relation to the range of competencies and skills required on the Board in the future, the Provost advised that further consideration will be given to the most appropriate way to fill the external memberships of the Board which will be required once the HEA Bill is enacted.

Action/Decision

008.01 The Board noted and approved the memorandum from the Provost dated 12 September 2022 and the nomination of Mr Paul Farrell as an external member of the Board as contained within.

BD/22-23/009 Proposed Changes to the 2010 Consolidated Statutes

The Registrar introduced this item with reference to his memorandum dated 6 September 2022 which was circulated in advance. He provided the Board with a summary of the proposed amendments to the Statutes, which had been considered by the Statutes and Schedules Working Party and were as follows:

- Amendments to Schedule 1 and Schedule 2 to the Chapter on Committees
- Amendments to Schedule 2 to the Chapter on the Senate.

In relation to the proposed Amendments to Schedule 1 and Schedule 2 to the Chapter on Committees, the Registrar advised that Board members were asked to approve the changes to Schedules 1 and 2 to the Chapter on Committees, pursuant to the Introduction Chapter, Part 13(2) and Schedule 2 to the Chapter on Committees, Section 3(5) (annual review of committee membership by the Provost and Registrar) required ahead of the approval of membership to the Committees of Board and Council for 2022/23 (included on Section C of the Board agenda).

In relation to the proposed amendments to Schedule 2 to the Chapter on the Senate and providing context for Board members, the Registrar advised that it is proposed that specific reference be made to the possibility of the Dean of Graduate Studies being involved where Masters degrees are concerned.

In addition, the Registrar informed the Board that the current Latin phraseology used at Commencement ceremonies can be problematic because of the nature of the Latin language and in circumstances where a graduating group comprises men and women, in Latin, plural terms for groups of people will always exclusively take the masculine. As such, the Board was asked to approve the principle of making the Latin terminology more gender inclusive and it was noted that the necessary wording amendments, as suggested by the Public Orator, would be brought to Board for noting.

The Registrar also advised that there is a concern with the current situation whereby students in a class group are called up at Commencement ceremonies in alphabetical order but within their degree classification and as such amendments were proposed to the Statutes whereby this practice would change so that students are called alphabetically.

He advised the Board that the Statutes and Schedules Working Party (SSWP) considered this change at its meeting of 5 September 2022. Unanimous support for the proposal was not reached by the SSWP

and they asked that this be noted by the Board when considering the proposed change.

Several Board members supported the proposal to amend the way in which students are called forward in Commencement ceremonies by degree classification and that this would now be done alphabetically. It was noted that successfully completing a degree programme was an achievement for all students and that those who are to receive Gold medals would still be called separately.

Following comments from Board members, the importance of respecting personal information at Commencement ceremonies was acknowledged. In addition, it was noted that every student has a different experience and pathway during their academic studies and it is important to acknowledge every accomplishment. It was also noted that students themselves had raised their discontent with the existing practice.

In response to comments from Board members not in favour of the proposal, the Registrar advised that a student's academic achievement can be acknowledged in many other ways including on the academic transcripts, on the degree certificate and that a graduation should be a day of celebration for all.

Action/Decision

009.01 The Board discussed and considered the memorandum from the Registrar dated 6 September 2022.

009.02 It was agreed that the Registrar would liaise with a Board member in respect of the proposed amendments to the Schedules to the Chapter on Committees and that a revised proposal would be brought to a future meeting of the Board.

009.03 Board considered and approved the proposed change to Section 1(6) of Schedule 2 to the Chapter on the Senate.

009.04 The Board approved changes to sections 12(3)(a) and 12(4)(a) of Schedule 2 to the Chapter on the Senate.

009.05 The Board approved the principle of making the Latin terminology more gender inclusive and, in advance, approved the changes proposed to multiple sections of Schedule 2 to the Chapter on the Senate by the Public Orator in this regard.

The dissent of Professor Alyn Stacey and Mr Byrne was noted to the proposed amendments to Schedule 2 to the Chapter on the Senate in respect of calling students alphabetically rather than by degree classification at Commencement ceremonies.

BD/22-23/010 Provost's Report

The Provost provided the Board with a verbal report under the following headings:

(i) Energy situation

The Provost advised the Board that it is possible that the University will experience electricity outages and disruption to supply in the coming months. She noted that the Chief Operating Officer and her team are actively preparing for these scenarios and, for example, have purchased battery operated torches for those in campus accommodation and are exploring ways of managing planned outages.

The Chief Operating Officer advised that she was liaising with research teams and co-ordinating planning with Irish Universities Association (IUA) in respect of the energy crisis.

It was noted that it is disappointing to be facing further disruptions to the University's activities but that a lot of planning has been done and there will be further communications to come.

The Provost noted that there will also be opportunities to drive change and that the Vice-President for Biodiversity and Climate Action will lead out in this regard. She also noted the rising cost of the University's energy bill and advised that she will continue to work with the Treasurer/Chief Financial Officer, the Government and others in this regard.

(ii) Recognition and Reward

The Provost reconfirmed for the Board that the second round of academic promotions, as previously committed to, is to proceed. She advised Board members that she had been liaising with Human Resources to introduce some minor changes to enhance the existing process, details of which will be brought to the October Board meeting.

In addition, the Provost advised the Board that a comprehensive review of the promotions process for all staff will commence in the current semester and will have inputs from many voices and disciplines across the University.

It was also noted that the working group established to examine the issue of precarious employment is due to commence its work in the coming weeks.

(iii) Governance

With reference to the changes to the HEA legislation, the Provost advised that it is timely to give consideration to the general governance and management of the University. She noted that a comprehensive review of committees is to be undertaken with a view to ensuring important issues such as Climate Action and Biodiversity are strategically considered. There will also be an opportunity to further consider the work of the Board and to facilitate wider participation from all groups in the University.

(iv) Legacies Review

The Provost advised that she has asked the Senior Dean to develop a process and proposals in respect of the evidence-based management of legacy issues and that these proposals will be brought to a future meeting of the Board.

(v) Science Gallery/ Douglas Hyde Gallery

Noting the importance of building on lessons learned, the Provost advised the Board that much consideration is being given to ways in which the Science Gallery might flourish in the future. A proposal in this respect is being prepared for the Board which would explore the possibility of establishing the Science Gallery as a company, with strong financial oversight and for the physical space to be used for public exhibitions and public activities on topics that matter.

In respect of the Legacies Review and following comments from a Board member it was noted that it will be important not only to reflect on lessons from the past for the here and now but also for the future.

In response to comments and a query from a Board member, the Provost clarified the rising cost of energy for the University.

Responding to comments from a Board member in respect of student accommodation, the Bursar/Director of Strategic Innovation clarified that the Printing House Square building project is almost at completion and the Provost noted that everything feasible is being done to complete this project with a view to assisting the accommodation crisis being faced by students.

Action/Decision

009.01 The Board received the report from the Provost.

BD/22-23/010 Any Other Urgent Business

There were no other items of urgent business.

SECTION B**BD/22-23/011 Board Business****(i) Callover**

The Board noted the callover updated to 15 June 2022.

(ii) Outcomes

The Board noted the Board outcomes from the meeting of 15 June 2022.

BD/22-23/012 Audit Committee

The Board noted and approved the draft minutes of the meeting of 10 March 2022 as well as the draft Audit Committee terms of reference and the draft Internal Audit Charter. In response to a query from a Board member in respect of private sessions, the Treasurer/Chief Financial Officer clarified that the holding of such meetings was standard practice for an Audit Committee.

BD/22-23/013 Coiste na Gaeilge

The Board noted and approved the draft minutes of the meeting of 4 April 2022.

SECTION C**BD/22-23/014 Administrative Procedures in the Summer Session**

The Board noted the memorandum from the Secretary to the College dated 6 September 2022.

BD/22-23/015 Membership of Committees of Board and Council

The Board noted and approved the Memorandum from the Registrar dated 6 September 2022.

BD/22-23/016 Revised Annual Governance Statement

The Board noted and approved the memorandum from the Secretary to the College dated 12 September 2022.

In response to a query from a Board member, the Secretary to the College clarified that the statement related to matters which occurred in the previous financial year 2020-2021.

BD/22-23/017 Head of School

The Board noted and approved the nomination of Professor Colin Doherty as Head of School of Medicine from 15 September 2022 to the end of the 2024-25 academic term.

BD/22-23/018 Prizes and Other Awards**(i) School of Medicine Prizes**

The Board noted and approved the Memorandum from the School of Medicine dated 24 August 2022

(ii) A.J. Leventhal Scholarship

The Board noted and approved the Memorandum from the Dean of Faculty of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences dated 17 August 2022

BD/22-23/019 Master Agreement and Service Level Agreements between The Lir and Trinity

The Board noted and approved the memorandum from the Bursar and Director of Strategic Innovation, Professor Eleanor Denny.

BD/22-23/020 Amendments to the Trinity College Dublin Annual Report 2020/2021

The Board noted and approved the Memorandum from Trinity Communications dated 5 September 2022.

BD/22-23/021 Student Conduct and Capacity Committee Membership 2022-23

The Board noted and approved the Memorandum from the Registrar dated 6 September 2022.

BD/22-23/022 Foundation Scholarship – Central Scholarship Committee

The Board noted and approved the Memorandum from the Secretary to the Foundation Scholarship

– Central Scholarship Committee dated 22 August 2022.

SECTION D

In compliance with the Data Protection Acts this information is restricted.

Signed:

Date: