

The University of Dublin

Trinity College

A meeting of the University Council was held on Wednesday 8 April 2009 at 11.15 am in the Board Room.

<i>Present</i>	Provost, Vice-Provost/Chief Academic Officer, Registrar, Senior Lecturer, Senior Tutor, Dean of Graduate Studies, Dr C Laudet, Dr C MacMaolain, Professor J Wickham, Dr V Kelly, Dr M Lyons, Dr D O'Sullivan, Dr D Brennan, Dr K Johnson, Dr A O'Gara, Professor G Whyte, Ms C Ní Dhubhda, Ms A Murphy.
<i>Apologies</i>	Dean of Research, Dean of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences, Dr C Morris, Dean of Engineering, Mathematics and Science, Professor J Fitzpatrick, Dean of Health Sciences, Professor M McCarron, Professor M Radomski, Ms D Flynn, Mr H Sullivan, Mr F Hughes, Mr D Walsh, Mr D Kavanagh, Ms A Mc Gowan, Chief Operating Officer.
<i>In attendance</i>	Librarian, Acting Secretary, Academic Secretary.
<i>Observer</i>	Secretary to the Scholars (Ms N Cleary).

SECTION A

CL/08-09/124 Minutes of the meetings of the 4th March 2009 and the 10th March 2009 were approved.

CL/08-09/125 Matters Arising

- (i) Referring to Actum CL/08-09/106, the Academic Secretary informed Council that a proposal regarding suitable arrangements for Senior Freshman students in the Schools of Dental Science, Nursing & Midwifery, Education and Medicine to take the Foundation Scholarship examination in January each year will be brought to the next meeting of Council.
- (ii) Referring to Actum CL/08-09/107, the Vice-Provost/Chief Academic Officer informed Council that a submission on up-skilling / re-skilling has been sent to the Higher Education Authority (HEA). The submission will be considered by a working group established by the HEA comprising representatives from the Department of Education & Science, the Irish Universities Association, the Institutes of Technology and the HEA. He noted that the submission will be circulated to Schools for comment and input.

- (ii) Referring to Actum CL/08-09/108, the Provost informed Council that a submission to the PRTL (Programme for Research in Third Level Institutions) Cycle 5 was made to the HEA and included the TCD-UCD Innovation Alliance.

CL/08-09/126 Provost's Report The Provost informed Council that the College has received formal notification from the HEA that a general moratorium has been applied to the filling of posts by recruitment, promotion, or the payment of an allowance for the performance of duties at a higher level with effect from the 27th March 2009. This intervention in the governance of the university raises fundamental concerns regarding University autonomy, enshrined in the Universities Act, 1997. The Department of Finance is developing an employment control framework for the universities, and the Chair of the HEA has met with representatives from the Department of Finance on this matter. The IUA has made a submission to the HEA on the recruitment moratorium, and the universities are now awaiting further clarification.

The Provost also noted the education cuts announced in the emergency mini Budget, April 2009. Referring to the need to maintain a creative environment in these difficult economic times, he noted recent positive developments within Trinity, namely, the launch of the postgraduate advisory service, Trinity News receiving the award of newspaper of the year in the national student media awards, discoveries in the treatment of eczema and discoveries in respect of the benefits of omega-3 fatty acids in the treatment of patients undergoing major cancer surgery.

CL/08-09/127 Committee Review Group A report from the Committee Review Group dated March 2009 was circulated with papers for the meeting. The Vice-Provost/Chief Academic Officer introduced the item and noted the membership of the Review Group and previous reports on College governance. The purpose of the first report is to obtain comments from Council and Board on the main recommendations of the Committees Review Group before proceeding to more detailed drafting. If the recommendations of this first report are accepted, a final report will be prepared for Council and Board which will include any changes recommended and revised terms of reference of relevant committees.

Speaking to the recommendations on definitions of committees, the Vice-Provost/Chief Academic Officer commented on the need to use nomenclature that represents the function and responsibility of the committee or group in question. The proposed definitions attempt to provide for this and the main categories of committees recommended are: principal committees of Board; compliance committees; sub-committees of Council; working groups; advisory committees; and, taskforces of Board, Council and Principal Committees. The Committee Review Group recommends that the Research Committee, the Graduate Studies Committee, the Undergraduate Studies Committee, and the International Committee should be sub-committees of Council. In reviewing existing principal committees it was felt that there is a need to have principal committees of Board for matters relating to finance, estates, human resources, information, and student services. These principal committees should have a policy and oversight role and should not have a management function. It is important that appropriate management decision-making structures are in place to implement policy decisions. Matters relating to management are, however, outside the remit of the Committee Review Group. The Vice-Provost/Chief Academic Officer commented on the recommendations in respect of advisory committees, working groups, and taskforces, and concluded by drawing Council's attention to the recommendations on the reporting arrangements to Board and Council.

Council welcomed the first report of the Committee Review Group. The nomenclature used for the committees of Council was discussed, and it was agreed that given the primacy of Council in the Statutes and in superintending the academic affairs of College, it would be more appropriate to refer to the recommended sub-committees of Council as 'Academic Committees'. The reporting arrangements of administrative and support areas to Board was discussed and it was agreed that Council should also receive copies of annual reports from these areas. In response to a query, the Provost confirmed that Council has the power to request a principal committee to consider a matter on behalf of Council, noting that principal committees and academic committees are instruments of Board and Council. The Vice-Provost/Chief Academic Officer, responding to a query, explained that academic committees of Council are normally responsible for implementing Council policy. For example, the Graduate Studies Committee and the Undergraduate Studies Committee consider policy issues and members perform an active role in fulfilling specific academic-related tasks within their respective Schools, such as coordinating Calendar entries and new course proposals, and implementing modularisation.

Council noted and supported the recommendations of the Report of the Committee Review Group subject to changing 'sub-committees' to 'academic committees' of Council, and to recommending that Council also should receive copies of annual reports from administrative and support areas.

CL/08-09/128 Graduate Studies

- (i) **M.Phil in European Studies** A copy of a proposal dated 19th February 2009 for the introduction of a course leading to the award of an M.Phil. in European Studies was circulated with papers for the meeting. The Dean of Graduate Studies introduced the proposal noting that it had been approved by the Graduate Studies Committee and had also received a positive external review assessment. Students of the Masters degree in European Studies will receive a thorough grounding in postgraduate research and learning, enabling eligible graduates to proceed to the PhD register. The M.Phil. degree will also be an effective self-contained qualification with a major component of transferable skills, equipping students for life-long learning and ensuring that graduates possess the skills to progress their careers outside the university sector. The M.Phil. builds on the success of the Bachelor degree in European Studies. There is considerable scope for sharing modules within the School of Languages, Literatures and Cultural Studies' suite of M.Phil. programmes as well as drawing on options taught outside the School. A Chair of European Studies has been identified as a first priority for strategic development within the School and a recent appointee has particular strengths in the study of Eastern Europe.

Council in discussing the proposal queried why there was no module on European Law in the course. The Registrar, commenting on his involvement in the development of the proposal, noted that the M.Phil. wishes to build on the strength of the undergraduate degree course in European Studies and to focus on history and identity, interfacing between cultural and historical issues. The Head of the School of Social Sciences and Philosophy expressed concern about the proposed high level of input from staff members in the School of Social Sciences and Philosophy, noting that the M.Phil. is not a Social Science degree. The Dean of Graduate Studies undertook to convey these concerns to the course coordinator. It was suggested that the course might better serve the economy and the employment needs of graduates by being

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more applied in nature. The Registrar commented that the School did consider a second parallel course with a more applied approach, but felt that there was demand for a theoretical degree. It was commented that graduates with an applied undergraduate degree would be interested in a more theoretical approach. It was explained that the Bachelor in European Studies took many years to establish itself, and it was felt that there should be no confusion about the nature of the M.Phil. in European Studies: it needs to be clear that it is not a course about contemporary institutions. The Senior Lecturer noted that syllabus for the core module did not seem to include any reverse perspective from other cultures on Europe as the 'other'.

Council approved the course proposal leading to the award of M.Phil in European Studies.

- (ii) **M.Sc in Advanced Radiotherapy Practice** A copy of a proposal dated 19th February 2009 for the introduction of a course leading to the award of an M.Sc. in Advanced Radiotherapy Practice was circulated with papers for the meeting. The Dean of Graduate Studies introduced the proposal noting that it had been approved by the Graduate Studies Committee and had also received a positive external review assessment. The course aims to develop students' knowledge and skills in the advanced radiotherapy management of cancer patients and to enable students to critically evaluate and participate in research in this area. There is a growing demand for postgraduate education and advanced practice training for radiation therapists in all clinical departments. With the expansion of radiotherapy services in line with the National Cancer Strategy, radiation therapists must develop in an advanced practice role in order to maximise the potential of their unique skill mix. Currently there are no postgraduate courses in radiation therapy available in Ireland and radiation therapists wishing to gain further education must enrol on courses in Britain.

Council discussed the proposal, and in response to a query the Dean of Graduate Studies commented that there has not been any discussion on the possibility of the M.Sc. in Advanced Radiotherapy Practice becoming a feeder course to a Clinical PhD. It was noted that the contact hours appeared to be very high, and the Dean undertook to seek the rationale for this. Responding to a query, the Dean noted that the quota of five reflected the minimum number of students required to achieve a breakeven financial position. It was agreed that new course proposals should ensure there is sufficient demand and should achieve a quota that justifies the level of resources required to deliver it.

Council approved the course proposal leading to the award of M.Sc. in Advanced Radiotherapy Practice with a postgraduate diploma exit option.

- CL/08-09/129 Discussion Document on Fitness to Practice Policy** A discussion document on a fitness to practice policy for College was circulated with papers for the meeting. The Dean of Students introduced this item noting that the document was discussed at the Undergraduate Studies Committee and the Graduate Studies Committee. The document contains guidelines for Schools and Course Committees on the content of school/departmental fitness to practice policies, together with recommendations on new procedures for dealing with fitness to practice cases. The Dean outlined the substantive elements of the policy noting that relevant Schools/disciplines should when formulating a policy address (i) the competencies that are being assessed in the

specific course and/or placement, (ii) whether the competency requirement is justifiable in relation to each specific course and/or placement, (iii) how competencies are assessed, and (iv) in the case of a student with a disability, whether the School/discipline has engaged with the Disability Service to determine how the student's needs might be reasonably accommodated. Cases raising fitness to practice issues (FTP) fall into three categories: cases where a student is deemed unsuitable to participate in a placement as a result of the outcome of Garda vetting procedures; disciplinary offences; and all other non-disciplinary cases. He took the meeting through the recommended procedures, and noted that an important initial decision in relation to a FTP case other than those involving Garda vetting, is whether it should be characterised as a non-disciplinary matter to be dealt with by the School Fitness to Practice Committee or as a disciplinary offence to be dealt with under College disciplinary procedures.

Relevant Schools should have a FTP Committee and comprise three members of staff designated by the Faculty Executive. There should also be a College FTP Committee, and an appeal against the decision of the School FTP Committee should be brought to the College FTP Committee. An appeal against the decision of the College FTP Committee should lie to the College Visitors, and depending on the circumstances, students affected by decisions under this policy have recourse to the Equality Tribunal, if the Ombudsman Bill (Amendment) Bill 2008 is passed, to the Ombudsman. The Dean of Students drew Council's attention to the proposed 'power to suspend' procedures and the specific issues concerning students with disabilities and in particular statutory obligations. In conclusion, he noted that the decisions of a School FTP Committee and the College FTP Committee and decisions of the Visitors relating to FTP issues shall be copied to the Senior Lecturer who shall propose amendments to the College Fitness to Practice Policy when appropriate.

Council welcomed the proposed Fitness to Practice Policy and in respect to the proposed review procedures, it was suggested that the Senior Lecturer may not be the most appropriate Officer to propose amendments to the policy as the policy applies to both undergraduate and postgraduate students. In response to a query, the Dean of Students noted that the requirement for a layperson on the College FTP Committee reflects current practice in the Health Sciences areas. The layperson will be external to College and will not be part of the profession in question. He also confirmed that FTP Committees should meet on demand. Where a student causes harm to others and does not have a mental health difficulty, existing College disciplinary procedures would be enforced. The Dean of Students commented that a student may be certified by her/his own doctor but that there would be circumstances when a College appointed doctor would be necessary. It was clarified that the policy was discipline specific and as such it was not necessary for all Schools to have a FTP Committee.

Council noted and approved the Fitness to Practice Policy.

CL/08-09/130 Quality Review The Provost's Report to Council on the review of the School of Languages, Literatures and Cultural Studies dated the 25th March 2009 was circulated with papers for the meeting. The Provost commented on the importance of a vibrant School of languages to the health and diversity of the College, and noted that the provision of modern languages in a university context faces many challenges worldwide. He took the meeting through the reviewers' conclusions. According to the reviewers the study of languages, literatures and cultures at Trinity College Dublin has a long and distinguished history and that the tradition of excellence in teaching and research in these areas continues today. The School, however, still bears many

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of the hallmarks of its constituent departments despite the moves towards standardisation and harmonisation. It also carries a heavy debt due in part, the reviewers feel, to the effects of the ARAM and also as a result of the 5% cut in the University's budget arising from the worsening economic climate. In this difficult financial environment, the Reviewers believe that the continuing success and international renown of languages at TCD depend upon the School adopting methods and structures which acknowledge current economic realities. The Reviewers suggest that a properly integrated School structure would reduce the amount of administration, the duplication of effort and the proliferation of meetings about which many members of staff complain.

The reviewers remark that present levels of research quality/productivity in the School are very respectable, with excellent work being done in some quarters. In order to maintain this, the Reviewers recommend the introduction of a more effective research management system which would be able to monitor research productivity and adjust workloads accordingly. They feel that proactive leadership from an empowered Director of Postgraduate Teaching and Learning, reporting within a unified School structure, would lead to considerable streamlining of current practices, and further noted that there is scope for growth in the number of postgraduate students in the School. The Reviewers recommend that all undergraduate students in the School should spend Year 3 of their programme abroad. This, they feel, would mean that (a) TCD language graduates would be more comparable with their UK counterparts, (b) potential research time would be freed-up for members of staff whose teaching loads often appear to be heavier than in comparator UK universities, and (c) there would be some financial savings accruing to the School from the reduction in the number of classes taught. They believe that the introduction of semesters and modules offers the opportunity for a root and branch overhaul of the curriculum design.

The Reviewers were greatly impressed by the dedication shown by all the Executive Officers to their respective departments. They note, however, that many of the School's administrative structures remain as they were under the previous departmental system which has led to problems with timetabling and accessing student records. They acknowledge, however, that some of these issues can only be addressed at College level through the implementation of improved central IT systems support. They recommend that a single office be set up and that the remit of the Executive Officers should be widened.

The reviewers report that there appears to be no coherent structure in the allocation of ancillary teaching support across the language areas, and express concern that these essential members of the teaching staff shoulder sometimes enormous workloads with apparently no compulsory training provision, little obvious career progression, no support for continuing professional development or research in poor physical working conditions. The reviewers comment on the limitations of the existing space occupied by the School and addressing management issues they suggest that the School should be restructured along a clearer line-management model, with models of responsibility and accountability more clearly delineated.

In discussing the report, Council commented on the need to address the academic workload issue which has appeared in many of the review reports to-date. The Vice-Provost/Chief Academic Officer confirmed that his Office was currently coordinating responses from Schools in respect of undergraduate teaching workloads, and commented that this exercise is more complex than anticipated due to, among other things, the different approaches to timetabling within and across Schools. Council discussed the difficulties in some Schools relating to the existing reporting lines of

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Executive Officers staff. Executive Officers do not report to the School Administrator and in some Schools, especially multi-disciplinary Schools, this arrangement militates against efficient coordination of academic administration. In response to a concern about the composition of the review panels, the Vice-Provost/Chief Academic Officer commented that the predominance of reviewers from British universities is being addressed and that Schools are now required to nominate potential reviewers from continental Europe. He noted that review panels, especially in the Health Sciences and Science areas, have members from continental Europe, the United States and as far afield as Australia. The existing policy of not having Irish reviewers on the review panel was discussed and the view was expressed that someone familiar with the Irish higher education system might be a useful addition to the panel.

Addressing the recommendations, one Council member noted that Directors of Teaching and Learning are not always empowered to carry out their roles and responsibilities. It was noted that the recommendation in respect of students spending Year 3 abroad was not realistic in the current Two-Subject Moderatorship structure (TSM). Acknowledging the need to review the TSM, it was nonetheless felt that this would be a behemoth task. The Vice-Provost/Chief Academic Officer informed Council that the Staff Office is developing a proposal on staff mentoring and this is expected to be discussed at the next meeting of the Personnel and Appointments Committee. He also undertook to liaise with the Staff Secretary on the reporting lines of School Executive Officers.

Council noted the review report on the School of Languages, Literatures and Cultural Studies and approved the following recommendations.

- (i) *If possible, all students in SLLCS (apart from Irish) follow a model similar to that of the European Studies model and spend their 3rd year abroad.*
- (ii) *A member of staff (e.g. the Director of UG Teaching and Learning) should be bought out for an entire academic year, to re-design the School's offerings, ensuring standardisation and commonality. S/he should be appropriately empowered to lead change.*
- (iii) *A more formal School management and committee structure should be introduced. This would include enhanced authority for the Head of School and, for example, the introduction of an integrated School Undergraduate Learning and Teaching Committee (alongside similar structures for Research and Postgraduate affairs).*
- (iv) *A workload time allocation model should be adopted across the School.*
- (v) *Reorganisation of the role and accommodation of Executive Officers, preferably with a strongly function-based model.*
- (vi) *Harmonization of teaching patterns, marking and assessment across the School.*
- (vii) *The School becomes a Cost Centre.*
- (viii) *Reform the punitive resource allocation model for SLLCS, especially in regard of recruitment of non-EU PG students and the lack of recognition given to quality of research outputs.*

Council also approved that:

- (ix) *The School of Languages, Literatures and Cultural Studies working closely with the Dean of the Faculty of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences, and other relevant Academic Officers, should consider the detailed recommendations of the Review Report and draw up an implementation plan for Council approval,*

- (x) *College should (a) ensure adequate support and structures for early career staff mentoring, and (b) ensure adequate support for career progression and continuing professional development for ancillary teaching support staff, and*
- (xi) *that College should conduct a comprehensive review of the Two-Subject Moderatorship programme.*

CL/08-09/131 Undergraduate Open Day A memorandum from the Senior Lecturer and the Academic Secretary dated the 1st April 2009 was circulated with papers for the meeting. Speaking to the memorandum the Senior Lecturer informed Council that following the meeting of Council of 4th March 2009, the Academic Secretary liaised with the Schools on the timing of Open Day in the new academic year structure. All 24 Schools and the Course Offices for BESS, TSM and Science were contacted and requested to complete a template indicating their preference for holding Open Day in Week 7 (Study Week) or Week 11 (Teaching Week), and for comments on holding Open Day on a Saturday. Twenty two Schools and the three Course Offices responded. Twelve (12) respondents indicated a preference for Week 7, and 13 indicated a preference for Week 11. Seven respondents supported holding Open Day on a Saturday, whereas 18 did not support this. The Senior Lecturer referred Council to the reasons given in favour and not in favour of holding Open Day in Week 7 and in Week 11 and the reasons given to support holding and not holding Open Day on a Saturday.

While there was no majority view in favour of holding Open Day in Week 7 or Week 11 from among the academic community, the Admissions Office expressed concerns about holding Open Day in Week 7 as the CAO-Higher Education Institutions information sessions for Guidance Counsellors in different regions across Ireland are held during this week. These sessions, organised by the CAO, are held in high esteem by the Secondary Schools, and holding Open Day in the middle of these would have an adverse impact on attendance. The organisation of Open Day is, in addition, resource intensive and if held in Week 7, additional resources would be required as the Admissions Liaison Officer and the Admissions Officer would not be able to attend the CAO event and other recruitment fairs held at this time.

There was a long discussion on this topic, and views in favour of Week 7 and Week 11 were considered. It was concluded that Open Day 2009 should be held in Week 11 and that the Admissions Office should consult with second-level schools on the best time to hold the Undergraduate Open Day in the future.

Council approved holding the Undergraduate Open Day in Week 11 of Michaelmas Term 2009.

CL/08-09/132 Any other business

- (i) **Erasmus Smith's Chair of Mathematics (1762)** Under Other Business the Council noted a memorandum from the Dean of the Faculty of Engineering, Mathematics and Science tabled dated 3 April 2009 and approved the membership of the Search Committee for the Chair, as follows:

Provost
 Vice-Provost/Chief Academic Officer
 Dean of Engineering, Mathematics and Science
 Head of School of Mathematics
 Professor S Shatashvili
 Professor C O'Sullivan
 External Assessors

- (ii) **Council Membership** Council noted the retirement of Dr K Johnson, elected research representative, from the membership of Council and recorded appreciation for her contribution during her tenure.

SECTION B

CL/08-09/133 Graduate Studies Committee The Council noted and approved the recommendations as set out in the minutes of the Graduate Studies Committee from its meeting of 26 March 2009, which had been circulated. The Dean of Graduate Studies drew Council's attention to Actum GS/08-09/037, Self Financing Courses, and noted that the minute incorrectly states that Board and Council made the decision to close down self-financing courses.

CL/08-09/134 Undergraduate Studies Committee The Council noted and approved the recommendations as set out in the minutes of the Undergraduate Studies Committee from its meeting of 3 March 2009, which had been circulated.

CL/08-09/135 Information Policy Committee The Council noted and approved the recommendations as set out in the minutes of the Information Policy Committee from its meeting of 20 January 2009, which had been circulated.

CL/08-09/136 Quality Committee The Council noted and approved the recommendations as set out in the minutes of the Quality Committee from its meeting of 11 March 2009, which had been circulated.

The Vice-Provost/Chief Academic Officer drew Council's attention to Actum QC/08-09/005. Council approved the Quality Committee recommendations that:

- (i) Module evaluations should become mandatory but remain confidential to the module lecturer(s), the Director of Teaching and Learning, and the Head of School. A summary report of modules reviewed as part of a course should be synthesised, unidentified, and used as part of the quality improvement process and to provide feedback to students.
- (ii) Module evaluations should be conducted at School or Course Office level.

The Vice-Provost/Chief Academic Officer drew Council's attention to Actum QC/08-09/007. Council noted the deferral of the reviews of the School of Biochemistry & Immunology and the School of Business from 2009/10 to 2010/11, and the recommendation that the Office of the Vice-Provost be reviewed in 2010/11.

CL/08-09/137 Student Services Committee The Council noted and approved the recommendations as set out in the minutes of the Student Services Committee from its meeting of 3 February 2009, which had been circulated.

CL/08-09/138 International Committee The Council noted and approved the recommendations as set out in the minutes of the International Committee from its meeting of 22 February 2009, which had been circulated.

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SECTION C

CL/08-09/139 Higher Degrees—Reports of Examiners The Council noted and approved the reports of examiners on candidates for higher degrees, approved by the sub-committee of Board and Council on 4 March 2009 and noted by Board on 1 April 2009.

Higher Degrees by Research Alone

PhD Thomas Barron; Anna Drury; Thomas Greene; Nicola Grenham; Brendan Niall Holland; Graham Little; Leanne O’Connor; Ciarán O’Reilly; Emma Brigid Sheils; Maria Tzoneva Stamenova; Peter Rigney; George Zavershinsky;

MLitt Kyra Hild; Danielle Kedan; James Murphy O’Connor.

CL/08-09/140 Revised General Procedures and Protocol for Filling of Chairs The Council noted and approved a memorandum from the Acting Secretary to the College, circulated dated 6 April 2009.

CL/08-09/141 School of Nursing and Midwifery - Director of Teaching and Learning (Undergraduate) The Council noted and approved the nomination of Dr C McCabe from October 2009 to September 2010.

CL/08-09/142 Civil, Structural and Environmental Engineering - Headship of Discipline/Department The Council noted and approved the nomination of Mr L W Gill to Headship for three years from 13 July 2009.

CL/08-09/143 Two-subject Moderatorship Title Changes The Council noted and approved a memorandum from the TSM Course Administrator, circulated dated 20 February 2009.

SECTION D

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

Signed

Date

Incorporating any amendments approved at subsequent Council meetings