

*Incorporating any amendments approved at subsequent Council meetings*

The University of Dublin

Trinity College

A meeting of the University Council was held on Wednesday 23 November 2011 at 11.15 am in the Board Room.

- Present* Provost, Vice-Provost/Chief Academic Officer, Registrar, Senior Lecturer, Senior Tutor, Dean of Graduate Studies, Dean of Research, Dean of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences, Professor M Ó Siochrú, Professor J Wickham, Professor G Watson, Professor D O'Donovan, Professor J P Labrador, Dean of Health Sciences, Professor T Connor, Professor D Brennan, Professor S Smith, Professor J Nunn, Ms D Jones, Dr A O'Gara, Professor J Ohlmeyer, Professor A Piesse, Ms R Barry, Ms S Leydon, Mr D Ferrick, Ms L Aljohmani, Mr M McAndrew, Dr D Fitzgerald.
- Apologies* Professor E O'Dell, Professor Z Rodgers, Dean of Engineering, Mathematics and Science, Professor A McNabola, Dr H Mannan, Mr R J Smith (GSU), Secretary to the Scholars (Mr B Roantree).
- In attendance* Librarian, Secretary to the College, Academic Secretary, Chief Operating Officer, Head of Central Academic Administration Services.

SECTION A

- CL/11-12/046 Statutory Declaration**  
New members attending Council for the first time made the statutory declaration, and were welcomed by the Provost.
- CL/11-12/047 Minutes of the meetings** of the 21<sup>st</sup> and 26<sup>th</sup> October 2011 were approved and signed.
- CL/11-12/048 Matters Arising:**
- (i) *Review of the Office of the Vice-Provost:* In response to a query, the Academic Secretary confirmed that discussions are taking place regarding the establishment of an Academic Registry at Magennis Court (off Pearse Street) to enable the provision of an integrated service to applicants, students, staff, graduates and the public, and to maximise the benefits of the GeneSIS project. Responding to concerns about the off-campus location, the Provost advised that the campus exists wherever Trinity College is located and noted recent developments at the Pearse Street site.
  - (ii) *Membership of Board Sub-Committees:* The Secretary advised that in order to reflect the role of Vice-Provost as the College's Chief Academic Officer, Board had approved the replacement of the Senior Lecturer with the Vice-

Provost/Chief Academic Officer as a member of the sub-committees (i) on Higher Degrees, and (ii) to approve the Proctors' Lists for Commencements.

#### CL/11-12/049 Provost's Report

- (i) *Budget 2012*: The Provost reported that the College had made a pre-budget submission to government through the IUA. The details of the Government's Budget for 2012, however, will not be known until the Ministerial announcements on the 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> December, 2011. The Planning Group will consider the impact on College and how to address this.

In relation to a query regarding possible discontinuation in the provision of local authority grants to postgraduate students, the Dean of Graduate Studies advised that the situation was unclear and was unlikely to be clarified in advance of delivery of the Budget. Following preliminary analysis, students in receipt of local authority funding were mostly concentrated in the area of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences. Council recognised that this issue was of great concern to students, and if implemented would increase their financial burden, while at the same time intensify the demand on College support services. The Provost's recommended that the Dean of Graduate Studies, together with the Graduate Students' Union, make representation to the Minister for Education on this matter.

On a related issue, the Council noted the intention of the Students' Union to provide emergency food hampers to Trinity College students in need over Christmas.

- (ii) *National Strategy for Higher Education*: The Provost advised that the Irish National Strategy for Higher Education to 2030, commonly referred to as the Hunt Report, was being led by the Higher Education Authority (HEA). The Strategy proposes, among other things, the development of a coherent framework for higher education which promotes inter-institutional cooperation and regional clusters. He noted the importance of engaging fully with proposals for implementation of the various strands of the Strategy, and the need for Trinity College to proactively defend its position as a university of global consequences, while recognising and strengthening engagement at local, regional and national levels. One member suggested that College should consider benchmarking itself against other city-located universities which make a difference locally while at the same time actively participating on the global stage.

#### CL/11-12/050 Draft Institutional Self-Assessment Report - Quality Review / Institutional Review

A memorandum dated 15 November, 2011 from the Vice-Provost/Chief Academic Officer had been circulated together with a draft Institutional Self-Assessment Report (ISAR). In introducing this item, the Vice-Provost/Chief Academic Officer advised Council that the College would undergo an institutional review of the effectiveness of its quality assurance and enhancement procedures in accordance with the Universities Act, 1997. The review would be conducted by the Irish Universities Quality Board (IUQB) and required the production of a self-assessment document and a number of visits by a Review Team, with the main visit scheduled for 12-15 March 2012. A Steering Group, chaired by the Vice-Provost/Chief Academic Officer, had been

established to manage the process and oversee the production of the self-assessment document, which would be submitted to the IUQB by 19 January 2012.

The current draft incorporated responses from the following Committees: Quality Committee (18 October 2011); Research Committee (20 October 2011); Undergraduate Studies Committee (1 November 2011); Graduate Studies Committee (3 November 2011). The Senior Administrative Management Group is expected to respond at its next scheduled meeting. In addition, many responses received through the Faculties, the student body, and an on-line consultation process have also been incorporated. While the draft self-assessment circulated was still a working document requiring additional sections in respect of methodology and a conclusion, the Vice-Provost/Chief Academic Officer was keen to receive the comments of Council at this stage. She noted that the concluding chapter should focus on the challenges to maintaining quality standards in the face of considerable financial constraints and the growing inability of the College to manage independently the annual budget allocated by the HEA.

In the discussion which followed, Council members made the following comments:

- (i) There was a need to improve the balance between the narrative and evaluative content in certain sections of the ISAR.
- (ii) For developments in progress, information on how progress was being measured (eg, process of modularisation) should be provided wherever possible.
- (iii) The Report would benefit from the inclusion of:
  - (a) comparative data where possible;
  - (b) a section on the College's commitment and ability to recruit, select and retain outstanding and world class staff;
  - (c) information on how issues identified in the previous review had been addressed by the College.
- (iv) The Report should emphasise what the College was doing to overcome any challenges encountered and demonstrate the strength of the College's ability to deal with the issues it faces.
- (v) The scope of the review should be clearly articulated and understood to ensure that the College community is aware of the purpose of the ISAR and to avoid confusion when the review visitation takes place.

In responding to some of the comments, the Vice-Provost/Chief Academic Officer stated that the document was not intended to be an evaluation of how the College was performing in research and teaching; its purpose was to provide an evaluation of the quality assurance and enhancement procedures in place. Given the funding crisis, a challenge in writing the document was achieving a balance between the effectiveness of current quality procedures and the threats to maintaining standards in light of the worsening financial forecast for the coming years. On a related matter, Council noted that the Planning Group had commenced a mid-term review of the College's Strategic Plan to be completed within the academic year 2011/12. Leaders have been appointed for each of the key areas to evaluate progress made to date, to review key targets in light of the transformed external environment, and to re-balance priorities.

The Vice-Provost/Chief Academic Officer thanked members of Council for their comments, which would be incorporated into the revised final draft for approval by the Provost.

#### **CL/11-12/051 Undergraduate Course Proposal**

A course proposal for a Bachelor in Science in Physiotherapy, in conjunction with the Singapore Institute of Technology (SIT), dated 16<sup>th</sup> November, 2011 from the Discipline of Physiotherapy, School of Medicine, had been circulated. In introducing this item, the Senior Lecturer advised Council that the course proposal had been developed following a number of site visits by the School of Medicine to the Singapore Institute of Technology (SIT). The proposal was supported by the School of Medicine and the Faculty Dean, and had received a favourable review from the external reviewer. The professional accreditation body, the Irish Society of Chartered Physiotherapists, had agreed to provide accreditation for the award. The Undergraduate Studies Committee (USC) recommended the proposal to Council subject to certain provisions which have been incorporated in the proposal before Council. The USC had also discussed a similar proposal from the Discipline of Occupational Therapy, but there was still some work to do on the proposal, and it would be brought to Council at a later date.

Students admitted to the course would have completed a three-year diploma at Nanyang Polytechnic and have professional recognition on the basis of the diploma course having professional accreditation. They would embark on a one-year 60 credit course delivered by Trinity College Dublin in conjunction with SIT, which would include a six-week immersion course when the students would study in Ireland. The course would lead to the award of a Bachelor in Science. It was noted that the one-year nature of the course recognised the prior qualification, similar to the one year, post-registration courses offered in Nursing and Midwifery.

There was a very strong academic and strategic rationale for this course. The proposal enabled the College to develop a footprint in the region and consider the development of similar proposals in other areas. It would require a derogation from Council in relation to the admission regulation which requires students to complete at least two academic years in College in order to complete a degree (F10 §15). It was noted that this regulation may need to be reassessed in the future as the College considers the area of lifelong learning, and the recognition of prior qualifications both in a national and a global context.

In the discussion which followed, the Dean of Health Sciences noted that the course would be self-financing and would not draw on exchequer funding. The Dean of Graduate Studies was of the view that the proposal offered many opportunities for postgraduate study for these students across the Faculty, including the prospect of opening up clinical research at an international level. The Vice-Provost for Global Relations advised that the proposal was aligned to the global relations strategy currently being developed and will be presented to Board in December 2011.

In response to requests for clarification in relation to assessment regulations, and provision of administrative and support services, the Senior Lecturer advised that the College's legal team was advising on the contract between the SIT and TCD and as is common with all such partnership, the exact nature and meaning of the engagement would be interrogated and the operational issues, including the responsibilities of

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each party would be clearly articulated. Council noted the views expressed for the allocation of additional resources to support services to address the specific requirements of an increased international study population.

Council approved the proposal, including the admission regulation, for a Bachelor in Science in Physiotherapy in conjunction with the Singapore Institute of Technology.

The Provost commended and thanked all those involved in developing this proposal, which heralded a new departure for strengthening Trinity's international reputation and institutional links.

**CL/11-12/052 School of Medicine - Accreditation of Undergraduate Medical Programme**

A report on an accreditation visit by the Medical Council conducted on 23-24 March 2011 in respect of the undergraduate medical programme, together with a response from the School of Medicine had been circulated. In introducing this item, the Dean of Health Sciences advised Council that the Visitation Team's main recommendations to the Medical Council's Professional Development Committee were that:

1. The College's undergraduate medical programme should be approved by the Medical Council under the terms of the Medical Practitioners Act, 2007. The recommendation was made on the grounds of the Medical Council Team's finding that the programme adhered to the rules, criteria, guidelines and standards approved by the Medical Council, as specified in the Act.

The approval should be for an initial period of five years from the date of approval by the Medical Council.

2. The College should be approved under the terms of the Medical Practitioners Act, 2007 as the body which may deliver the undergraduate medical programme. This recommendation was made on the grounds of the College's on-going compliance with the rules, criteria, guidelines, and standards approved by the Medical Council, as specified in the Act.

The Visitation Team made the following major recommendations; the priorities identified for TCD were:

- (i) The E-Learning platform needed to be significantly developed;
- (ii) The modularised/credit system needed to be reconciled with the University system for programme governance articulated in the 2011 Calendar;
- (iii) The Resource Planning Model (RPM) should be implemented. If this is not possible, the Medical School should be allowed to utilise the funds it generated.

The Dean advised that further development of an e-learning platform was a priority for the School. It anxiously awaited the development of a new College platform to facilitate greater emphasis on e-learning, and had appointed an E-learning development officer to begin work. The new College learning platform would integrate with the new student administration system (GeneSIS) that would enable greater efficiency with respect to tracking student progress and collation of assessment results. In the interim, online modules were being developed in a format

that could be exported to any VLE platform, and the School would like to be included in future initiatives in this area.

It was noted that the process of reconciling the modularised credit system was on-going with modularisation almost complete, and that the practice of permitting the carry forward of marks from 3<sup>rd</sup> year to the final year exams was being phased out, and should be completed in 2012/13. When the phasing out process has been completed, and students already in the system had exited, the ECTS credit system would be fully aligned with programme governance articulated in the University Calendar.

The Visitation Team made the following additional recommendations to the major recommendations:

- a) Inter-professional education should continue to develop further.
- b) Feedback should be more regularly and more consistently requested from students and the timing of such requests should not be part of examinations (for example during OSCEs). Students should also be made aware of changes that are implemented as a result of this feedback.
- c) Feedback on their performance should be available routinely for students and should not be associated solely with poor performance.
- d) The timing of exam results should be reviewed as some students have already travelled home (overseas) by the time the results are issued which makes feedback difficult to obtain.
- e) There should be more consistent blueprinting between learning objectives and assessment for all modules.
- f) There should be even greater attempts made to ensure more vertical integration across all years of the curriculum.
- g) TCD should monitor the occasionally marked differences in grading between subjects.
- h) General Practice is under-represented and should be given more prominence with a more separate identity from Public Health.
- i) Final year seems to concentrate largely on medicine, surgery and psychiatry as per Bologna recommendations whereby assessments, particularly those that are critical to award of the final degree, take place as near as possible to instruction in these subjects. However, years Four and Five constitute the senior cycle of the course named as Phase Three (Patient Centred Evidence Based Medical Practice and Professional Development). The specialties included in the twenty month senior period are as follows: Medicine, Surgery, General Psychiatry, Obstetrics and Gynaecology, Emergency Medicine and Critical Care including Anaesthesiology, Liaison Psychiatry, Public Health, Primary Care and Epidemiology and Medical Jurisprudence.
- j) All objectives should be written in the same format and collated to get an easily available overview of the curriculum.

Council members expressed particular concern in respect of the poor constructive feedback provided by some areas to students on their performance. It was reported that not all disciplines were in compliance with the College regulation requiring the safe keeping of scripts for 13 months, and that this matter would be an agenda item for a future meeting of the Undergraduate Studies Committee.

Council noted the recommendations of the Medical Council and the School's response to these. The Dean of the Faculty of Health Sciences was asked to report on progress to a future meeting of Council.

#### CL/11-12/053 Quality Assurance

(i) **Implementation Plan**

An implementation Plan for the School of Linguistic, Speech & Communication Sciences, dated October 2011, had been circulated. The Dean of the Arts, Humanities & Social Sciences referring to the plan advised that the implementation of a number of recommendations was underway, and the remainder were in the planning or discussion stage. The implementing of the recommendation in relation to members of staff reducing the quantity of their publications and enhancing quality was considered by the School as the biggest challenge. There was no agreement within the School that this was desirable for all staff. The School accepts, however, as a goal that all academic colleagues should aspire to produce research publications of the highest quality as a central element of their work. Implementation of the recommendation for integration of deaf staff more fully into School activities required the allocation of resources by the College for interpretation services. It was noted that as the remit of the HR and Equality Committees was the development of policy, and the School should seek funding through more appropriate channels.

(ii) **Student Evaluation of Modules**

A covering memorandum from the Vice-Provost/Chief Academic Officer, dated 14 November 2011, together with a report on the student evaluation of undergraduate and postgraduate modules in the academic year 2010/11 had been circulated. In introducing the item, the Vice-Provost/Chief Academic Officer advised that following consideration by the Quality Committee, and the Undergraduate Studies and Graduate Studies Committees, the following recommendations were put forward to Council:

- (a) Further efforts be made to improve student response rates;
- (b) Conduct student evaluation of postgraduate courses at course level rather than at module level.

In considering the annual report and the recommendations, Council expressed concern at the low level of participation by students, and the absence of information on the outcome of evaluations conducted locally by Schools. The Provost stressed the importance of student evaluation of modules and full participation in the process by all Schools.

Council requested the Quality Committee to address this matter as a matter of priority.

Council approved the recommendations:

1. to include a question (a tick box option) at the beginning of a module questionnaire which seeks to elicit whether students are satisfied with the organisation of the module and the instruction received, and that

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students will be given the opportunity to comment on why they are satisfied. If the response is positive, students can opt not to complete the questionnaire, and

2. that evaluation of postgraduate courses be conducted at course rather than individual modules. The procedures to manage this should be developed and approved by the Quality Committee.

**CL/11-12/054 Any other urgent business**

Responding to a query on the College's agreement with the Milltown Institute, the Provost undertook to report on the issue under the standing agenda item of his Report at the next meeting of Council.

**SECTION B**

**CL/11-12/055 Undergraduate Studies Committee**

The draft minutes of the meeting of 1<sup>st</sup> November, 2011 were approved. The Senior Lecturer drew Council's attention to Actum UGS/11-12/014, concerning the Provost's Teaching Awards.

**CL/11-12/056 Graduate Studies Committee**

The draft minutes of the meeting of 3<sup>rd</sup> November, 2011 as circulated were noted and approved by Council.

**CL/11-12/057 Research Committee**

- (i) *Minutes*: Draft minutes of the meeting of 20 October, 2011 as circulated were noted and approved by Council.
- (ii) *Derogation of section of College IP Policy relating to Campus Company Formation*: a memorandum from the Associate Director, Trinity Research & Innovation as circulated was noted and approved by Council.

**CL/11-12/058 Quality Committee**

The draft minutes of the meeting of 18 October, 2011 as circulated were noted and approved by Council.

**SECTION C**

**CL/11-12/059 Council Membership**

The Council noted that the following had been elected as Council members:

- (i) **Faculty of Health Sciences**  
Professor J Nunn (Senior Constituency, Head of School), in place of Professor M McCarron, who had been elected to the Deanship of the Faculty;
- (ii) **Students' Union**

Ms L Ajohmani, Health Sciences representative, in place of Mr P Kenny, who had resigned;

- (iii) **Graduate Students' Union**  
Dr D Fitzgerald, member;  
Mr R J Smith, observer.

**CL/11-12/060 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 26 October 2011 and noted by Board on 9 November 2011.

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

**MD** Mensud Hatunic.

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

**PhD** Aoife Catriona Daly; Brian Kevin Donohoe; Marian Forde; Cormac Hampson; Tora Sun Leong; Wulf Lüdicke; Phillip McConway; Clare Morgan; Eve Morrison; Roderick Peter O’Gorman; Marita O’Sullivan; Susan Rose Power; Aliaksandra Rakovich; Sean Reilly; Sharon Sheehan; Rebecca Rose Wall; David Walsh.

**MSc** Deirdre Ann Carroll; Joseph Anthony Donohue; Brian William John Gervais; Miriam Frances Holohan; Michelle Marie Leech.

**CL/11-12/061 School Directors**

The Council noted and approved the following nominations:

- (i) **Religions, Theology and Ecumenics - Director of Teaching and Learning (Undergraduate), 2111-2013**  
Professor B Wold (in place of Professor Z Rodgers);
- (ii) **School of Social Sciences and Philosophy**
- (a) Director of Research - Professor G Narciso from 1 January 2012 to 31 December 2013 (replacing Professor A Finlay);
- (b) Director of Teaching and Learning (Undergraduate) - Professor P O’Grady, 1 January 2012 to 24 August 2012 (to cover for leave).

**CL/11-12/062 Chairs - McCann Fitzgerald Chair in Corporate Law:** A memorandum from the Dean of the Faculty of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences, dated 15 November 2011, had been circulated in which it was proposed to establish a sponsored Chair in the area of Corporate Law. The sponsorship will cover the costs of the Chair for the first five years, with the option to renew for a further five years by agreement of the parties. Council approved the proposal including the title of the chair, subject to the condition that the specific title will cease if the sponsorship is discontinued.

**SECTION D**

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

Signed .....

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Date .....