



Incorporating any amendments approved at subsequent Council meetings

XX = Board relevance

**Trinity College Dublin  
The University of Dublin**

**A meeting of the University Council was held on 15 December 2021 at 11.15am remotely and hosted from the Provost's Library.**

<i>Present</i>	Provost, Vice-Provost/Chief Academic Officer, Registrar, Senior Lecturer/Dean of Undergraduate Studies, Senior Tutor, Dean of Graduate Studies, Dean of Research, Vice-President for Global Engagement, Dean of Students, Dean of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences, Dean of Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics, Dean of Health Sciences, Professor L. Carson, Professor P. O'Grady, Professor A. Bray, Professor D. Romelli, Professor A. O'Connor, Professor M. Lyons, Professor M. Monaghan, Professor B. O'Connell, Professor L. O'Driscoll, Professor M. Gill, Professor C. Donnellan, Ms. AM. Malone, Dr. O. Gobbo, Professor A. Long, Ms. B. Genockey.
<i>Apologies</i>	Professor M. Ruffini, Ms. D. Kelleher, Ms. J. Bochenek, Ms. S. Sutton, Ms. Z. Cummins, Ms. A. Bhattacharjee, Ms. N. Aluthge Dona.
<i>In attendance</i>	Interim Chief Operating Officer, Secretary to the College, Librarian and College Archivist, Academic Secretary, Assistant Academic Secretary, Ms. A. Crawford.
<i>Observers</i>	Ms. Camilla Persello.

**SECTION A**

The Provost welcomed everyone to Council and requested that Council members declare any potential conflicts of interest relating to the agenda. The Secretary advised that there were no conflicts of interest reported.

**CL/21-22/071    Declarations by New Members and Observers**

The Secretary to College advised that as the new member was unable to attend the meeting the item would be deferred to the February 2022 meeting.

**CL/21-22/072    Minutes**

The minutes of the meeting of Council on 17 November 2021 were approved and signed.

**CL/21-22/073    Matters Arising**

**CL/21-22/048 Integrity in an Academic Context**

Referring to the action (CL/21-22/048.2) that the Vice-Provost/Chief Academic Officer discuss measures to address academic integrity with the Junior Dean, Senior Lecturer/Dean of Undergraduate Studies, the Dean of Graduate Studies, and the Academic Secretary, the Vice-Provost/Chief Academic Officer advised that she had met to-date with the Senior Lecturer/Dean of Undergraduate Studies and the Junior Dean to discuss Academic Integrity and the practices of other universities in this space. A working group will be established, and it is expected that a proposal on Academic Integrity will be developed and brought to Council this academic year.

#### **CL/21-22/047 Council Format 2021-22**

The Secretary to College reported that the new Council format will be introduced in the Hilary term with Section A items divided into A.1 items for development/discussion and approval, and A.2 items for approval and noting.

#### **CL/21-22/074 Provost's Report**

##### **i Covid-19**

The Provost informed Council that College intends to continue to deliver teaching and research activities in-person in the new year, and in the event that Government introduces new measures over the Christmas period College is in a position to respond to the changes and to communicate these to the Trinity community.

Speaking to the item, the Provost expressed her appreciation that graduations were proceeding and commented on the high number of ceremonies that had taken place since the summer. She extended her thanks to the Registrar and the Academic Registry for all the work undertaken to make this happen.

##### **ii Science Gallery**

The Provost advised Council that good progress is being made to address the financial challenges of the Science Gallery and to secure its future. Discussions have taken place with the Department of Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science and the Department of Tourism, Culture, Arts, Gaeltacht, Sport and Media in this regard and a proposal will be brought to Board in the new year.

##### **iii E3 Research Institute**

The Provost highlighted that Trinity did not receive the funding expected from Government under the National Development Plan (NDP) for the E3 Research Institute. Trinity will focus on completing the Trinity Technology and Enterprise Centre (TTEC) redevelopment phase and will undertake a strategic review of the E3 plans in the new year to establish a way forward in line with Trinity's mission.

##### **iv Old Library Redevelopment Project**

Referring to the Old Library Redevelopment Project and the need to source an alternative location for the Book of Kells while the redevelopment work is progressing, the Provost advised Council that a recommendation will go to Board for consideration in the new year.

##### **v Research**

The Provost noted that the work of the European Innovation Council (EIC) research is progressing well, and she extended her congratulations to Professor Yvonne Buckley who was named Irish Research Council (IRC) Researcher of the Year, and Dr. Kathy Ruddy, who was named Early Career Researcher of the Year.

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Dr. Pauline Rooney, Academic Developer: Digital Learning joined the meeting

**CL/21-22/075 Student and Staff Experiences of Teaching, Learning and Assessment at Trinity 2020-21**  
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The Academic Secretary introduced the item explaining that in May 2021, the Trinity Living with Covid Oversight group (TLC) had requested an assessment of the teaching, learning and assessment (TLA) experiences of academic staff and students during 2020/21 with the view to establishing the TLA digital practices that might be continued post-pandemic. The results of the survey are presented in the summary report that was circulated to Council and a more detailed report is available also. She commented that a lot has been learnt about digital learning during the past 18 months, and the findings of the survey suggest that digital learning can no longer be viewed as a temporary response to the pandemic. Staff and students need certainty, and there is an appetite to retain and develop TLA digital practices that worked well. She noted, however, that this requires long-term pedagogically sound digital learning strategies, that are underpinned by learning systems that are fit-for-purpose.

The Academic Secretary suggested that Trinity needs to build resilience to protect its education from the vagaries of a pandemic and any other unforeseen threats. Furthermore, 'blended learning' is fast becoming the mainstay of a wide range of education offerings and Trinity needs to have the systems and staff and student supports in place to ensure that it can compete in an increasingly competitive education environment.

The Provost commented on the importance of a planned, robust, and seamless delivery of teaching, learning and assessment in a digital context with the Academic Secretary noting Trinity's commitment in the Strategic Plan 2020-2025 to implementing a full-spectrum digital learning strategy by 2022.

Dr. Rooney outlined the aims of the survey undertaken between June and July 2021, which addressed two key questions – what aspects of digital TLA should be retained and how staff can be supported to develop effective digital TLA approaches. She highlighted that 2439 responses were received from students representing 13% of the student body, and 509 responses from academic and teaching staff representing 54% of the academic staff community. Undergraduate students represented 75% of respondents, with 16% of respondents representing postgraduate taught students and 9%, postgraduate research students. The majority of academic and teaching staff who had responded to the survey had greater than ten years' experience.

Dr. Rooney outlined the five themes explored by the survey and presented the key findings and actions for each theme. The actions presented for each theme were as follows:

Digital teaching and learning

- Develop the structures/resources to support teaching staff and students to develop pedagogic skills and competences required to enhance digital TLA at Trinity.
- Agree and disseminate a shared understanding of blended, hybrid, and online learning at Trinity.
- Agree the TLA practices to be continued post-pandemic and revise existing TLA policies accordingly.

Digital Assessment

- Prioritise an institutional focus on academic integrity in a digital context, including the developing of relevant policies and practices that develop students' understanding of academic integrity, and explore strategies for mitigating plagiarism.

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#### Communication

- Develop an institutional feedback policy to support student agency and feedback literacy.
- Develop communication strategies at programme and/or module level within Schools.

#### Technologies

- Review and consolidate Trinity's suite of supported technologies.
- Provide staff guidance on selection and use of third-party technologies.

The Provost thanked Dr. Rooney and invited questions and comments.

Council members commended Academic Practice for the report with the Senior Lecturer/Dean of Undergraduate Studies highlighting the need for Trinity to reflect on the learning arising from the pivot to online TLA and how digital technologies can be harnessed to enhance TLA practices. The Vice-Provost/Chief Academic Officer agreed, adding that the report presents a wealth of information that can inform innovations in assessing learning in a digital context. The different views expressed by undergraduate and postgraduate students of their experiences of online TLA was raised by the Dean of Graduate Studies, who noted that careful consideration will be required when scoping and developing provision that responds to the needs of all Trinity students.

Professional body and accreditation requirements in the Health Sciences was discussed with one member noting the impact of such on TLA modalities. He acknowledged that there may be scope in certain instances to introduce new modalities, though requirements relating to certain disciplines and in-patient contact were unlikely to change. The Vice-President for Global Engagement highlighted the need for Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) to encourage professional and regulatory bodies to consider and update their requirements in light of new and innovative approaches to TLA.

Responding to a query on whether the integrity of high stakes professional examinations in a digital context would be prioritised, the Provost and Academic Secretary advised that assessment is an area that will be prioritised initially, and that the way forward will be established following consultation with Schools. The role of assessment design in designing out opportunities for academic misconduct was highlighted by a member, and she commended Academic Practice for its training in this area. She highlighted the need for more training on assessment design in a digital context.

Speaking to the item the Vice-President for Global Engagement commented that HEIs need to assign greater value on teaching and learning in order that new and innovative approaches are readily adopted, and that revisiting criteria for academic promotions would be a step in this direction. She added that there is a need to build capacity for Trinity to best respond to challenges as they arise and to accept that some learning experiences/disciplines are not suited for online delivery and can present an additional workload for staff. The Dean of Students reminded Council of the findings from StudentSurvey.ie on staff-student interaction and engagement and urged consideration of these in the development of a digital learning strategy and the delivery of online TLA. The Provost agreed, highlighting the need for online TLA to be underpinned by appropriate pedagogical approaches.

In response to a query on the College Virtual Learning Environment (VLE) and the use of third-party platforms that are not supported by College, the Academic Secretary reported that the Director of IT Services will be progressing work to tender for a VLE this academic year. The importance of College extending its range of approved platforms was emphasised, as several platforms not currently endorsed by College offer greater flexibility and can be used to complement existing platforms and digital technologies.

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The Academic Secretary advised that due to the wealth of data gathered by the survey and the numerous actions arising from the findings there is a need to develop a work programme that will prioritise elements of existing TLA practices that can be adapted to a digital context for implementation in 2022/23. She noted that the Dean of Graduate Studies will be bringing a proposal on remote *viva voce* to Council in the new year.

The Academic Secretary thanked Council for the discussion advising that a proposal on the TLA priorities for 2022/23 will be brought to Council in the new year. She extended her thanks to Dr. Rooney and staff in Academic Practice for their work on the report.

**Decisions:**

**CL/21-22/075.1:** Council approved the Summary Report: Student and Staff Experiences of Teaching, Learning and Assessment at Trinity 2020-21.

**CL/21-22/075.2:** Council approved the development of a work programme to prioritise elements of existing teaching, learning and assessment practices that can be adapted to a digital context for implementation in 2022-23 and for a full costing to accompany the work programme.

Dr. Pauline Rooney left the meeting.

**CL/21-22/076    Terms of Reference for Governance of the Postgraduate Renewal Programme  
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The Dean of Graduate Studies introduced the terms of reference for the governance of the postgraduate renewal programme reminding Council that in June 2021 it had approved the postgraduate renewal programme to move to the consultation and design implementation stages. She advised that the consultation phase will consist of a wide scale engagement with key stakeholders through focus groups, surveys and interviews, with a view to ensuring that all stakeholders have an opportunity to contribute to shaping the direction and outcomes of the renewal. The findings of the consultation phase will inform the design of the implementation plan.

The Dean of Graduate Studies advised that the Vice-Provost/Chief Academic Officer is the Programme Chair and Chair of the Steering Committee with herself as Dean of Graduate Studies as Programme Sponsor. Governance of the programme consists of the Steering Committee and six work-packages as follows:

- Work-package 1 – Postgraduate taught renewal
- Work-package 2 – Postgraduate research renewal
- Work-package 3 – Systems and processes
- Work-package 4 - I<sup>3</sup> Relationships
- Work-package 5 – Student experience
- Work-package 6 – Staff experience

The Dean of Graduate Studies highlighted that membership of the Steering Committee comprises the Programme Chair, the Programme Sponsor, the Chairs and Leads of each work-package, the Academic Secretary, a postgraduate student representative, the programme director – Ms. Leona Coady has just commenced in this role, and the programme manager.

The Provost thanked the Dean of Graduate Studies and invited questions and comments.

The Registrar left the meeting.

Responding to comments from the Senior Tutor on the consideration of high-level graduate attributes and a wide definition of student supports for graduate education, the Dean of

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Graduate Studies advised that the pre-consultation phase commencing in the new year will inform the design of the implementation plan for graduate renewal. She advised that the outcomes of the consultation will be reported to Council before the end of this academic year.

A member commenting on the scale of the programme queried how the implementation phase of graduate renewal will be executed. The Dean of Graduate Studies reported that this will be determined by the consultation phase and she acknowledged that the implementation plan will require significant investment.

The Provost noted the importance of consultation in informing the design and development of the implementation plan for graduate renewal, and in ensuring that staff and students are provided with opportunities to express their views on a range of College matters through appropriate and designated structures.

**Decision:**

**CL/21-22/076.1:** Council approved the terms of reference for governance of the postgraduate renewal programme.

**CL/21-22/077 Postgraduate Course Proposal – Two-year Part-time Postgraduate Certificate/Postgraduate Diploma Top-up in Engineering for Climate Action (HCI Pillar 3)**

The Dean of Graduate Studies presented the proposal from the School of Engineering for the new two-year part-time framework-based top-up course in Engineering for Climate Action (Human Capital Initiative, Pillar 3) to Council leading to the award of Postgraduate Certificate (30 ECTS), and retention of the existing award of Postgraduate Diploma (60 ECTS) in Engineering for Climate Action at level 9 of the NFQ. She advised that the proposal is a part-time expansion to the existing full-time course in Engineering for Climate Change that was approved by Council on 28 April 2021, and that the Higher Education Authority (HEA) has agreed to a revision of the existing one-year full-time Postgraduate Diploma in Engineering for Climate Action by permitting an introduction of a two-year part-time framework Postgraduate Certificate/Postgraduate Diploma top-up structure from 2022/23. The revised structure will allow for a new entry and exit route, and a new attainment award of Postgraduate Certificate, and will increase student recruitment and meet the needs of a wider audience.

The proposal consists of direct application entry routes to the Postgraduate Certificate (30 ECTS – one-year part-time) and facilitates progression from the Postgraduate Certificate (30 ECTS – part-time) to the Postgraduate Diploma (30 ECTS – part-time).

The Dean of Graduate Studies reported that the proposed part-time expansion to the existing full-time course had not been externally reviewed as it is only a reconfiguration of the existing course which was already positively reviewed by Dr. Jen Roberts, Lecturer (Chancellor's Fellow in Energy, Director Civil and Environmental Engineering at the University of Strathclyde in the UK) and considered by Council on 28 April 2021.

**Decision**

**CL/21-22/077.1:** Council approved the expansion of the one-year full-time Postgraduate Diploma in Engineering for Climate Action (HCI Pillar 3) offered by the School of Engineering to include the introduction of a two-year part-time Postgraduate Certificate/Postgraduate Diploma top-up from 2022/23.

**CL/21-22/078 Contingency Measures for Semester 1 Assessment 2021/22**

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The Vice-Provost/Chief Academic Officer informed Council of the assessment contingency measures 2020/21 approved by TLC as follows:

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- Exams deferred from the Semester 1 session will take place from the 7-19 February 2022, with contingency dates of 21-26 February 2022.
- Examinations will be scheduled in late afternoons, evenings, or weekends, within this period, giving consideration to other factors such as existing teaching or lecture requirements, to minimise the impact on students and staff whenever possible.
- The approved deferral session applies to all deferred examinations in Semester 1 both online and in—person, whether deferred for Covid or other medical or ad misericordiam reasons (with supporting documentation submitted).

The contingency plans, the Vice-Provost/Chief Academic Officer explained, were discussed at both the Undergraduate Studies Committee (USC) and the Graduate Studies Committee (GSC).

The Dean of Research requested that consideration be given to the research commitments of staff in February 2022 and to introducing measures to alleviate the pressure on staff progressing work on research grants at this time. The Vice-Provost/Chief Academic Officer advised that the Continuity of Learning and Student Activities Group had discussed this and that this will be an item on the agenda of the next meeting of the TLC.

#### **Decision**

**CL/21-22/078.1:** Council noted and approved the Semester 1 Assessment Contingency Measures 2021/22.

#### **CL/21-22/079 XX Contingency Plan for Scholarship Examinations 2022**

Speaking to the item, the Senior Lecturer/Dean of Undergraduate Studies informed Council that Board has approved the contingency plan for Scholarship Examinations 2022 and that Council's consent to the Board's approval of the contingency plan to hold Schols online is being sought in case changes to government guidance require such a plan to be implemented is being sought. He explained that candidates for Foundation Scholarship will take their Scholarship examinations (Schols) in-person from 10 to 14 January 2022. Candidates who are prevented from sitting Schols in their Senior Freshman year due to exceptional circumstances, may apply to the Senior Lecturer/Dean of Undergraduate Studies to be allowed to sit the examinations in the Junior Sophister year instead (Calendar, Part II, p. 192). He advised that this provision will cover candidates who must self-isolate and cannot attend for Schols because they have tested positive for Covid/are symptomatic and are awaiting a PCR test/result, or are a close contact of someone who has tested positive for Covid.

The Senior Lecturer/Dean of Undergraduate Studies highlighted that while it is unlikely that Government guidance in relation to the use of in-person examinations after Christmas will change, College must plan for this possibility. Following consultation with Schools, it was recommended by TLC on 9 December and approved by Board on 14 December, that College make contingency plans to hold Schols online. To minimise pressure on staff in Schools Academic Registry (AR) staff will create the Blackboard assessment submission sites, will grant course representatives access to the sites, and will support Schools in uploading papers to Blackboard. He added that Schools will be required to liaise with the Academic Registry to ensure that all requirements for the examinations are captured, and to sign-off on all submission sites before the beginning of the examination week. AR will manage all online invigilation for Schols and Schools will be required to make a representatives available throughout each examination, in the event of queries from students. He asked Council to consent to the Board's approval of the contingency plan to hold Schols online, in case changes to government guidance requires such a plan to be implemented.

The Secretary to the Scholars expressed the preference of the Scholars' Committee for in-person examinations and the need for contingency measures to include the appropriate invigilation of online examinations to ensure that academic integrity is upheld. The Senior

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Lecturer/Dean of Undergraduate Studies thanked the Secretary of Scholars for her comment and advised that he will contact her to discuss further if contingency measures are necessary.

**Decision:**

**CL/21-22/079.1:** Council consented to the Board's approval of the contingency plan for Scholarship Examinations 2022.

**CL/21-22/080 Any Other Urgent Business**

There was no any other urgent business.

**SECTION B**

**CL/21-22/081 Research Committee**

The minutes of 19 October 2021 were noted and approved.

**CL/21-22/082 Undergraduate Studies Committee**

**Decision:**

**CL/21-22/082.1:** The minutes of 30 November 2021 and appendix: New Further Education and Training (FET) Routes and Updates were noted and approved.

**CL/21-22/083 Graduate Studies Committee**

The Dean of Graduate Studies informed Council that a proposal on remote *viva voce* examinations will be brought to Council in the new year. She advised that work is being progressed on the sourcing of additional desk space for PhD students.

The Dean of Graduate Studies drew attention to GSC's concern that postgraduate student representatives are not yet in place in all Schools and that this is presenting challenges for Schools.

The minutes of 2 December 2021 were noted and approved.

**Decisions:**

**CL/21-22/083.1:** Council approved the change of course title for the School of Religion, Theology, and Peace Studies' MPhil. (and related Postgraduate Diploma) in Intercultural Theology and Interreligious Studies to Contextual Theologies and Interfaith Relations.

**CL/21-22/083.2:** Council approved the re-classification of the School of Social Work and Social Policy's Postgraduate Diploma in Child Protection and Welfare from a part-time course to a full-time course from 2022/23, and the progression pathway from the full-time Postgraduate Diploma to the part-time Masters in Child Protection and Welfare (30 ECTS) without an additional admissions fee once the entry criteria are met.

**Actions:**

**CL/21-22/083.3:** The Dean of Graduate Studies to contact Schools to establish if all postgraduate student representatives are in place and to advise the Provost on this. If necessary, the Provost to write to the Graduate Students' Union expressing Trinity's concern

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with the delay in electing and nominating postgraduate student representatives following communication from the Dean of Graduate Studies on this.

### SECTION C

#### CL/21-22/084 Membership of the University Council – Graduate Students' Union

The Council noted that Mr David Lee (Faculty of Health Sciences) will serve as a member of the University Council for the remainder of the academic year 2021-2022.

#### CL/21-22/085 Higher Degrees—Reports of Examiners

- (i) The Council noted and approved the reports of examiners on candidates for higher degrees, approved by the sub-committee of Board and Council on 20 October 2021.

##### Higher Degrees by Research Alone

**MD** Bronagh Mairead Gallagher;

**PhD** Mohammed Khaled N. Alotaibi; Xue Bai; Andrew Bathe; Ross Burdis; Andrew Cooper; Luke Patrick Dowling; Samira Mohamed Otman Elbai; Erin Fahey; Alexander David Jones; Anne Marie Jones; Hilde Anna Koch; John Alphonsus Matthews; Kyle Martin; Steven McCartney; Dorde Mitrovic; Geraldine Mary Nolan; Alex O'Cinneide; Hugh David O'Dwyer; Sarah Parker; Lisanne Martha Johanna Jolanda Peters; Rémi Rateau; Joseph Roberts; Paul Ryan; Luana Souza Martins; Jinfan Wang; Ian Whelan;

**D.Ch. Dent** Emily Higgins; Caroline Mary Marron;

**D. Music. Perf.** Matthew Mazanek;

**M.Ch.** James Michael Broderick;

**MSc** Andrew Allan; Sebastian Marinel Csadi; Kate Horgan; Yuliia Rakovets.

- (ii) The Council noted and approved the reports of examiners on candidates for higher degrees dated 15 December 2021.

##### Higher Degrees by Research Alone

**Ph.D.** Daniela Filipa Alves Ferreira; Alexander William Lucas Chance; Conor Patrick Cullen; James Philip Garland; Louise Marie Jeanne Kari Mereau; Niamh McNamee; Aaron David Nevin; Tom F O'Mahony; Laura Rai; Marie Ryan; Andrew David Harry Selkirk; Oguzhan Turkoglu; Dale Whelehan; Marjan Zhaf;

**D.Ch.Dent** Aisyah Binti Ahmad Fisal;

**M.Sc.** Sara Pelivani;

**M.Litt.** Una Pittion.

**CL/21-22/086 Acting School Directors**

The Council noted and approved the following nominations:

- (i) Professor Melissa Sihra as Acting Director of Teaching & Learning (Postgraduate), School of Creative Arts, from 17 January 2022 to 14 April 2022;
- (ii) Professor Justin Doherty as Acting Director of the Centre for European Studies, School of Languages, Literatures and Cultural Studies, from 1 January 2022 to 31 May 2022;
- (iii) Professor Agustin Benetrix as Acting Director of the Teaching and Learning (Postgraduate), School of Social Sciences and Philosophy, from 1 January 2022 to cover for a period of maternity leave.

**CL/21-22/087 Acting Head of Discipline**

The Council noted and approved the nomination of Professor Ciara O’Hagan as Acting Head of Discipline (Hispanic Studies), School of Languages, Literatures and Cultural Studies, from 24 January 2022 to 23 January 2023.

**SECTION D**

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

Signed .....

Date .....