



Academic Affairs

Annual Report 2024-2025

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Foreword

I am delighted to present the sixth annual report of Academic Affairs (AA) which reflects on our activities and developments throughout 2024/25 and offers a look ahead to our future priorities.

The past year has seen the team progress and evolve, with new colleagues – Ellen and Joanna - joining and further strengthening our capacity. We've continued to build meaningful relationships with the Schools and key Units such as the Academic Registry and Trinity Global, establishing Academic Affairs as a trusted and collaborative partner. We were also pleased to support the onboarding of the new Senior Lecturer, a key milestone for the College.

Throughout the year, the team has led and contributed to a range of projects, policy reviews, and programmes. These collective efforts have supported academic governance and development and have helped align our work more strategically with institutional goals.

Looking ahead to 2025-26, we will focus our efforts on ensuring that our workplan, priorities and processes are clearly aligned with College's Strategic Plan 2025-30 and its objectives for Education. We are committed to enabling impactful outcomes through coordinated planning, supportive and collaborative working ethos.

I want to acknowledge and thank the team for their continued dedication and professionalism, which have once again made this a successful and forward-looking year for Academic Affairs.

I hope you enjoy reading this report.

Yours sincerely,



Assistant Academic Secretary: Academic Affairs

What we do

Welcome to Academic Affairs (AA), a cornerstone division within Trinity Teaching and Learning (TT&L).

In Academic Affairs our mission is to shape **world-class academic policies**, robust **standards**, and **innovative programmes**.

Our vision is to work **collaboratively and inclusively** with academics, disciplines, and Schools, with Trinity Units and Divisions, with College Officers, with national and international partners and to nurture a dynamic and supportive environment.

Our working ethos is rooted in **consultation, collaboration, supporting innovation** and enabling teaching and learning excellence in Trinity College Dublin.

Our Core responsibilities:

Policies & Regulations	•We shape academic policy, regulations, and standards, ensuring alignment with both national and European legislation as well as Trinity's own guidelines
Programmes	•We support Schools in the development of new programmes and modifications to existing programmes [e.g. major curricular changes, suspensions and cessations]
Strategic Projects	•We lead and contribute to College and sectoral strategic teaching & learning projects
Trusted Advisor	•We advise and assist the Academic Secretary and College Officers in policy development
Academic Committees	•We support management of academic committees, namely Academic Council, USC, GSC, Trinity Electives, and Associated Colleges

People

Rima Fitzpatrick

Assistant Academic Secretary/Head of Academic Affairs

Rima joined Academic Affairs in April 2024, having previously managed the School of Languages, Literatures and Cultural Studies in Trinity College. As the Head of the unit, Rima holds overall responsibility of Academic Affairs office, ensuring its strategic and operational objectives are met.

Ciara Conlon

Education Support Manager

Ciara advises and supports Schools in the development of undergraduate course proposals, advises on undergraduate policy and regulations and manages Undergraduate Studies Committee.

Ewa Sadowska

Administrative Officer

Ewa advises and supports Schools in the development of postgraduate course proposals, advises on postgraduate policy and regulations and manages the Graduate Studies Committee.

Liz Donnellan

Education Policy Developer

Liz joined Academic Affairs in April 2023, having previously worked in the Quality Office and in Graduate Studies. Her areas of responsibility include the annual Academic Affairs work programme for academic policy and regulation review, and the management, development, and review of Calendar Part II.

Joanna Kozielec

Education Support Manager

Joanna worked with the team from February 2025- the end of July 2025 as maternity cover for Ciara. Joanna was responsible for advising and supporting Schools in the development of undergraduate course proposals, advising on undergraduate policy and regulations and managing the administration of Undergraduate Studies Committee.

Ellen Kampinga

Education Support Officer

Ellen joined the team from November 2024. In Academic Affairs, Ellen had the responsibility for managing the administration of the Associated College Degrees Committees of Trinity's Linked Providers (Royal Irish Academic of Music (RIAM) and Marino Institute of Education (MIE)), and the Trinity Electives Sub-Committee. Ellen also assisted the team in the development of digital systems and with larger projects within Academic Affairs' remit.

Strategic Projects

Postgraduate Renewal

Academic Affairs involvement in PG Renewal Horizon 2 stage

Since the 2021/22 academic year, AA has been involved in various aspects of the Postgraduate Renewal Programme. Since its inception, the Programme has delivered on its objectives through six dedicated Work Packages (WP) and has developed proposals for renewing postgraduate education at Trinity. The achievements to date are listed on the PG Renewal website <https://www.tcd.ie/media/tcd/graduate-studies/pdfs/you-said-we-did.pdf>.

In 2024/25, key Academic Affairs contribution for PG Renewal Programme were an Abridged programme modification process and a review of the pilot of the 2-stage postgraduate programme development and approval process.

Abridged Programme Modification Process

2024/25 saw the start of the development of an abridged process for major changes in existing postgraduate taught programmes. AA led this deliverable, in the scope of the Horizon 2 work plan, to 'design a system for addressing major/minor changes to a programme' (H2.WP1.2.07.A). To progress this, we developed abridged approval templates and processes for consideration under the pilot. The members of WP#1, which included, the Assistant Academic Secretary - Academic Affairs, a Head of School, a School Manager, a DTLP, and a Faculty Dean, aimed to ensure that the templates meet the needs of Schools, Faculties and Units while upholding quality assurance standards and compliance with College's governance and policies ("Programme and Curriculum Design and Approval Policy" outlines the scenarios requiring approval from the GSC and Council). The proposed abridged templates retain the core principles of full proposals—such as student demand, employability, and resource implications—but have been simplified to reduce administrative effort.

Proof of Concept Template has been modified to provide an overview of the programme, describe the proposed change(s) and explain the rationale. It includes prompts regarding impacts on student demand, career prospects, and resources. If a change does not impact a specific area, the proposer can skip to the next section. For changes affecting demand or resources, financial information is required, necessitating approvals from the Faculty Finance partner or Dean. Curriculum Plan Template has been adapted to capture relevant details for the proposed change(s). A Curriculum Plan is generally required only for specific scenarios, such as changes to Programme Learning Outcomes, the addition of a framework, or when a School is progressing towards another award (e.g., adding a postgraduate diploma to an existing postgraduate certificate). The Approval Process has been abridged by streamlining the two separate stages—a Proof of Concept form (stage one) and a Curriculum Plan (stage two)—into a single approval cycle. Separate sign-offs from units like Global or Careers are not mandatory, although proposers are encouraged to consult with these professional units. This approach aims to create a robust yet agile governance process. A suite of supporting resources – a short explanatory booklet, an FAQ document, visual of governance flow - have been developed on Academic Affairs website to clearly visualise the requirements of the abridged process.

The February Council approved the abridged process recommended by the January GSC. Information on the abridged process is available on the AA website <https://www.tcd.ie/academic-affairs/pg-programme-life-cycle-development/amendments-to-existing-pgt-programme/>

Review of pilot of 2-stage postgraduate programme development and approval process.

In 2023, a new two-stage process for postgraduate programme development was piloted as part of the Postgraduate Renewal Programme. Academic Affairs, in collaboration with PG renewal team supported its implementation and rollout across Schools.

Following the pilot during 2023/24 and 2024/25, a comprehensive review was led by the Assistant Academic Secretary - Academic Affairs and supported by Work Package. The review included a wide group of stakeholders – proposers, Heads of school and School Managers, Directors of Teaching and Learning, Faculty Deans and Finance Partners, Professional Units (Global/Careers/Academic Practice), Dean of Graduate Studies - and involved interviews, surveys, focus groups. This resulted in a final report outlining key recommendations to improve the process. Operational improvements were being developed during summer 2025 and governance related, and other improvement recommendations will be consider at College GSC and Council in early 2025/26.

International Education Mark / TrustEd application

The International Education Mark (IEM) is a new quality mark, established by QQI and branded TrustEd, that is intended to represent and promote public confidence in the quality of Irish Higher Education providers delivering programmes to international learners. The IEM/TrustEd will be awarded to providers who have demonstrated that they meet national standards to ensure a quality experience for international learners, from enrolment through to the completion of their programmes of education and training.

During summer 2024, Academic Affairs worked closely with the Quality Officer to project manage the development of Trinity's application for the IEM/TrustEd. This involved collaborating with Trinity Global, Academic Registry, the Transition to Trinity Officer, HR, FSD, the Quality Office and Academic Affairs, and collating a comprehensive application for College. Trinity's application has been approved by College Governance Committees and submitted to QQI in November 2024. The application moved successfully through desktop review and assessment panel initial review with the full outcome expected in September/October 2025.

Academic Integrity

As part of its ongoing commitment to fostering a culture of academic integrity, Academic Affairs contributed to a series of targeted initiatives during the 2024/25 academic year outlined below.

National Academic Integrity week 2024/25

During National Academic Integrity Week 2024 (14th - 18th October 2024), Academic Affairs collaborated with the Senior Lecturer to hold two one-hour, in-person workshops to support staff and students in upholding academic integrity and in navigating the academic integrity process. The workshops presented an overview of the Academic Integrity procedures and the resources available on the Academic Integrity website, providing an opportunity for discussion of gaps in or improvements to the procedure and resources. They also facilitated the sharing of good practice and the lived experience of managing Academic Integrity cases, and a number of sample case studies were worked through. Staff were contacted beforehand to identify areas of particular interest to them that they would like covered during the workshop. There were four attendees each at the staff and student workshops. Further details about events held during Academic Integrity Week 2024 can be found [here](#).

Academic Integrity Workshops for the College Community

In advance of the Semester 1 assessment week, Academic Affairs sent an email to all staff in November 2024 drawing attention to the Academic Integrity resources available on the Academic Affairs and Academic Practice websites and inviting them to attend three on-line drop-in information sessions in November and December 2024, and in January 2025. An email was also sent to all Directors of Teaching and Learning and to School Managers highlighting the location of the Academic Misconduct Procedures and supporting resources, and providing a short slide presentation summarising that information, for dissemination amongst colleagues and/or for presentation at School/Programme meetings. An offer was also made that staff from Academic Affairs would be available to go out to Schools to speak to the presentation, in response to which an information session for the School of Education was held on the 4th December 2024. Five staff attended the online drop-in clinics and 15 staff from the School of Education attended the information session.

Feedback from these events highlighted that the Academic Misconduct Procedures, developed in 2023/24, were found to be very helpful in terms of providing guidance on a consistent and structured response to alleged misconduct. Issues raised included the need for clearer guidance as to whether student use of Generative Artificial Intelligence (GenAI) (e.g. Chat GPT) is allowed and under what circumstances, and the difficulty in proving the unauthorised use of Chat GPT.

Calendar Regulations

Additional wording on use of GenAI in teaching and learning was included in the Academic Integrity section of the Calendar in June 2024 to reflect the publication of the College-wide statement on Artificial Intelligence and Generative AI. Further information on Academic Integrity can be found at <https://www.tcd.ie/academic-affairs/academic-integrity>

Programmes

Support and collaboration with Schools and academics on new and revised programmes is one of the core functions of the Academic Affairs Team. AA provides support and feedback to Schools throughout the programme development and approval process. AA reviews academic proposals for all new programmes, Trinity Electives and Micro-credentials, and proposals related to significant curriculum amendments/developments at both undergraduate and postgraduate levels, before proposals are submitted to College Academic Committees.

All Trinity programme proposals are developed and approved in line with the '[New Programme Design and Approval Policy](#)', which ensures that the same standards are applied to all programmes, including programme proposals submitted by Trinity's Linked Providers, Marino Institute of Education (MIE) and the Royal Irish Academy of Music (RIAM), those developed under inter-institutional framework agreements/partnerships, and the micro-credentials developed under the HCI Pillar 3 pilot programme.

A list of undergraduate and postgraduate proposals and curriculum developments, which were both reviewed and supported by AA in 2024/25 and subsequently approved by University Council, can be found in Table 1 below and on our page <https://www.tcd.ie/academic-affairs/programme-updates/2024-2025/>

Table 1a: UG proposals and curriculum developments approved by Council in 2024/25.

Undergraduate Education	
New Approved UG Courses	Dual degree programme in Social Policy and Human Rights with the University of Sydney
Amendments to existing UG Courses	Curriculum Review Year 1 Medicine Programme, in line with changing professional accreditation requirements
	Non-EU Admission Pathway BSc Nursing
	Admission revision to various Science and Business Programmes
Partnerships	School of Medicine Articulation agreement with International Medical University (IMU) Malaysia
	School of Medicine and University Brunei Darussalam Curriculum mapping for an articulation agreement extension
New Trinity Electives	<p>Histories and Futures of Climate Change</p> <p>Entrepreneurial Action</p> <p>Introduction to Medicinal Plant Use and Integrative Medicine</p>
Degree/Award Projects	Change in the Degree Nomenclature (from BA to BSc) for science programmes introduced in line with International Practice
	Degree Calculation recalibration Columbia Dual Degree to exclude Trinity-based 30 ECTS.

Table 1b: PG proposals and curriculum developments approved by Council in 2024/25.

Postgraduate Education	
New Approved PG Courses	Two-year parttime blended framework-based Postgraduate Diploma course in French for Teachers from the School of Languages, Literatures and Cultural Studies
	One-year full-time MSc in Accounting and Analytics from the School of Business, replacing PGDip in Accounting
	One-year full-time MPhil in Theology & Social Justice , from the School of Religion, Theology and Peace Studies. In both the Traditional and Framework architectures
Amendments to existing PG Courses	Revised Two-year full-time Master in Global Challenges for Sustainability , as part of the CHARM-EU Initiative.
	Additional direct entry 1-year part-time 60 ECTS Postgraduate Diploma in Specialist Nursing with six strands
	Title Change from MPhil in 'Gender and Women's Studies' to MPhil in 'Women's Gender and Sexuality Studies' .
	Change in the start date of the MSc in Hospital Pharmacy from January 2026 to September 2025.
	Two new entry routes to the Professional Master of Education via Computer Science and Chinese, in line with existing subject areas (EDPT1012 and ET7907).
	Title Change from MEd Strand in 'Critical Perspectives on Education' to 'Open Pathways' on all full-time and part-time formats of delivery, in the School of Education.
	Revision of English Languages requirement for number of courses across College.
New Micro-credentials	Perinatal Mental Health & Children Related Trauma

Academic Policies, Procedures & Regulations

In association with relevant stakeholders, Academic Affairs reviews and updates academic policies and procedures, in accordance with a cyclical schedule of reviews. New policies, procedures and regulations are also developed, as required, in response to sectoral or statutory initiatives or identified need.

In 2024/25, AA managed the development of two new Policies, and the review and update of nine others, which are listed in Table 2 below.

Table 2: Academic Policies Developed and Reviewed during 2024/25

Remote Supervision of Postgraduate (Doctoral) Students – renamed the Off-site Supervision of Research Students Policy
Assessment and Academic Progression Policy
Return of Coursework Policy – renamed the Return of Feedback on Assessments Policy
Late Submission of Assessments (Extensions) Policy (NEW)
Admission and Transfer Policy
Recognition of Foreign Qualifications Policy
English Language Policy
Student Garda Vetting Policy (NEW)
Programme and Curriculum Design and Approval Policy
Programme Suspension and Cessation Policy
Virtual Learning Environment (VLE) Policy – renamed the Learning Management System (LMS) Policy

Academic Affairs also informed the development and review of undergraduate regulations. These included regulations on repeating a year and the application of compensation regulations for students who defer a year or who go off-books without assessment (OBA). Guidance on Operational Procedures for Examiners during the Examination Period were also developed in collaboration with the Senior Lecturer/ Dean of Undergraduate Studies and the Dean of Graduate Studies. AA also managed the review and updating of derogations to the TEP regulations relating to course assessment and progression and managed the review of and updates to regulations in the Calendar Part II.

Academic Committees

Academic Affairs works closely with the Senior Lecturer/Dean of Undergraduate Studies, the Dean of Graduate Studies, and the Registrar, and provides support to University Council and its principal committees namely, the Undergraduate Studies Committee and its sub-committee on Trinity Electives; Graduate Studies Committee, and the sub-committees of University Council – the Associated Colleges Degree Committees (ACDC) of Marino Institute of Education (MIE) and the Royal Irish Academy of Music (RIAM). Table 3 below provides information on the number of committee meetings held in 2024/25.

Members of the AA team have specific responsibility for a committee support and work with the relevant College Officers in setting meeting agendas, drafting documentation, collating and reviewing papers for circulation, acting as minute secretary to meetings, communicating committee decisions to relevant stakeholders and following up on committee actions.

Table 3: Academic Committees and sub-committees supported by Academic Affairs – Key figures 2024/25.

29	Committee/sub-committee meetings, of which:
6	University Council
7	Undergraduate Studies Committee
8	Graduate Studies Committee
5	Associated College Degrees Committee (excl. Annual Dialogue Meeting)
3	Trinity Electives Sub-committee (inc. Trinity Electives assessment review meeting)

Contributing to College Groups and Industry Networks

Team members in Academic Affairs actively participate in and bring expertise to a wide range of College's working groups, project groups and committees.

The AA team also actively engages and represents Trinity College in industry-wide networks and events, including, but not limited to:

Coimbra Group

In May 2025, the Assistant Academic Secretary - Academic Affairs joined the Coimbra Group's Education Innovation Working Group, strengthening Trinity's engagement with European partners on advancing teaching and learning. As part of this collaboration, the Head of Unit participated in the Coimbra Group's 49th Annual Conference, held in Bologna in June 2025, alongside the wider Trinity delegation. This involvement supports the sharing of best practice and contributes to shaping innovative approaches to education across member institutions.

IQQF QQI Committee

Since November 2024, the Assistant Academic Secretary - Academic Affairs has represented Trinity on the QQI Irish Qualifications and Quality Framework (IQQF) Forum, contributing to national discussions on qualifications, quality assurance, and educational standards. This engagement enables Trinity to remain aligned with evolving national frameworks and to actively participate in shaping policy and practice in higher education across Ireland.

Website & Systems

Academic Affairs has completely refreshed its website during 2024/25 with the intention to streamline information, reduce duplication and present information in a clear and accessible manner for all users. The website links to the central repository for all academic policies, procedures, and regulations, provides resources to assist with course development at both undergraduate and postgraduate level, and links to meeting agendas and minutes for related governance committees.

Find our new website at www.tcd.ie/academic-affairs

Looking forward to 2025/26

Continuous improvements and developments are planned for 2025/26, including:

- Aligning the workplan of Academic Affairs to College Strategy 2025-30 through a concrete and detailed action plan.
- Finalising the review of the two-stage postgraduate programme development and approval process and embedding the approved recommendations and changes. Training and mainstreaming new processes within the team and PG renewal project draws to a close.
- A number of innovative course proposals and curriculum developments and revisions will be supported and managed by AA in 2025/26 at undergraduate and postgraduate levels.
- In response to feedback from the academic community, AA will manage the revisions to undergraduate regulations, including supporting academic integrity through further development of institutional guidelines on generative AI in student work.
- As part of building collaborative community with Schools, Academic Affairs will be offering an annual induction session to new School Managers and new Directors of Teaching and Learning to brief them on changes to processes managed by Academic Affairs, and to highlight the academic policies coming into effect from 2025/26. These sessions will also signpost what academic policies will be reviewed during 2025/26 and advise on the supports available to Schools to assist with the development or major revision of course and curriculum proposals. The AA team will also host focus sessions, workshops and surveys with the Schools in areas of resource development and policy reviews.
- Planning is underway for the review and updating of several College academic policies prior to the end of the 2025/26 academic year:
 - Academic Awards Policy
 - Dual and Joint Awards Policy
 - Postgraduate Research Supervision Policy
 - Procedures for a Viva Voce
 - Approval of Linked Providers' Quality Assurance Procedures
 - Linked Provider Appeal Policy
 - Quality Policy Statement
 - Procedure for the transfer to External Examiners of students' assessed work
 - Procedures for the Conduct of Focus Groups for Student Feedback on Modules and Programmes.

The work initiated in 2024/25 on the review of the undergraduate Appeals Policy and procedures will continue in 2025/26.

- The AA team will continue contributing to on-going and new strategic teaching and learning projects across College – PG renewal, Academic Integrity week, new Teaching & Learning strategy, to name a few.
- Business as usual in 2025/26 will comprise the management and support of USC and GSC and their respective sub-committees on Trinity Electives, supporting development of new programmes and policies by Associated Colleges, and providing policy and regulation guidance to College community and College officers.

The AA team looks forward to providing continuing guidance and support to the College community in 2025/26. If you have any ideas/feedback to inform our work, please do get in touch!

[Academic Affairs - Academic Affairs | Trinity College Dublin](#)

acadaff@tcd.ie