Academic Practice Annual Report

2021-22

Trinity College Dublin
Coláiste na Tríonóide, Baile Átha Cliath
The University of Dublin

Trinity Teaching & Learning

Contents

Foreword

Since its original inception in 2003, Academic Practice has played a key role in strengthening and advancing excellence in teaching and learning across the disciplines at Trinity. By establishing the Academic Practice team, Trinity recognised the importance of strengthening teaching and learning as a feature of a world-class educational experience.

In March 2020, the Covid pandemic initiated unprecedented changes to academic practice across Trinity; presenting a significant challenge for academics as they endeavoured to ensure continuity of teaching and programme delivery. Academic Practice acted as a key support for staff as they sought guidance on remote teaching and alternatives to traditional in-person examinations.

The "pivot" to remote teaching has continued for many in 2021-22, and Academic Practice has continued to work extensively during this time to support staff, equipping them with core digital teaching competences. However, pedagogical challenges persist as indicated by staff and students in <u>Trinity's 2020-21 "Survey of Staff and Student Experiences of Learning, Teaching and Assessment</u>". Against this backdrop, Academic Practice underwent a Quality Review in March 2021 with a panel of International experts. The panel was overwhelmingly positive in their report, and participants in the review acknowledged Academic Practice as a highly valuable resource to Trinity. It is clear that Academic Practice plays an essential role in supporting the educational mission of Trinity.

I would like to thank Academic Practice colleagues for their unstinting commitment to teaching and learning and for helping to shape and increase the professionalisation of pedagogic practice and teaching at Trinity.

Patricia Callaghan

Academic Secretary
Head of Trinity Teaching & Learning

The Academic Practice Team 2021-22

Dr. Ciara O'Farrell
Head of Academic Practice

Dr. Caitriona Ni She
Academic Developer

Dr. Jonny Johnston
Academic Developer

Assoc Prof. Cicely Roche
Academic Developer/
Trinity Education Fellow

Dr. Pauline Rooney
Academic Developer

Nicola Byrne
Education Support Officer/
Project Manager

Dr. David Hamill
Learning Technologist

Jade Concannon
Education Support
Officer

Introducing Academic Practice

Our mission in Academic Practice is to strengthen and advance excellence in teaching and learning across the disciplines at Trinity.

With a focus on partnership and dialogue, we are committed to enhancing teaching and learning through the fulfilment of three main objectives:

o   leading academic professional development in teaching, learning and assessment for academic staff and those with teaching responsibilities.
o   nurturing and supporting teaching cultures and communities across the disciplines.
o   advancing and promoting research and scholarship in teaching, learning and assessment.

Leading academic professional development in teaching, learning and assessment

Advancing and promoting research & scholarship in teaching, learning & assessment

Partnership & Dialogue

Nurturing and supporting teaching excellence
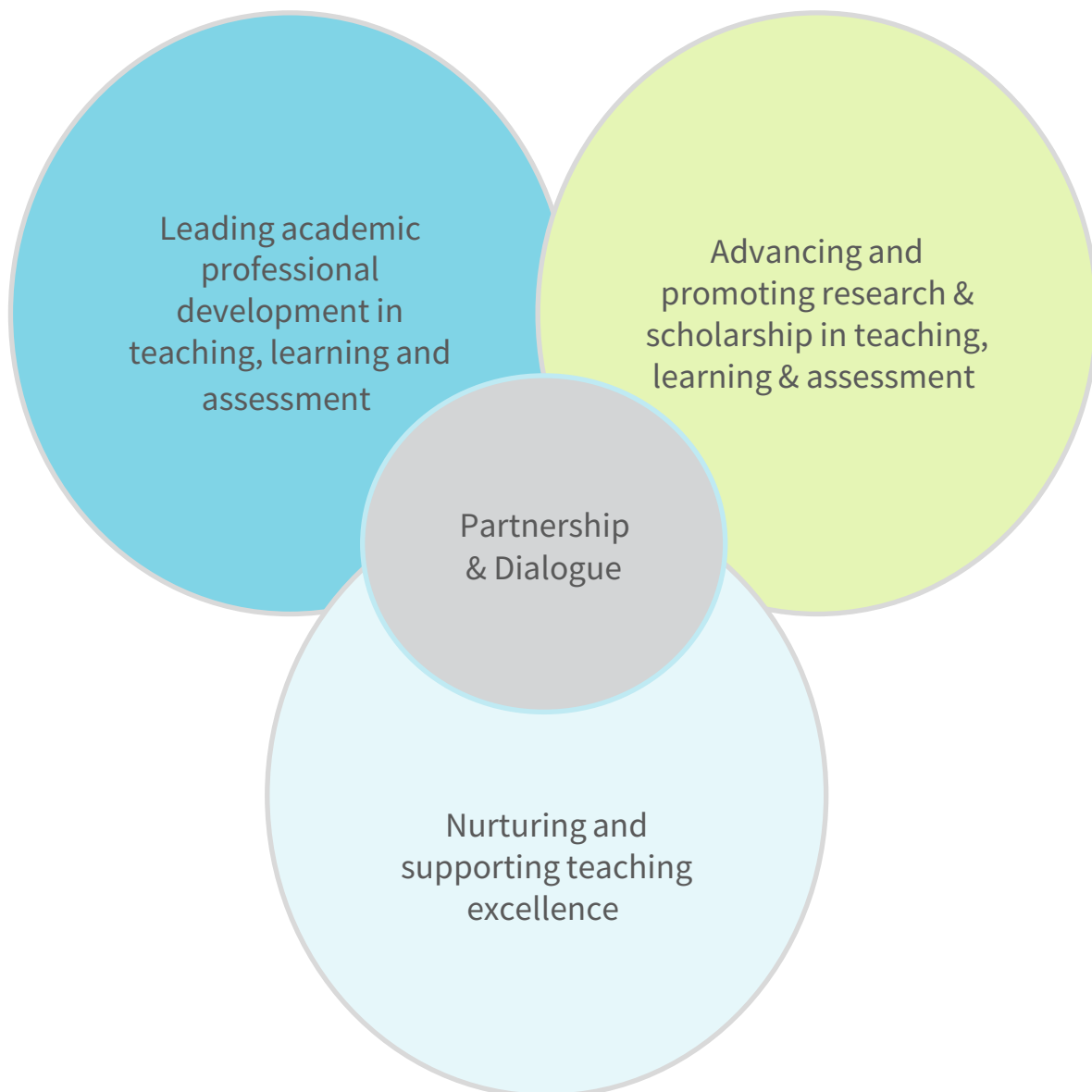
2021-22 At a Glance

125
Graduates from Special Purpose Certificate (to date)

269
Graduates from Graduate Teaching Assistant Programme (to date)

39
Professional development events

1108
Participants at events

8
For-credit modules

473
Staff enrolled on our modules

96
Teaching Excellence Award winners

666
Podcast plays

Special Purpose Certificate in Teaching, Learning and Assessment for Academic Practice

The SpCert is a level 9/ M-level professional practice award targeted to the needs of faculty and staff holding responsibilities for teaching and/or supporting student learning at Trinity. Flexible, research-informed and practice-based, the SpCert empowers participants to develop and evidence their academic practice through:

o Critical engagement with research in teaching and learning
o Ongoing reflection on, and evaluation of practice
o Discussion, community-building and sharing of ideas and experiences.

Recognising the important of disciplinary context and culture, participants explore and critically evaluate practice and convention in learning and teaching both from generic and discipline-specific perspectives.

The SpCert seeks to strengthen and advance excellence in teaching and learning across the disciplines and to further the enhance teaching and learning cultures at Trinity.

125

Graduates to date

473

Currently enrolled

Enrolments to date by Faculty
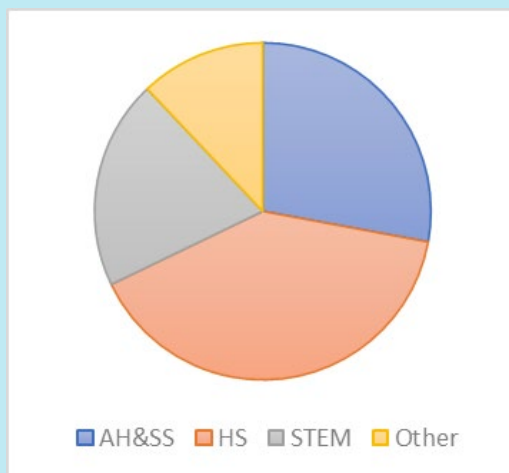

AH&SS   HS   STEM   Other

I am grateful and delighted that I had a chance to obtain the SPCert. I was amazed with how well the on-line lectures were designed - they were vibrant and engaging, and we were encouraged to actively participate in the discussion, student group work, engaging via whiteboard and polls, and having a chance to present our work and discuss it among each other, etc. For me this was truly wonderful and inspiring learning experience!

Dr Alina Premrov, School of Natural Sciences
SpCert Graduate, 2022

Graduate Teaching Assistant Programme

Our fully online 5-ECTS Graduate Teaching Assistant Programme *"Teaching and Supporting Learning as a Graduate Teaching Assistant"* is available to doctoral students in any discipline in College.

The programme is targeted towards PhD students with roles supporting teaching and learning, e.g. students holding roles as TAs, lab demonstrators, and tutorial leaders. The module typically runs in Michaelmas and Hilary terms and also during the summer.

Credits awarded following successful completion of the module can form part of the structured PhD programme. Registered PhD students may also access a self-guided version of the module that does not lead to the award of credits and which is available on demand through the VLE on a purely professional development basis.

269
Graduates to date

402
Enrolments to date

Graduates to date by Faculty

■ AH&SS ■ HS ■ STEM

"I benefited so much on this module. It has helped me to understand that lecturing is not just about pouring out knowledge to students....There is need for a GTA to really understand the basic principles of teaching and learning before getting involved in the classroom or laboratory."

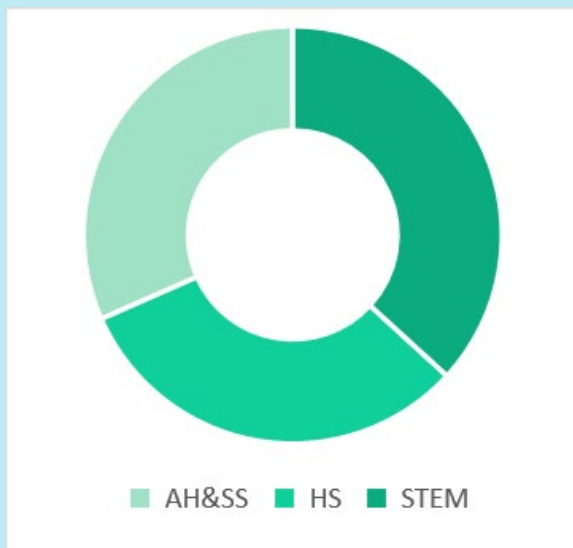Mr Ferguson Tobins, School of Engineering. GTA Graduate 2019-20.

Research Supervisor Development Programme

Established by Academic Practice in 2014, the Research Supervisor Development Programme is a unique collaborative initiative under the auspices of the Irish Universities Association which is run by Graduate Studies and Academic Practice, in partnership with UCD.

Targeted at new and experienced supervisors, this programme highlights current pedagogies, practices and challenges in research supervision, offering fora for discussion, collaboration and peer learning.

In 2021-22, the programme expanded to include contributions from RCSI, DCU, MU, NUIG, UCC and UL. The aim was to enable each partner institution to host events on key topics, which could be accessed across the IUA network by contributing partners. Shared resources promote a community of practice for Institutions and participating supervisors.

Fifteen events were offered in total during 2021-22, with six of these facilitated by Trinity, supported by Academic Practice. These included:

231
Participants in TCD events

6
TCD events

9
Partner events

Introduction to Research Supervision

Considerations when taking on a new PhD candidate

Supervising Research Students Remotely

Mental Health & Well-being

Career Development & Networking

Navigating Difficult Conversations with Research Students

>> Find out more about the Researcher Supervisor Development Programme

Professional Development Events & Workshops

Launch of Spotlight Series

Each year, Academic Practice run standalone professional development events and workshops, in response to academic and institutional needs and priorities. In 2022, we launched our **Spotlight Series**: a series of events focused on a specific theme of strategic importance to Trinity. These provide opportunities for academic staff to discuss, connect, and share expertise and perspectives on key topics relating to teaching, learning and assessment, supporting the development of communities of practice across the disciplines.

PD Events at a Glance

1008
Participants

39
Events

26
Contributors

25
Resources

Spotlight on Digital Assessment

Our first series focused on **Digital Assessment** with contributions from academic staff across the Faculties. See recordings of some events below: more details are available on the Academic Practice website.

Using digital technologies to enhance assessments in the form of essays and literature reviews

Using Digital Technologies to Enhance Field Trip Assessments

Using digital technologies to enhance assessments of clinical practice skills

National Forum Seminars

Academic Practice was awarded funding by the National Forum to host a number of national events with contributions from international experts. These included:

Practices in the Disciplines: Opportunities & Challenges of Digital Education

Dr. Peter Bryant
University of New South Wales

[Find out more](#)

ePortfolios for Experiential learning

Prof Kathleen Yancey
Florida State University

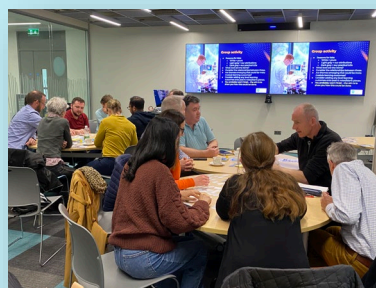[Find out more](#)

Digital Futures in HE: Practice & Policy

Prof Sian Bayne
University of Edinburgh

[Find out more](#)

Designing Learning Outcomes for Labs

Prof Andrew Garrard & Dr Adam Funnell
*University of Sheffield*

[Find out more](#)

We also captured the outputs of these events digitally through event recordings and resources. Click on the links above to find out more.

Expanding Professional Development Opportunities

Development of Academic Practice "Learning Hub"

In 2021, the Academic Practice website was redeveloped with the aim of creating a "learning hub" for Trinity staff, focused on research-informed teaching, learning and assessment. A key priority was to develop a suite of resources that would support academic staff through the process of programme and module design. We are continuing to develop this hub to further enhance our supports for staff.

>>> [Click here to find out more about our website.](#)
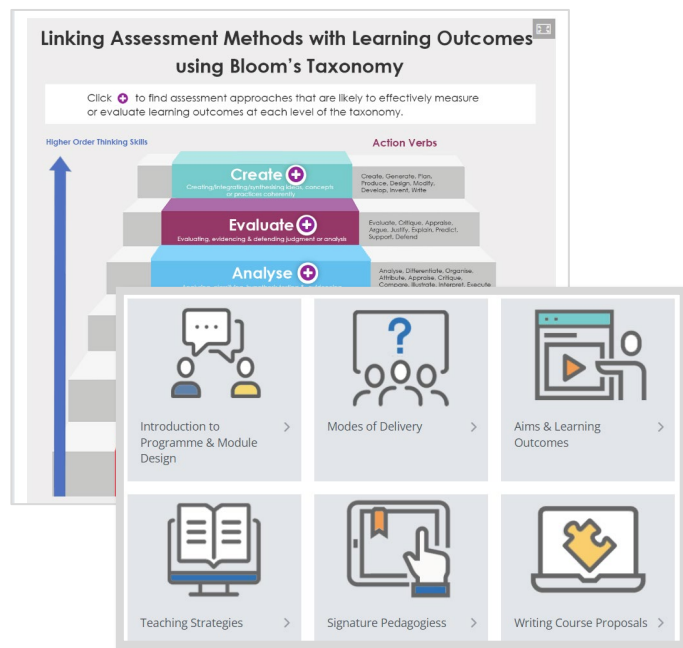
## Academic Outreach via Podcasting and Blogging

In 2021, we launched our blog "**InspirED**", where contributors and readers can

- **connect** with colleagues, linking pedagogic research with practice.
- **reflect** on teaching, learning and assessment.
- inspire each other to **effect** changes in teaching practice.

>>> [Click here to visit InspirED](#)

We also launched our **"Coffee & Cobblestones"** podcast, where we discuss emerging issues and challenges in education with colleagues across the sector.

>>> [Click here to visit Coffee & Cobblestones](#)

12 Posts

1334 Reads

735 Visitors

12 Episodes

666 Plays
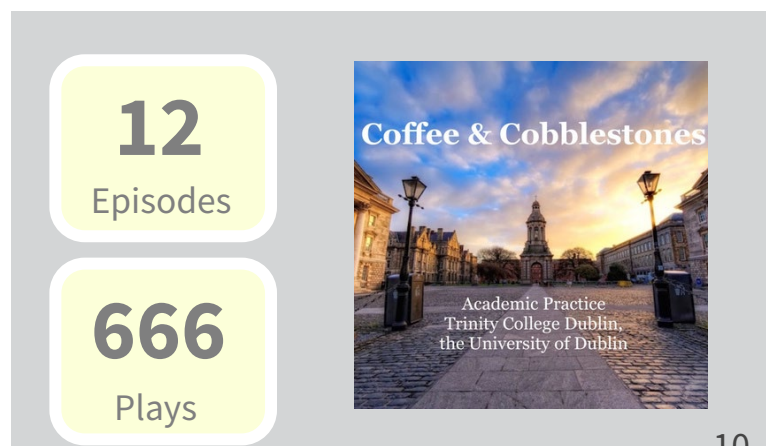
Strategic Teaching & Learning Projects

Digital by Design: Building Capacity for Digital Education at Trinity

Funded by the National Forum as part of the SATLE 20 Initiative, "Digital by Design" was Trinity's largest SATLE 20 project and aimed to build capacity for digital education across Trinity, drawing on what we have learned from our pandemic experiences of digital learning.

Completed in May 2022, key outputs of the project included:

Three Faculty-based "Snapshot" research reports, mapping digital education practices across the disciplines nationally and internationally

Read more

A Professional Development Framework for Digital Education at Trinity

Read more

A for-credit-module for Graduate Teaching Assistants "Assessment & Feedback in a Digital Context"

Read more

A suite of professional development events for staff

Read more

Three Faculty-based Sharepoint Hubs: where staff can share research, ideas, experiences and practices on all things teaching, learning and assessment-related.

Read more

Supporting Curriculum Excellence on HCI Programmes

Funded by the Higher Education Authority, the Human Capital Initiative (HCI) at Trinity powers a suite of courses aimed at developing the most relevant and in-demand skillsets. Innovation and "next-generation teaching and learning" underpins the project with a firm focus on meeting industry and future skills needs.

With significant expertise in programme and module design, Academic Practice support HCI coordinators and their teams through the design process via consultancy support, tailored workshops and a suite of digital resources. We also work closely with colleagues to support the course proposal and approval process.

Upskill at **Trinity** with **HCI courses**

2
Team-based ABC learning design workshops
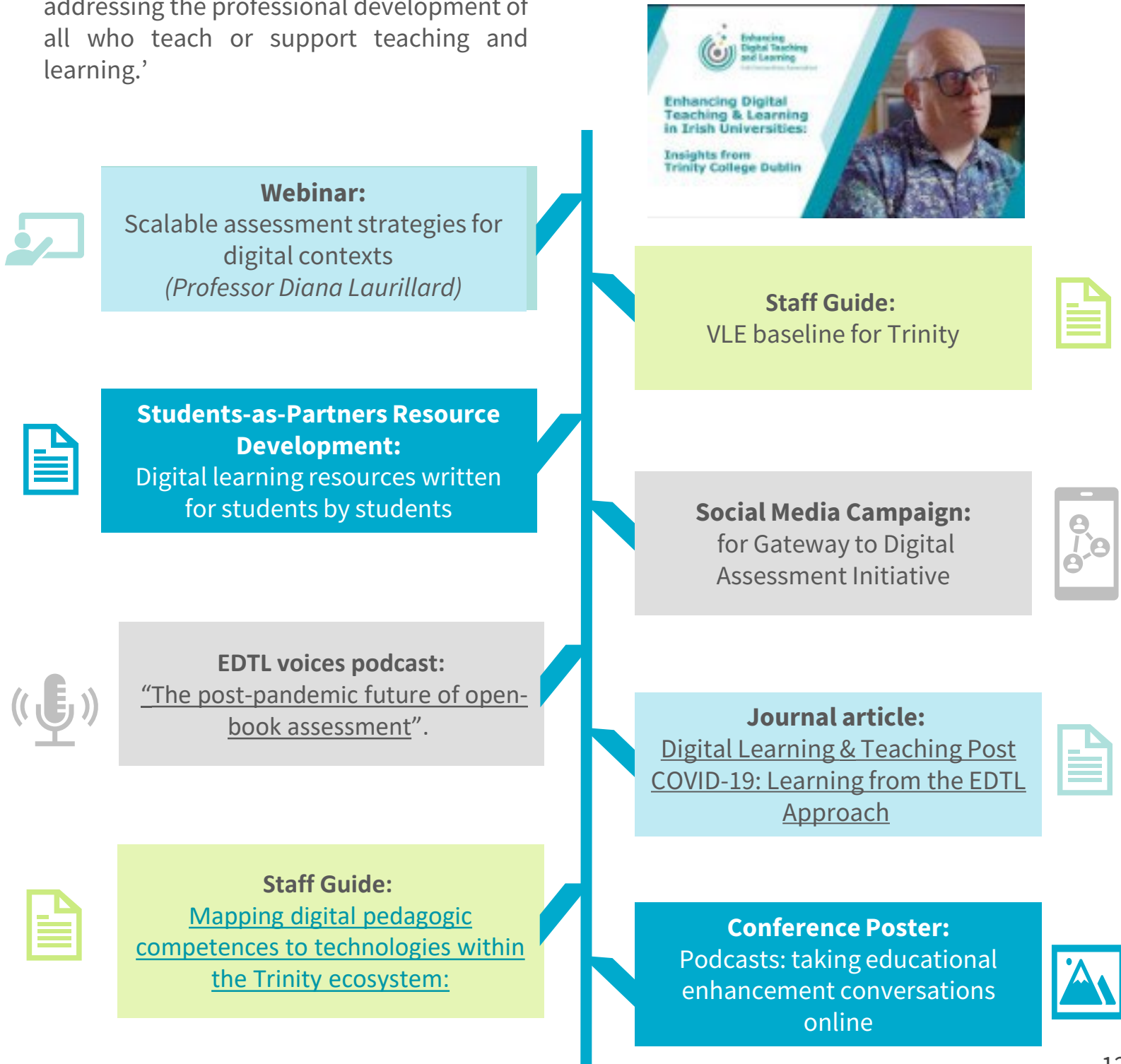
4
Staff Master Classes

8
Webpages & resources

Enhancing Digital Teaching & Learning in Irish Universities (EDTL)

The Enhancing Digital Teaching and Learning in Irish Universities Project is coordinated by the Irish Universities Association, with all seven universities as partners. Led by Academic Practice in a Trinity context, the project aims to 'mainstream digital in teaching and learning activities in Irish Universities, by addressing the professional development of all who teach or support teaching and learning.'

Digital education remains a key feature of teaching and learning at Trinity, with a majority of our staff and students indicating a preference for blended learning (Academic Practice, 2022). A snapshot of key EDTL-supported outputs from Academic Practice during 2021-22 is illustrated in the timeline below.

Webinar:
Scalable assessment strategies for digital contexts
(Professor Diana Laurillard)

Staff Guide:
VLE baseline for Trinity

Students-as-Partners Resource Development:
Digital learning resources written for students by students

Social Media Campaign:
for Gateway to Digital Assessment Initiative

EDTL voices podcast:
"The post-pandemic future of open-book assessment".

Journal article:
Digital Learning & Teaching Post COVID-19: Learning from the EDTL Approach

Staff Guide:
Mapping digital pedagogic competences to technologies within the Trinity ecosystem:

Conference Poster:
Podcasts: taking educational enhancement conversations online

Trinity Teaching Excellence Awards

Academic Practice manages the Trinity Excellence in Teaching Awards (formally the Provost's Teaching Awards). These Awards are designed to recognise and celebrate those who have:

achieved and sustained outstanding quality of teaching and positive educational impact through effective use of pedagogies that engage and enhance student learning.

This highly prestigious Award reflects the importance of teaching as a scholarly activity at Trinity and celebrates the key role that teaching staff play in enriching the learning opportunities of our students.

96

Awards to date

It was a great honour to be nominated by my students for this award and to hear their stories of how teaching and learning adapted and evolved to meet their changing needs during the really challenging pandemic.
Completing the <u>certificate</u> *gave me the necessary skills to adapt my teaching to the online forum, to reflect on my practice and adjust it in response to student needs, and how to build a successful community of peers from different disciplines to consistently improve my scholarship of teaching and learning*

Dr Órla Gilheaney, School of Linguistic, Speech & Communication Sciences
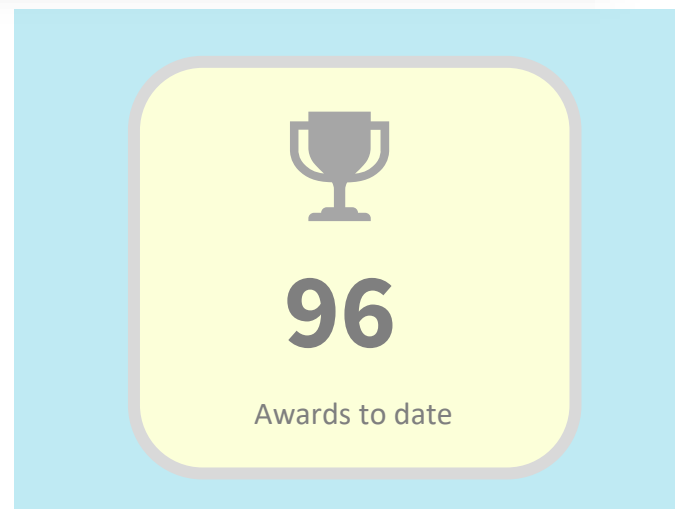
Postgraduate Awards for Teaching & Learning

Coordinated by the Dean of Graduate Studies Office, the Postgraduate Awards for Teaching and Learning recognise excellence in teaching and learning practices of emerging researchers and postgraduate teaching assistants.

Academic Practice works closely with the Dean and Graduate Studies Office to support these Awards, recognising expertise and excellence in our future educational leaders.

30	**15**	**16**	**1**
Applications	Schools represented	Shortlisted	Award

Award Criteria

✓ Contribution to stimulating, engaging and supporting student learning.

✓ Commitment to critical reflection and professional development that enhances teaching practice.

✓ Exceptional performance in enhancing the student learning experience in the discipline.

Building a Students-as-Partners Approach

Our work in Academic Practice is embedded firmly in a Students-as-Partners ethos. During 2021-22, this partnership approach has played a key role in supporting dynamic collaboration between staff and students in the digital assessment space.

Promoting a cultural shift away from the dominant view of assessment as something 'done to' students, we have sought to open dialogue between staff and students on assessment. In doing so, we aspire to close the gap between student and staff understandings of assessment practices, criteria and standards.
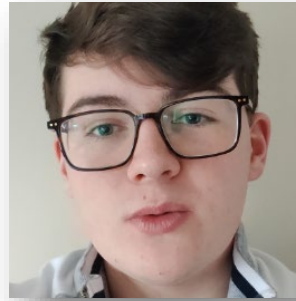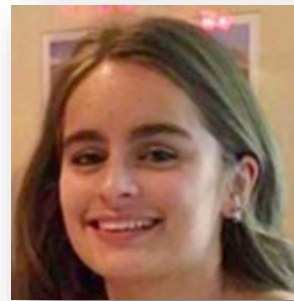
Ben Ryan
BBS Business

Hannah Arthurs
MSc Entrepreneurship

Alex McKibben
B.Sc. Pharmacy

Laine Abria
BSc Pharmcy (RCSI)

| **6**	**3**	**15**
student partners	projects	resources

Consultancy

Academic Practice works collaboratively with individuals, groups, and programme teams to provide bespoke guidance and support in teaching, learning, assessment and curriculum design. Over the past year we have worked extensively with a range of staff, offering support targeted to School and Department needs.

12	**7**
consultancy initiatives	schools/ departments
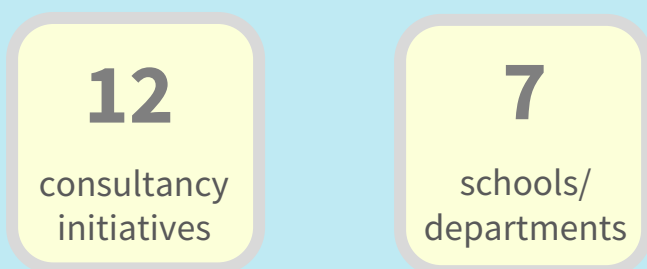
Sample Initiatives Supported:

- DEPTH: Digitally Enhanced Practical Teaching in Health science.

- Supporting Student Success through Clinical Teacher Training.

- Enhancing Resilience in dental undergraduate education (SATLE).

- Careers Employability Awards: Setting and Assessing Learning Outcomes.

- Programme Learning outcomes, and aligned assessment options in Business.

Research and Scholarship

Student & Staff Experiences of Teaching, Learning & Assessment at Trinity College Dublin 2020-21

Academic Practice led the data analysis and write up of findings of the 2020-21 survey of Student & Staff Experiences of Teaching, Learning & Assessment.

The results give a comprehensive insight into student staff experiences of remote teaching, learning and assessment (TLA) during the previous academic year including:

- Digital teaching approaches
- Digital assessment experiences (including open-book formats)
- Communication and feedback
- Technologies used
- Preferences for post-pandemic teaching, learning and assessment
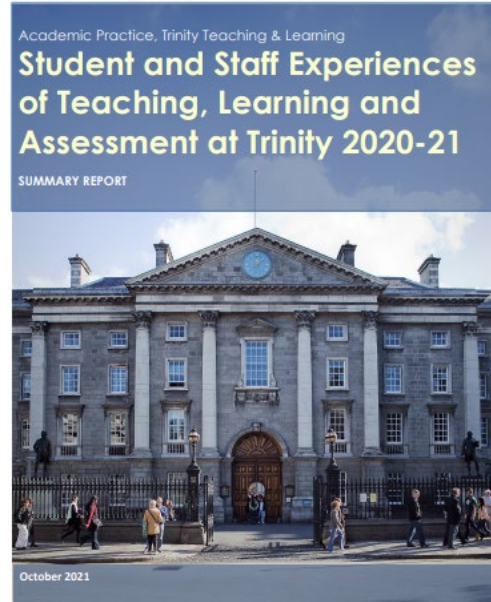
>> [Read Full Report and Executive Summary reports](#).

Trinity's Professional Development Framework for Digital Education
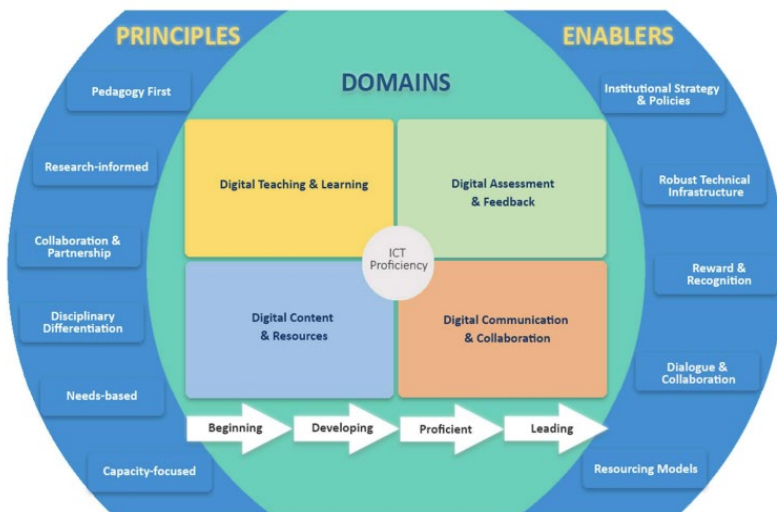
As part of our SATLE Digital by Design project, we undertook focus groups and interviews with staff across all 24 Schools at Trinity, with the aim of informing the development of a Professional Development Framework for Digital Teaching and Learning.

Our framework, which comprises **principles**, **enablers**, **domains** and **proficiency levels**, addresses differentiated disciplinary requirements and provides guidance to support digital education at Trinity.

>> [Find out more about our Professional Development Framework](#)

Peer Reviewed Publications

Ní Shé, C., Farrell, O., Brunton, J., & Costello, E. (2021). Integrating design thinking into instructional design: The #OpenTeach case study. *Australasian Journal of Educational Technology*, *38*(1), 33–52. doi.org/10.14742/ajet.6667
>> Read more

Johnston, J. & Ryan, B. (2022) From Students-as-Partners theory to Students-as-Partners practice: reflecting on staff-student collaborative partnership in an academic development context. *All Ireland Journal of Teaching and Learning in Higher Education* 14:1
>> Read more

Schalk, A. E., McAvinia, C., & Rooney, P. (2022). Exploring the concept of the digital educator during COVID-19. *Australasian Journal of Educational Technology*, *38*(2), 129–141. doi.org/10.14742/ajet.7316
>> Read more

Conference Presentations

Ní Shé, C. & Rooney, P. (2022) Exploring staff experiences of open-book assessment during the pandemic: lessons learned and next steps. Assessment in Higher Education Conference 2022 June 22&23rd - Manchester.

Roche. C, & Abria, L. ePortfolio for experiential reflection: student-led competence assessment. QQI 10th anniversary conference | Quality and Qualifications Ireland. October 18th-19th, 2022.

Conference Posters

Johnston, J.; Rooney, P.; Ni Shé, C.; O'Farrell, C.; Roche, C. Podcasts: taking educational enhancement conversations online? Irish Learning Technology Association/ EdTech conference 2022. Poster presentation.
>> Read more

Invited presentations/workshops

Sustainable change in student engagement? IUA / EDTL (for University of Amsterdam academic staff).

Sustainable feedback in academic practice? Marino Institute for Education.

Getting Started with 'Hybrid' Teaching: Implications for Pedagogic Practice in Hybrid Teaching, University of Bristol.

Looking forward to 2022-23

The next academic year promises to be another challenging one! We have many exciting initiatives planned and, as always, strive to support Trinity staff in their teaching and learning endeavours.

Over the coming year, our work will focus on three key areas of national and institutional strategic importance: academic integrity, digital learning and education for sustainable development.

Academic Integrity

Digital Learning

Education for Sustainable Development

We will continue to focus our activities under three pillars:

Leading academic professional development

Advancing and promoting research & scholarship

Nurturing and supporting teaching excellence

Find out more at our website

We are always interested in hearing from you!

Find out more on our [Academic Practice website](#).

Email us at [academic.practice@tcd.ie](#).

Follow us on Twitter [@TCD_AP](#).

[Click here to watch our latest YouTube videos.](#)

[Click here to subscribe to our Monthly Newsletter "Teaching Matters"](#)

Visit our Academic Practice Faculty Hubs by clicking on the links below

These are Faculty spaces where you can share questions, research, ideas and experiences related to your teaching, learning and assessment practices.

HEALTH SCIENCES

AHSS

STEM

Academic Practice,

Trinity Teaching & Learning