



Trinity College Dublin

Coláiste na Tríonóide, Baile Átha Cliath

The University of Dublin



Centre for Academic Practice Annual Report

2023-24

Trinity Teaching & Learning

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Foreword

As we reflect upon another academic year, it is my pleasure to present the Annual Report of the Centre for Academic Practice. This report encapsulates the dedication, innovation, and collaborative spirit that define our commitment to advancing teaching and learning excellence at Trinity.

In this report, you will find a comprehensive overview of the diverse programmes, strategic initiatives and activities that we have supported over the past year. From professional development for educators to student-centred initiatives that promote transformative learning, we have strived to nurture a community that values and prioritises continuous enhancement of teaching and learning at Trinity.

Over the past year, we have also been delighted to welcome two new members of staff: Kevin O'Connor (Learning Technologist) and Dr Claire McAvinia (Academic Developer). With extensive experience in academic development, digital education, teaching and research in higher education, both Claire and Kevin have brought a wealth of expertise to our team.

Collaboration, dialogue and partnership are cornerstones of our work in the Centre for Academic Practice. With this in mind, I would like to thank my colleagues in the Centre for their commitment to enhancing teaching and learning across the university.

To the many staff and students across Trinity who have partnered with us: your support is invaluable and greatly appreciated.

We hope you enjoy reading this Annual Report and we look forward to working with you in 2024-25.



Dr Pauline Rooney

Head of the Centre for Academic Practice

Trinity Teaching & Learning



About the Centre for Academic Practice

Our Mission

Our mission is to inspire and strengthen a culture of enhancement and innovation in teaching and learning underpinned by research, innovation, inclusivity, sustainability and collaboration.



Our Core Pillars of Activity

With a focus on **dialogue**, **partnership** and **collaboration**, we fulfill our mission through four key pillars of work:



We champion & support
excellence & innovation in
teaching, learning &
assessment



We facilitate
research-informed
professional
development



We advance & promote
research & scholarship in
academic practice



We nurture
teaching & learning
communities

The Team 2023-24



Dr Pauline Rooney
Head of The Centre for Academic Practice:
Trinity Teaching & Learning



Nicola Byrne
Project Manager



Jade Concannon
Programme Administrator



Dr Claire McAvinia
Academic Developer



Dr Caitriona Ni She
Academic Developer



Kevin O'Connor
Learning Technologist



Dr Ana Schalk
Digital Academic Developer



Dr Sarah-Jane Cullinane
ESD Fellow



Dr John Gallagher
ESD Fellow



Dr Claire Kelly
ESD Fellow



Dr Felix Mezzanotte
ESD Fellow



Dr Carlos Rocha
ESD Fellow



Dr Cicely Roche
ESD Fellow

2023-24 At a Glance



160

Graduates from Special Purpose Certificate (to date)



450+

Graduates from Graduate Teaching Assistant Programme (to date)



19

Professional development events in 23-24



530+

Participants at events in 23-24



3

For-credit modules for staff in 23-24



558

Staff enrolled on our modules (to date)



106

Teaching Excellence Award winners (to date)



2

For-credit modules for postgraduate students

Special Purpose Certificate in Teaching, Learning & Assessment

The Professional Special Purpose Certificate in Teaching, Learning & Assessment for Academic Practice is a level 9, non-major award. The 15 ECTS-credited 'SpCert' focuses on four interrelated facets of Academic Practice: teaching, learning, research and leadership.

We were delighted to celebrate with our SP Cert graduates this year at their graduation in College's Public Theatre on 12th July 2024.



The cert programme is very manageable, creates new networks, gives new insights into teaching practices across College and has an expert and supportive teaching team. Definitely worth doing!

Participant from Trinity Library



I think more senior academics like me would really benefit from this module so some way to allow them time to do so would be great.

Participant from School of Engineering



I have thoroughly enjoyed completing all the modules as part of the SP Cert. The quality of teaching on this certificate course is extremely impressive, and its practical focus means that you can immediately transfer your learning into your teaching practice. There is flexibility with the modules that you choose to complete, meaning that you can select aspects of your teaching that you would like to expand your learning in. This course has transformed my beliefs and values surrounding teaching and learning, and my teaching practice has evolved to one that is evidence-based, student-centred, and supportive of all learning types. My sincere gratitude to all those involved in the teaching of this excellent course".

Participant from School of Linguistic Speech & Communication Sciences



160

Graduates to date

558+

Staff attendees to date



[Find out more about our SpCert.](#)

Teaching & Supporting Learning for Graduate Teaching Assistants

This **fully online** for-credit module (5 ECTs) is aimed at postgraduate research students (PGRs) with active roles in supporting teaching, learning, and assessment at Trinity.

Grounded in the scholarship of teaching & learning (SoTL), participants are supported to engage in a community of practice where they will develop familiarity with, and insight into, evidence-based approaches to pedagogical practice. The module introduces participants to core concepts of teaching, learning and assessment in higher education and supports participants to critically reflect on their professional roles and articulate their own philosophy of teaching, informed by pedagogical research.

This module contributes to the award of the structured PhD and is typically offered twice a year.



Teaching & Learning Methods

Module themes ('blocks') are released on a structured basis across the 10-week duration of the module. This 'flipped' approach supports participants to engage with a wide variety of stimulus materials throughout the module.

Module participation is built around engagement in small peer learning sets at times to be agreed between participants in these groups. In this way, the module aims to be as flexible as possible, enabling participants to fit module participation into existing schedules.



450+

Graduates
to date



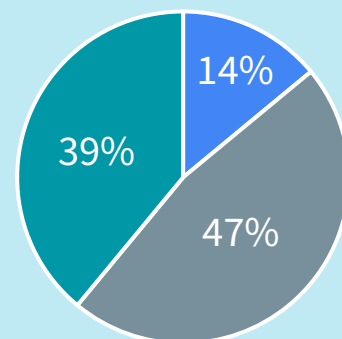
650+

Enrolments
to date



[Find out more about our Graduate Teaching Assistants Programme](#)

Graduates by Faculty 2018-2024



■ AH&SS ■ HS ■ STEM

Hear from our Students



Taking this module when I was just starting out as a teaching assistant was very useful. It enabled me to consider various approaches from the literature whilst also discussing with my peers about how they've developed their approaches and met particular challenges.



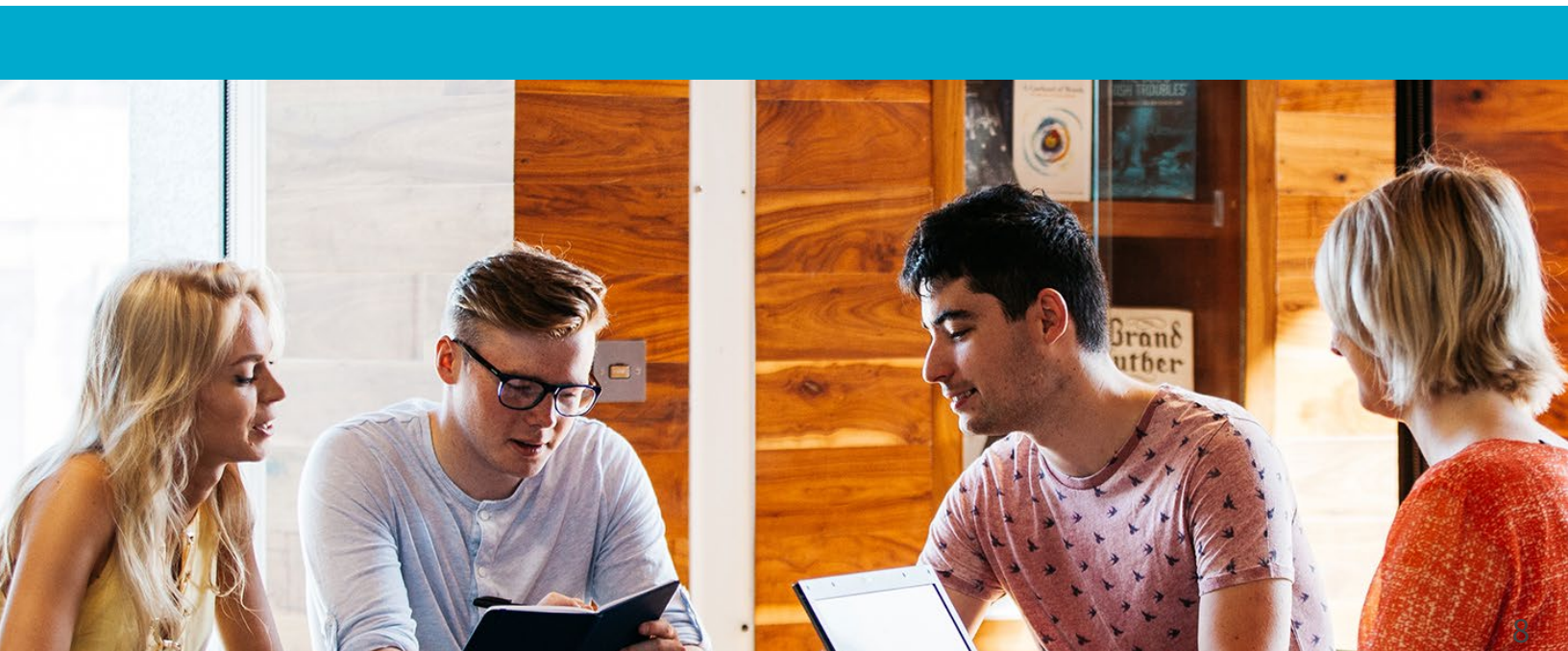
Jack Traynor
School of Histories & Humanities



The module not only talked about how the teaching experience can be enhanced but also opened up possibilities where students across disciplines could come together and discuss newer challenges and real-time experiences they are gaining from the classrooms.



Srimoyee Biswas
School of Social Work & Social Policy



Research Supervisor Development Programme

Established by the Centre for 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 and RCSI.

This programme is targeted at research supervisors new to their role, from across the disciplines, as well as more experienced supervisors who wish to share and expand their knowledge and experience.

The programme of online activity highlights approaches to common challenges, current practices and pedagogies within the field of research supervision. Panel discussions with experienced research supervisors and experts, professional staff and research students will take place across this interactive programme, offering a platform for discussion and an opportunity for peer learning and exchange.



Nine events were offered in total during 2023-24, with "Mental Health and Wellbeing for Research Students and Supervisors" facilitated by Trinity, supported by the Centre for Academic Practice. These included:



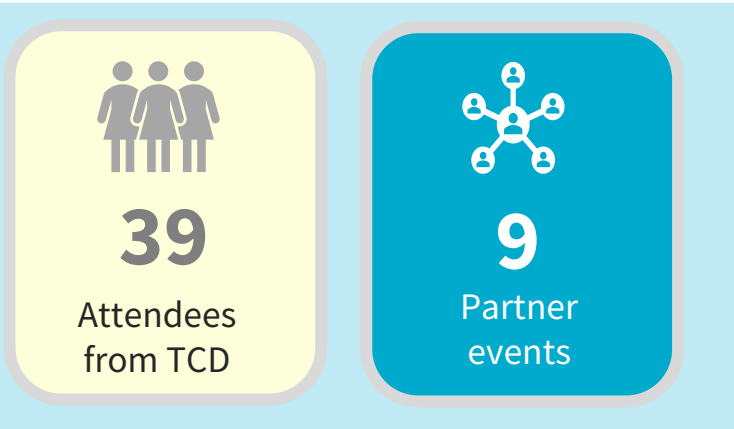
- Mental health and wellbeing for research students and supervisors.



- The Fundamentals of research supervision Hugh Kearns.
- Attracting the right candidate.
- Expectations: navigating roles and responsibilities.
- Supporting & enhancing the research student's skills base.
- Maternity Matters.
- Monitoring, assessment, examiners, viva voce.
- Navigating challenging conversations.



- Developing clinician-scientist relationships to progress clinical research.



[Find out more about the Research Supervisor Development Programme](#)

Professional Development Events

Research-informed professional development is a key pillar of our work and each year we run a series of events, partnering with academics from across the disciplines.

This section provides a snapshot of our offerings over the past academic year.

Events at a Glance



530+

Participants



19

Events

Welcoming new staff to teaching & learning at Trinity

In September 2023 and March 2024, we welcomed lecturers, many relatively new to Trinity, to our interactive teaching and learning workshops where we explored participants' experiences of teaching and learning, and the characteristics of effective teaching practice.

We examined how we can bring some of these characteristics into teaching through effective planning, student engagement, questioning and assessment techniques.

Embarking on a career as a teaching academic in a new university can be challenging. This workshop provided an opportunity for new academic staff to join a supportive, collaborative teaching community at Trinity and connect with academic colleagues across the disciplines, supported by educational experts in the Centre for Academic Practice.



Excellent workshop to reinforce the importance of student engagement.



Interesting to hear other people's views and experiences.



A variety of formats and dynamic environment.

Learning Design and more...

Making effective use of Teaching Assistants in lab-based disciplines

In this workshop, educators from the University of Sheffield explored how to unlock the full potential of teaching assistants (TAs) in the classroom.



The ABC approach to learning design

In this workshop, the ABC model was used to create a visual 'storyboard' outlining the type and sequence of learning activities (both online and offline) required to meet the intended learning outcomes of a module.



Getting started with Learning Outcomes

This workshop explored the role of learning outcomes in module design, with a focus on how they align with teaching and assessment approaches.



Interactive Oral Assessments: A DCU perspective

Colleagues from DCU shared their experiences of using interactive orals as an authentic assessment format, outlining and discussing the main elements of interactive oral assessment.



Events on Academic Integrity



Challenging cheating: strengthening academic integrity through the “Swiss Cheese” approach.

This webinar aimed to support staff to:

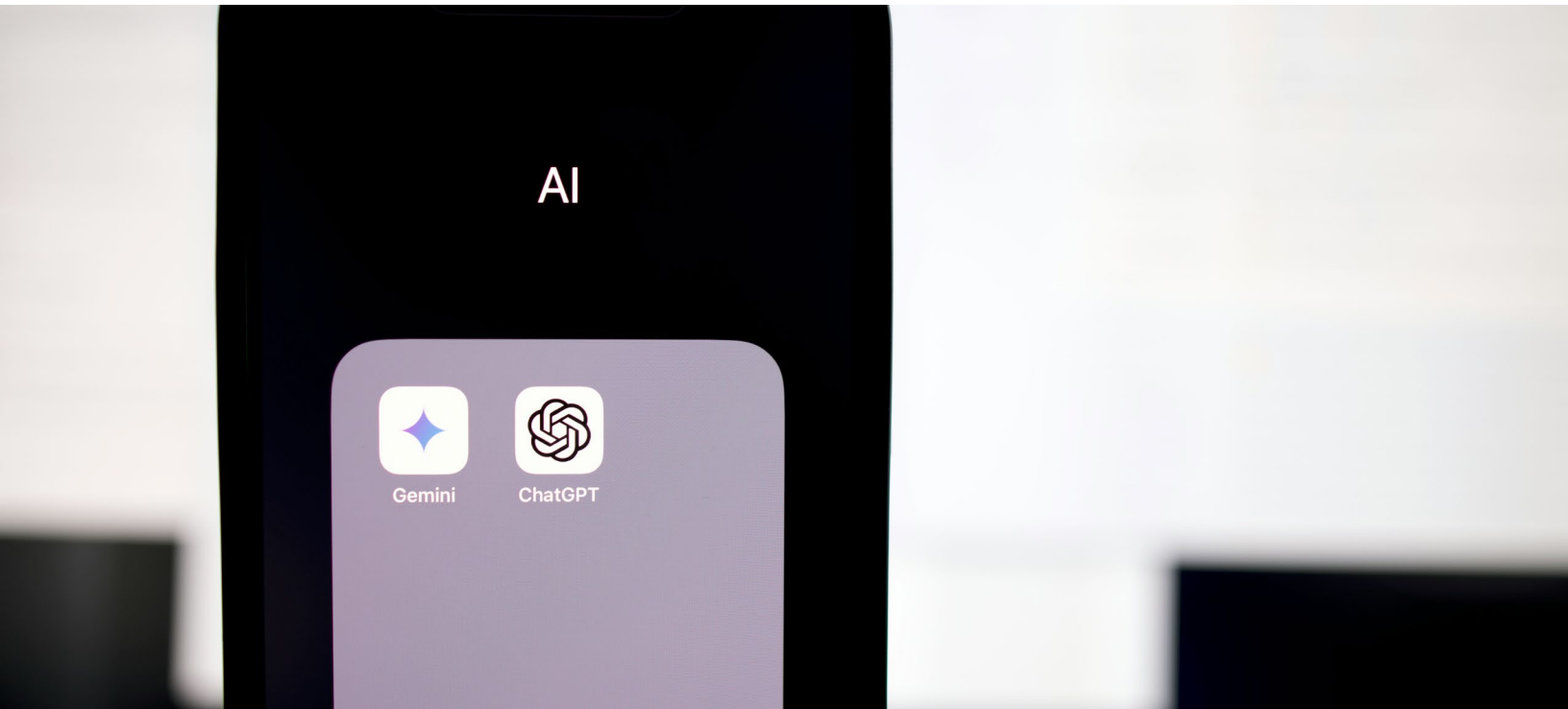
- understand what is meant by academic integrity, academic misconduct, and cheating behaviours;
- discuss the impact of cheating behaviours on assessment, academic integrity and academic misconduct;
- evaluate a range of approaches that can be adopted within your own practice to strengthen assessment integrity (even in a world of generative AI).

Strengthening academic integrity through effective assessment.

This workshop aimed to support staff to:

- understand the value of taking a “Swiss Cheese” approach to assessment practices and processes;
- evaluate principles and methods of effective assessment design (even in a world of generative AI);
- apply one of the methods to (re)design an assessment practice.

Events on Artificial Intelligence



Take-home assignments in the AI era: how to react and how to respond

This event aimed to:

- articulate an understanding of the challenges and opportunities presented by generative AI, for teaching, learning and assessment;
- discuss and consider a range of approaches that can be adopted within your own practice to strengthen take home assignment integrity in a world of generative AI.

Exploring the use of GenAI to support student learning

This lunchtime seminar aimed to:

- invite all teaching staff who are interested in exploring, or have already explored, the use of GenAI to support student learning to share their experiences;
- to provide a welcoming and inclusive space to share, and learn from, each other's experiences.

Teaching Award winners shared their teaching innovations and experiences



Developing audio-visual aids to improve student learning of systems-based embryology

Dr Eric Downer, School of Medicine

Focusing on respiratory system development, Dr Downer's published data suggest that audio-visual aids enhance comprehension of complex biological concepts.

Engaging and assessing large class sizes in Engineering

Dr Justin King, School of Engineering

Dr King gave a brief overview of his experiences in teaching large class sizes (>250) in Engineering.

How do you keep students engaged throughout the semester? What methods can be used to assess large classes efficiently and effectively?

Using student feedback to shape pedagogical approaches in the post-pandemic landscape

Dr Yvonne Lynch, School of Linguistic, Speech & Communication Sciences

Informed by research on student experiences during the pandemic, Dr Lynch explored evolving pedagogical strategies over the past two years. She also discussed strategies for fostering the development of Trinity graduate attributes among students.



Strategic Initiatives

Education for Sustainable Development

In May 2023, Trinity secured funding through the Strategic Alignment of Teaching and Learning Enhancement Fund (SATLE). Administered by the National Forum in partnership with the HEA this funding aims to drive teaching and learning innovation and enhancement across the higher education sector. One key focus area is Education for Sustainable Development (ESD).

As part of the ESD initiative, Trinity Teaching and Learning (TT&L), in collaboration with Trinity Sustainability, appointed five interdisciplinary Fellows in ESD. The fellows work in partnership with the Centre for Academic Practice, TT&L and Trinity Sustainability.

A key component of the ESD initiative is the involvement of four student interns, whose contributions help ensure the initiative is relevant and accessible to the student body. This student-as-partner approach empowers students to actively participate in and promote sustainability efforts.

Summary of major milestones and deliverables to date:

Developed an ESD **Implementation Plan** 2023-2026.

Developed **key competencies** for sustainability as outlined by UNESCO and the European Commission.

An interdisciplinary team of staff and students from all three faculties co-created an **ESD Common Module**. The module will be piloted in the School of Business in Michaelmas Term 24 with 500+ JF students.

The Centre for Academic Practice developed a series of **professional development** opportunities for staff across various disciplines on how to embed ESD into their curricula.

Careers and Development Centre (TT&L) is actively sourcing and promoting **more sustainable development related job opportunities** and developing internship and work-based opportunities in collaboration with relevant Schools.

Externally, the Fellows have **contributed** to the LERU group report on ESD and collaborated with national HEI networks on ESD, as well as with university partners in the SOS Responsible Futures International Pilot Programme.

Strategic Initiatives

Generative Artificial intelligence(GenAI)



Our Generative AI initiatives aim to develop AI literacy amongst Trinity staff and students while enhancing teaching and learning through an ethical and human-centred approach. The Centre for Academic Practice has devised a comprehensive plan that includes:

- providing a suite of **digital open access resources** on using GenAI in teaching and learning;
- offering professional development via **webinars and workshops** to explore the use of GenAI for teaching;
- publishing a suite of **use cases** on GenAI in education - in partnership with universities across Ireland;
- developing an **Open Course** funded by the National Forum in collaboration with Dublin City University and the University of Limerick;
- **embedding GenAI** within our own professional development programmes – to model effective practice while providing an opportunity for students and staff to experience these technologies as part of their learning processes.

Trinity Teaching Excellence Awards & School Awards 2023-2024

The recipients of the Trinity Excellence in Teaching Awards & School Awards for Teaching Excellence were announced by the Provost Dr Linda Doyle at a ceremony in the Provost's House on Monday 24th June 2024. The Trinity Excellence in Teaching Award initiative is designed to recognise and celebrate those who have made an outstanding contribution in the pursuit of teaching excellence.

The Centre for Academic Practice have administered these awards since its inception in 2000 and is proud to part of such a wonderful initiative. Please view our Award Booklet to see what our students had to say.



Centre for Academic Practice staff from left to right: Dr Claire McAvinia, Ms Jade Concannon, Dr Pauline Rooney & Dr Ana Schalk.



From left to right: Dr Liz Heffernan, Dr Rachel Hoare, Dr Matthew Saunders, Dr Aibhin Bray, Dr Glenn Strong & The Provost Dr Linda Doyle.


106
Trinity Excellence in Teaching Awards to date


30+
School Awards for excellence in teaching to date



Each of us will remember a teacher or lecturer who inspired us to think differently or encouraged us to do things we thought were beyond our reach. The Trinity Excellence in Teaching Awards recognise those who go above and beyond in their teaching, and I am very proud of this year's recipients. They are all hugely dedicated to their students, innovative in and outside the lecture theatre, and incredibly inspiring.

Provost Linda Doyle

Award Winners 2024



Find out more about our Award Winners in our [2023-24 Teaching Awards Booklet](#)

Trinity Excellence in Teaching Award Winners 2024

- Dr Aibhín Bray, School of Education
- Dr Liz Heffernan, School of Law
- Dr Rachel Hoare, School of Languages, Literatures and Cultural Studies
- Dr Matthew Saunders, School of Natural Sciences
- Mr Glenn Strong, School of Computer Science & Statistics

School Award Winners 2024

- Dr Robert Baker, School of Chemistry
- Dr Sheila Cannon, Trinity Business School
- Dr Martyn Egan, School of Social Sciences & Philosophy
- Dr Jacob Erickson, School of Religion, Theology & Peace Studies

School Award Winners 2024 contd...

- Dr Neale Gibson, School of Physics
- Prof Stephanie Holt, School of Social Work & Social Policy
- Dr Aaron Hunter, School of Creative Arts
- Dr Martin McMahon, School of Nursing & Midwifery
- Dr Suzanne O'Neill, School of Histories & Humanities
- Mr Eugene O'Rourke, School of Engineering
- Mr Seán Phelan, School of Dental Science
- Prof Roman Romero-Ortuno, School of Medicine
- Prof Cristin Ryan, School of Pharmacy & Pharmaceutical Sciences
- Dr Lorraine Swords, School of Psychology
- Dr Chaolun Wu, School of Mathematics

Postgraduate Awards for Teaching & Learning

Each year, the Graduate Studies Office administers the Trinity Teaching Award for Postgraduate Students, recognising the substantial contribution that these students make to undergraduate and postgraduate teaching and learning.

Schools may nominate up to three students for consideration by the selection panel, which is chaired by the Dean of Graduate Studies and includes cross-Faculty and student representation and the Centre for Academic Practice.

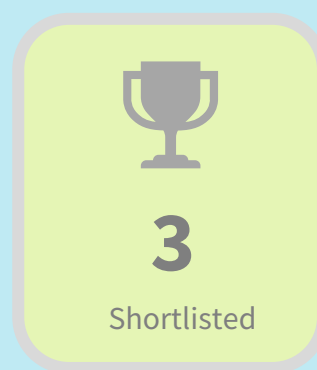
The call for nominations was issued to Schools in November 2023. Following a selection process, the Dean of Graduate Studies announced the winners in May 2024 which was followed by a ceremony to congratulate the winners and nominees.



Award Winner



Runners Up



Shortlisted

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.

Faculty & School Consultancies



The Centre for 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. These include:

Curriculum development for new programmes:

Schools of Natural Sciences
School of Pharmacy & Pharmaceutical Sciences

GenAI in teaching & learning:

Trinity Business School

Curriculum redesign:

School of Physiotherapy

If you are interested in working with us in 2024-25 please email academicpractice@tcd.ie

Research & Scholarship



Ní Shé, C., Ní Fhloinn, E., & Mac an Bhaird, C. (2023). TeRMEd: a framework for educators to aid in the design and evaluation of technology-enhanced resources in mathematics. *Journal of Research on Technology in Education*, 1–21.

[>> Read more](#)



Connery, A., & Ní Shé, C. (2024). Designing a Module on Stuttering and Cluttering: A Guide for Speech-Language Pathology Educators. *American Journal of Speech-Language Pathology*, 33(3), 1157-1173.

[>> Read more](#)



Breen, S., Ní Shé, C., & O’Shea, A. (2024, June 10-14). Role of example generation in implicit and explicit conjecturing tasks. [Conference paper]. INDRUM 2024, Barcelona, Spain.

[>> Read more](#)



McAvinia, C. (2024). From flagship to flotilla? Findings from a review of literature on learning spaces in higher education and ESD. *Irish Journal of Academic Practice*, 11(2).

[>> Read more](#)



Invited Keynote:

Schalk, A. (2024). Unleashing Academic Integrity potential in a GenAI era: How the evolving landscape of GenAI reshapes academic integrity, presenting unprecedented challenges and opportunities for teaching and assessment practices. CONUL Consortium of National and University Libraries Annual Seminar, 1 March 2024.

[>> Read more](#)

Looking forward to 2024-25

As we move into the next academic year, we are looking forward to continuing our work with staff across College and to leading and contributing to institutional teaching and learning initiatives.

In addition to our core professional development provision for staff and graduate teaching assistants, our work over the coming year will focus on three key areas of national and institutional strategic importance: academic integrity, digital transformation in teaching and learning and education for sustainable development.

- Education for Sustainable Development
- Generative AI in Teaching & Learning
- Research-informed Teaching
- Digital Transformation of Teaching & Learning
- Academic Integrity



We will continue to strand our activities under four pillars:

Champion & support excellence & innovation in teaching, learning & assessment

Facilitate research-informed professional development

Advance & promote research & scholarship in academic practice

Nurture teaching & learning communities



[Find out more at our website](#)

We are always interested in hearing from you!



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



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