

Incorporating any amendments approved at subsequent Board meetings.



Trinity College Dublin

Coláiste na Tríonóide, Baile Átha Cliath

The University of Dublin

Board Meeting of 28 January 2026

This meeting was held in the Trinity Board Room

Present: Chairperson (P Farrell), Provost (Dr L Doyle), Vice-Provost/Chief Academic Officer (Professor O Sheils), D Caden, Professor M Cunningham, T Doyle, I Goggin, Professor A Kahane, Dr M Kelly (Deputy Chairperson), Professor D Jones, Professor C Leahy, D Leahy; O Muldoon, Professor A Nolan (joined the meeting online); Professor C O'Farrelly; Professor I Arnedillo Sánchez, Dr D Thornhill, Professor J Walsh, A White, Dr J Wyse.

Apologies: Professor A Dignam; Dr N Hardiman; R Matthews McKay.

In attendance

(ex officio): Secretary to the College/Director of Governance (V Butler), Chief Operating Officer (N Gorman), Chief Strategic Developments Officer/Bursar (Professor E Denny), Treasurer/Chief Financial Officer (L Ryan).

In attendance: Deputy Secretary to the College (AM O'Mullane).

BD/25-26/115 Statement of Interest

The Secretary to the College/Director of Governance advised the Board that there were no statements of potential conflict of interest declared by members.

The Chairperson reminded the Board of the importance of respecting the confidentiality of Board business and noted that should any member wish to discuss any Board matter with other colleagues or peers that they should raise this at the Board meeting for decision on how best to deal with this.

BD/25-26/116 New Members' Declarations

At the invitation of the Chairperson the new Board member made the declaration in the language of their choice.

SECTION A.1 POLICY AND STRATEGIC MATTERS

BD/25-26/117 Minutes

Board approved the draft minutes of 3 December 2025 subject to the amendment to Minute 84.1 being made as read out by the Deputy Secretary to the College.

Alex White joined the meeting at this point.

BD/25-26/118 Matters Arising from the Minutes

Arising from Minute BD/25-26/082, University Risk Register 2025/26, the Chief Operating Officer provided an update on the approach being taken to managing the Laboratory Safety and Hazard Risk noting there were some areas of excellence and

some areas of improvement required. The Chief Operating Officer provided an overview of near miss, minor and major incidents, the governance structures in place, and the priorities of the Safety Office.

In response to a question from a Board member about the handling of a particular type of hazardous material, the Provost confirmed that this matter had been addressed. The Chairperson requested a further progress update on the management of the Laboratory Safety and Hazard Risk in due course.

Dr John Walsh joined the meeting at this point.

The Chief Operating Officer provided an update on the incident that took place in TBSI the previous week.

Arising from Minute BD/24-25/218, Report of the Taskforce on Academic and Institutional International Links and Related Matters, the Secretary to the College/Director of Governance advised that there was one outstanding relevant governance committee, Graduate Studies Committee, that needed to consider the Task Force Report. The Task Force Report would also be shared with the Standing Committee of the Fellows for feedback. Subsequent to this, an update would be provided to the Board by the Secretary to the College/Director of Governance and the Senior Dean on the feedback received.

BD/25-26/119 Provost's Report

The Provost provided an update on the outcome of the latest Research Centres Programme Call from Taighde Éireann - Research Ireland. The Provost noted that Trinity had been successful in being awarded funding for two new national research centres to be hosted in Trinity. The Provost further noted that Trinity had also been successful in a joint bid for a further national research centre. The Provost noted that, in terms of existing centres, it was disappointing that AMBER's application had been unsuccessful, particularly since AMBER had an excellent review outcome last year. The Provost also provided an update on the leadership of the Innovation and Enterprise Function and noted the importance of the upcoming Irish EU presidency for European Universities. The Provost advised the Board that she would be attending the Council of the Global Research-Intensive Universities Network at the end of February and concluded by noting that last year had been Trinity's best year for philanthropy.

There was discussion about dual use research funding and knowledge security and the implications for academic freedom. The Provost advised that there would be a need to have conversations about these matters at a national, sectoral and University level.

In response to a question about the future direction of Innovation and Enterprise, the Provost noted the good building blocks in place to support innovation and noted that there were opportunities to intensify this further.

In response to a comment by a Board member about support being provided to staff in the AMBER Centre, the Provost noted the importance of this and advised that

work had taken place to understand the implications of AMBER not receiving funding under Research Ireland's Research Centres Programme Call. The Provost noted that engagement with the AMBER leadership team continues in relation to this. The Provost also noted that Trinity will need to manage the appropriate transitions involving existing research centres that were not awarded funding under this call, including engagement with, and support for staff that are impacted. There was also discussion about the opportunities to align philanthropy to support the University's research priorities.

Action/Decision

119.01 The Board received the Provost's Report.

Strategic Plan 2025-30

BD/25-26/120 Trinity Development and Alumni Business Case 2026-2031

Kate Bond, Chief Advancement Officer and David O'Shea, Director of Operations, TDA, joined the meeting for this item.

Kate Bond, Chief Advancement Officer, introduced the item with reference to their presentation dated 20 January 2026, which had been circulated in advance of the meeting, which sought an increased investment in Trinity Development & Alumni (TDA) for the period 2026-2031 to deliver growth in philanthropic funding in support of the University's new strategic plan "Thrive" and other priorities.

The Chief Advancement Officer set out details on TDA's performance against the TDA 2021 – 2026 TDA Business Case; noting that all targets will be achieved by the end of the current year. The Chief Advancement Officer advised that excluding Oxford and Cambridge, Trinity was the fifth most philanthropically successful University in the UK & Ireland and did so with much lower alumni numbers than its other comparators. Further benchmarking data was shared on the performance of fundraisers and the cost of fundraising as a percentage total of university incomes and costs in 2024. The Chief Advancement Officer provided details on the positive impact of philanthropy across Trinity, TDA's track record, and set out the case for further investment including support for delivering Thrive.

David O'Shea, Director of Operations, TDA, advised that there was potential for growth in the next business case cycle which could deliver budget relieving philanthropy. He provided details on costs over the life cycle of the business case, the deliverables, the key risk and the mitigants in place.

In response to questions about the benchmarking data utilised in the presentation, the Director of Operations, TDA advised, that Oxford and Cambridge were excluded and that the benchmarking data was drawn from Council for Advancement and Support of Education (CASE) data which was voluntarily submitted by CASE members.

In response to a question about how this business case would be reflected in the budget and forecasting, the Treasurer/Chief Financial Officer advised that the business case ran from 2026/2027 with additional costs and increased income being factored into the next five-year forecast to the Board.

In response to a question about the extent of unrestricted giving to the University, the Chief Advancement Officer, advised that while unrestricted gifts were occasionally received from major donors unrestricted giving generally tended to be received via TDA's regular giving programme or via legacy gifts.

In response to a question, the Director of Operations, TDA provided details on the level of giving to student clubs and societies and noted that a specific fundraiser was working with Trinity Sport.

In response to a question about the growth in headcount at TDA supported by the proposed business case, it was confirmed that this would be on a phased basis with a particular focus on hiring fundraisers.

In response to a question about whether there were plans to deepen connections with academics and researchers in the next business case period, the Chief Advancement Officer noted that additional fundraisers would support increased bandwidth to forge such connections.

Board members commended the performance of the TDA and noted the importance of the proposed business case for budget relieving opportunities and for supporting the delivery of Thrive.

Action/Decision

120.01 The Board considered and approved the presentation from the Chief Advancement Officer dated 20 January 2026, and the accompanying TDA Business Case 2026-2031, Request for Investment.

The Chief Advancement Officer and Director of Operations, TDA, left the meeting at this point.

BD/25-26/121 Response to Board Request for Information – International Student Trends

Professor Emma Stokes, Vice-President for Global Engagement, Ms Niamh Burke, Associate Director, Partnerships and Mobility, and Declan Coogan, Associate Director, Recruitment, Trinity Global joined the meeting for this item.

Professor Stokes, Vice-President for Global Engagement, introduced the item with reference to their presentation dated January 2026, which had been circulated in advance of the meeting following a Board request for information on International Student Trends.

The Vice-President for Global Engagement provided details on trends under the following headings:

- The Trinity Landscape, Student Fee income per Faculty as per 20 January 2026
- The Trinity Landscape, Source countries
- Growth projections for Trinity Schools
- National Picture, international student enrolment at Trinity and other IUA Institutions
- National Trends

- Global Trends
- Summary of Strategic Risks and Mitigations
- Current Admissions Trends, opportunities and mitigating factors.

It was noted that Trinity has strong brand recognition and that rankings performance continues to be a signal of excellence internationally. However, the Vice-President for Global Engagement noted that Ireland's competitive advantage was at risk from a number of emerging challenges. These included, shorter haul destinations becoming more appealing for certain sending countries, the accommodation crisis and cost of living, challenges in obtaining visas in key regions, potentially increasing challenges in transition to employment in Ireland for visa-requiring applicants. The Vice-President for Global Engagement provided details on the diversification of offerings in Irish HEI's.

Professor Darryl Jones left the meeting at this point.

The Vice-President for Global Engagement provided details on the potential opportunities in Transnational Education (TNE) and noted the admissions trends for Trinity since the Covid Pandemic, noting the mitigations to risks the University had in place.

Board members thanked the Vice-President for Global Engagement and her team for the presentation and all their efforts. Board members noted the direction of travel taken by other IUA universities in the TNE space, which did not appear currently to be a matter of active consideration by the University. A number of Board members advised that this matter may benefit from a strategically focused reflection on the risks, benefits, and opportunities by appropriate stakeholders.

Action/Decision

121.01 The Board received the presentation from the Vice-President for Global Engagement date January 2026.

Professor Emma Stokes, Vice-President for Global Engagement, Ms Niamh Burke, Associate Director, Partnerships and Mobility, and Declan Coogan, Associate Director, Recruitment, Trinity Global left the meeting at this point.

Critical Infrastructure Matters

BD/25-26/122 Strategic Capital Projects Dashboard

The Bursar/Chief Strategic Developments Officer introduced the item with reference to their presentation dated 21 January 2026 which had been circulated in advance of the meeting which provided a high-level overview of the University's major capital programme. Board noted an update from the Bursar/Chief Strategic Developments Officer on Dartry and also noted that the Main Contractor for E3 Learning Foundry had issued the final BCAR documentation with Dublin City Council expected to complete site inspection this month. Substantial completion would be followed by a two-month period for IT Services completion.

Action/Decision

122.01 The Board received the update from the Bursar/Chief Strategic Developments Officer.

BD/25-26/123 Response to Board Request for Information – Large Scale Capital Projects Prioritisation

The Provost introduced the item with reference to their presentation from themselves and the Bursar/Chief Strategic Developments Officer dated 21 January 2026 in response to a request from Board (*ref: BD/25-26/039*) to gain a better understanding of how large-scale capital projects emerge, and the role that the Board plays in their development.

The Bursar gave an update on the development of the All-Campus Masterplan which had involved extensive engagement with stakeholders. The Masterplan examined the needs of the University in the round, presented opportunities for the estate and the public realm, and gave the University the tools to understand the trade-offs. There will be an online information session provided to the Board in advance of the May Board meeting.

Board members welcomed the presentation and advised that it would be useful for the induction process of new Board members. A Board member suggested it would be beneficial to provide an overview of the governance structures involved with the overview of individual projects.

Board members welcomed the appointment of the Director of the Capital Programmes Office, noting the challenges of working with contractors to deliver major public sector capital projects. Board noted the importance of the project champion/sponsor given the length of time it takes to progress capital projects from ideation to completion. Board also noted the importance of its own role in making decisions at critical points in a project, bringing to bear lessons learned from previous projects as well as the vision for the estate. A Board member queried whether the presentation could be shared with external stakeholders as it may assist with their understanding of how the University approached capital projects.

Don Thornhill and Grace McNally left the meeting at this point.

Action/Decision

123.01 The Board received the update from the Provost and the Bursar/Chief Strategic Developments Officer.

People and Culture Matters

BD/25-26/124 Senior Academic Promotions Call 2026

The Provost introduced the item with reference to the memorandum dated 20 January 2026 which had been tabled at the meeting. The Board was being asked to approve a financial envelope to run an interim call in 2026, under the existing procedure 57, Senior Academic Promotions Procedure.

The Board had previously approved an insertion in the current procedure to cater for any backlog and the Board noted that this insertion is explicitly linked to the 2024

call and will not apply to the proposed interim call in 2026. If approved, the implementation date of the 2026 interim call would be 01 October 2026.

Board members supported the proposal. A number of Board members suggested that provision of a multi-annual five-year budget for promotion rounds may be beneficial as it supported a coherent approach to planning, budget and demonstrated its value. The Vice-Provost/Chief Academic Officer provided an update on progress with the review of the Senior Academic Promotions process, referred to the data (available on the ASD webpage) indicating outcomes of the past five rounds of promotions calls, and agreed to discuss the suggestion with the Chief Financial Officer in order to understand the financial implications.

Action/Decision

124.01 The Board approved the memorandum from the Provost dated 20 January 2026, and the accompanying request for the financial envelope to run the Senior Academic Promotions Call 2026.

BD/25-26/125 Disciplinary Panel (Academic Staff)

Sorcha De Brunner, Governance Manager, joined the meeting for this item.

The Secretary to the College/Director of Governance introduced the Disciplinary Panel (Academic Staff) item with reference to the memo dated 21 January 2026 which had been tabled at the meeting and the accompanying report from the Chairperson of the Disciplinary Panel Academic Staff.

Action/Decision

125.01 The Board noted the memorandum from the Secretary to the College/Director of Governance and the Governance Manager date 21 January 2026.

125.02 The Board considered and approved the report of the Chairperson of the Disciplinary Panel dated 21 January 2026.

Sorcha De Brunner, Governance Manager, left the meeting at this point.

Other

BD/25-26/126 Visitors

The Board received a verbal report from the Secretary to the College/Director of Governance on a Visitor Case.

BD/25-26/127 Honorary Degrees

Professor Neville Cox, Registrar, joined the meeting for this item.

The Registrar introduced the Honorary Degrees item with reference to his memorandum dated 21 January 2026 which had been tabled at the meeting and summarised the proposed nominations as contained within. Board members were reminded about the confidentiality of the item.

Action/Decision

Board minutes of 28 January 2026.

127.01 The Board approved the memorandum from the Registrar dated 21 January 2026.

Professor Neville Cox, Registrar, left the meeting at this point.

BD/25-26/128 Any Other Urgent Business

None identified.

SECTION A.2 POLICY MATTERS ALREADY CONSIDERED BY PRINCIPAL COMMITTEES

BD/25-26/129 Revised Sustainable Procurement Policy

The Board approved the memorandum from the Procurement Manager and the ESG Measurement and Reporting Manager dated 21 January 2026 and accompanying Revised Sustainability Procurement Policy.

BD/25-26/130 Revised Tobacco and E-Cigarettes Policy

The Board approved the memorandum from the Vice-Provost of Biodiversity and Climate Action and the Director of College Health dated 20 January 2026 and the accompanying revised Tobacco and E-Cigarettes Policy.

BD/25-26/131 Revised Library Disposal Policy

The Board approved the memorandum from the Librarian and College Archivist and the accompanying Revised Library Disposal Policy.

SECTION B MINUTES FROM COMMITTEES

BD/25-26/132 Board Business Callover

The Board noted the Board Business Callover updated to 3 December 2025.

BD/25-26/133 University Council

The Board approved the revised draft acta of the meeting of 10 December 2025 subject to an amendment being made to minute CL/25-26/071 to reflect the role of the Board in that process of consultation.

BD/25-26/134 Audit Committee

The Board approved the minutes of the meeting of 15 October 2025 and noted the executive summary.

BD/25-26/135 Finance Committee

- (i) The Board approved the minutes of the meeting of the meeting of 18 December 2025 and noted the executive summary.
- (ii) The Board approved the minutes of the meeting of 15 January 2026 and noted the executive summary.

SECTION C MATTERS FOR NOTING AND APPROVAL

BD/25-26/136 Higher Education Authority (HEA) Oversight Agreement 2026

The Board noted and the memorandum from the Deputy Secretary to the College and the Head of Financial Planning and Analysis dated 20 January 2026.

BD/25-26/137 Board Elections Timeline

The Board noted and approved the memorandum from the Secretary to the College/Director of Governance and the Governance Manager dated 23 January 2026.

BD/25-26/138 Higher Degrees

The Board noted the Higher Degrees approved by Council on 10 December 2025.

BD/25-26/139 Prizes and Other Awards – Prizes in the School of Social Sciences and Philosophy

The Board noted and approved the memorandum from the Head of the School of Social Sciences and Philosophy dated 29 October 2025.

BD/25-26/140 Financial Services Division Annual Report 2024/25

The Board noted the report for 2024/25.

BD/25-26/141 Senate Business – Recommendations for the award of the degree MA (jure officii)

The Board noted and approved the memorandum from the Registrar dated 20 January 2026.

BD/25-26/142 Associated Companies – Directors’ Reports

The Board noted and approved the memorandum from the Secretary to the College/Director of Governance dated 21 January 2026.

BD/25-26/143 Risk and Compliance Committee Revised Terms of Reference

The Board noted and approved the memorandum from the Secretary to the College/Director of Governance dated 20 January 2026.

BD/25-26/144 High-Level Summary Report on Conflicts of Interest 2024/25

The Board noted the memorandum from the Secretary to the College/Director of Governance dated 20 January 2026.

SECTION D PERSONNEL MATTERS

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

SECTION E NON-EXECUTIVE MEETING

BD/25-26/148 Universities Act 1997 (as amended) – Performance of the Chief Officer Provost’s performance

Paul Farrell, Chairperson, introduced the item noting the section in the Universities Act 1997 (as amended) – in respect of performance of the Chief Officer. The Chairperson confirmed that he had reviewed the Provost’s performance against the targets set by the Board for Financial Year 2024/26 in accordance with Section 18 of the University’s Act 1997 as amended by section 76 of the Higher Education Act 2022 which sets out that the Board shall “establish and implement arrangements for the management of the performance of the chief officer”.

The Chairperson reminded the Board of the targets set and advised that he considered the Provost to have fully met and indeed exceeded all the targets. He invited the Board to provide their views on his recommendations on the Provost's performance. The Board agreed that the Provost had very successfully met all the targets set.

The Board noted that the Chairperson would be in touch with the Provost to agree targets for 2025/26 and also noted that the Provost would be giving a short-written update as part of the Provost's report.

148.01 Action/Decision

The Board endorsed the Chairperson's recommendations that the Provost has fully met all targets set by the Board for FY 2024/25.

BD/25-26/149 Senior Management Changes

Paul Farrell, Chairperson, sought the advice of Board members on the Board's role in supporting succession planning for the Senior Management team. The Board members noted that for a number of senior professional services roles there were deputy roles in place, which supported retaining institutional memory.

Orla Muldoon left the meeting at this point.

Board members concluded that the matter of ensuring there was succession planning in place was for the Provost and the Senior Management team.

Signed:

Date: