



Incorporating any amendments approved at subsequent Council meetings

XX = Board relevance

**Trinity College Dublin
The University of Dublin**

A meeting of the University Council was held on 20 October 2021 at 11.15am remotely and hosted from the Provost's Library.

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

SECTION A

The Provost welcomed everyone to Council and requested that Council members declare any potential conflicts of interest in relation to the agenda. The Secretary noted that the Senior Lecturer/Dean of Undergraduate Studies, Professor David Shepherd, had declared a conflict of interest for item A.5 'Change of Name of School of Religion', as he is from the School of Religion. The Secretary recommended that the Senior Lecturer/Dean of Undergraduate Studies remain in the meeting for discussion of the item.

CL/21-22/021 Minutes

The minutes of the meeting of Council on 22 September 2021 were approved and signed.

CL/21-22/022 Matters Arising

There were no matters arising from the minutes.

The Registrar, Professor A. Bray, Professor A.M. Malone, Ms. B Genockey, and the Librarian and College Archivist joined the meeting.

CL/21-22/023 Provost's Report

The Provost referred to the death of Trinity's former colleague Fellow Emeritus Professor Brendan Kennelly highlighting that he was held in high esteem by his colleagues. The funeral is taking place today and arrangements are being made by Trinity to hold a memorial service.

The Provost invited the Secretary to College to update Council on the Government legislative proposals on the governance of Higher Education Institutions (HEIs). The Secretary informed Council that following the publication of General Scheme of a Bill the relevant Oireachtas Joint Committee considers the General Scheme, invites submissions, and convenes hearings. He reported that the Irish Universities Association (IUA) met with the Oireachtas Joint Committee on Education, Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science in July to discuss the Higher Education Authority Bill 2021 as part of the pre-legislative scrutiny process. Subsequent to the hearings a 'Report on the Pre-Legislative Scrutiny of the Higher Education Authority Bill 2021' was published by the Oireachtas Joint Committee at the end of September 2021. The Secretary summarised some of the key recommendations of the report as follows:

- Legislative reform will be of limited value unless it is accompanied by a sustainable funding model.
- Greater clarity is required on how institutional autonomy will be maintained and will continue to allow for the differentiation of mission by HEIs.
- In respect of the membership of the HEI governing boards/authorities, further clarification is required.
- The HEA should have a designated role in the promotion and support of research, the development of research policy and the provision of research funding.

Speaking further to the item he advised that at a meeting between the Secretary General of the Department of Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science and the Chairs of the governing bodies and Department officials, a number of clarifications had been provided. He noted that transitional arrangements would apply to Governing Authority membership to allow continuity.

The Secretary to the College also explained that the draft legislation when in final draft form will be submitted by the Minister for Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science to the Cabinet for approval before being published and submitted to the Dáil and Seanad for debate and consideration.

The Provost thanked the Secretary to the College for his report and advised Council that Trinity had been working closely with the Department over the past number of months on the legislative proposals and that the need for Trinity's unique status to be recognised had been emphasised.

Referring to the Trinity Living with Covid Oversight Group, the Provost reported that it had met earlier to discuss the Government's announcement on public health measures that will come into place on Friday 22 October and the impact of this on Trinity plans. She confirmed that as planned, Trinity is removing the rules on social distancing in indoor spaces from Friday 22 October 2021 and that learning spaces will operate at full capacity for the second half of Semester 1 (after Reading week). The campus will also reopen to the public from Friday 22 October 2021 and the additional security measures at the entrances will be removed over the coming weeks. She added that the Library will remove social distancing from 22 October 2021 and that it will be back to full capacity in time for Reading week and the assessment period. She emphasised the importance of exercising personal responsibility with the wearing of face masks continuing and for staff and students not to come into College if Covid-19 symptomatic. The Provost acknowledged the work of all involved both centrally and at local level on the resumption of teaching on campus, noting, the significant work undertaken by Michael Slevin

Incorporating any amendments approved at subsequent Council meetings

and Mary McMahon on timetabling and the reallocation of rooms. She emphasised the importance of communication with students on living with Covid and the need for Trinity to respond to changes as they arise.

Responding to a question from the Academic Secretary on College committees meeting in-person, the Provost advised that for the immediate future Council will continue to meet online. Referring to a member's comment on employing a hybrid approach to meetings, she advised that in her experience this approach does not generally work well, and that once in-person meetings resume there will be a need for flexibility, as members may have to attend online on occasion.

The Quality Officer, Ms. Roisin Smith joined the meeting.

CL/21-22/024 Draft Institutional Self-Evaluation Report (ISER)
XX

The Provost thanked all involved for their work on the Institutional Self-Evaluation Report (ISER) and commended the Academic Secretary and the Quality Officer in particular for their efforts.

In introducing the report, the Academic Secretary explained that the Trinity institutional review had been originally scheduled for October 2020 and was postponed to October 2021 due to Covid and rescheduled to 7-11 March 2022 to ensure that an onsite visit could be accommodated. An Institutional Self-Evaluation Team (ISET) was convened to oversee the process, seek stakeholder input, and the production of review documentation. Membership of ISET consisted of, the former Vice-Provost/Chief Academic Officer, Academic Officers, Heads of Support and Administrative Areas, and Student Representation. ISET met on 19 occasions from January 2020 to January 2021, and a communications sub-group, which met on 26 occasions, was established with the remit to engage the College community in the preparation for the review.

Referring to the consultation process on the ISER, the Academic Secretary informed Council that this consisted of engagement with committees of Board and Council, which students are members, and other fora, such as the Heads of Schools, and School Managers.

She presented the timeline for consultation and approval of the ISER noting that the report will be submitted to Quality and Qualifications Ireland (QQI) on 15 December 2021.

Speaking to the item the Academic Secretary highlighted the purpose of the Institutional Review as '...to assess the effectiveness of (Trinity's) internal quality assurance procedures for education, training, research and services to ensure that agreed quality standards are being met' and for Trinity to fulfil its obligations under the Qualifications and Quality Assurance (Education and Training) Act 2012.

She noted that since the 2012 review the higher education landscape has changed due to several factors including, an increase in student mobility, deepening academic networks and partnerships, a move towards blended/flexible learning and continuous professional development, the growth of digitisation and online learning, a decrease in state funding to universities, the accommodation crisis, and Covid-19 and Brexit.

Drawing attention to the 2012 Trinity institutional review, the Academic Secretary highlighted that Trinity was found not to be fully compliant and that there were many recommendations for improvement, including:

1. Governance that was too inwardly focused.
2. Management that needed to be professionalised.
3. GeneSIS (SITS) needed to be brought to a successful conclusion.
4. Student evaluation to be overhauled as a matter of urgency.

Incorporating any amendments approved at subsequent Council meetings

The Academic Secretary explained that following the 2022 review there will be a specific qualitative statement on the following:

- The effectiveness of the quality assurance procedures of the institution and the extent of their implementation.
- The extent to which the quality assurance procedures can be considered compliant with the European Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance (ESG) and having regard to QQI's statutory quality assurance guidelines.
- The enhancement of quality by the institution through governance, policy and procedures.
- The extent to which the procedures are in keeping with QQI policy for Access, Transfer and Progression.
- The extent to which the procedures are compliant with the Code of Practice for the Provision of Programmes to International Learners.

The Academic Secretary outlined the membership of the International Review Panel appointed by QQI as follows:

- Chair – Professor Elmer Sterken Rector Magnificus Emeritus, Groningen University, the Netherlands.
- External representative – Dr. Gráinne Quinn, Executive Vice-President and Chief Medical Officer, Perrigo.
- Irish representative – Professor Kerstin Mey, President, University of Limerick,
- International Reviewer – Dr. Achim Hopbach, former President of ENQA, MD, Austrian Quality Agency.
- Coordinating Reviewer – Dr. Catherine Peck – Head of Teaching and Learning at Innopharma Education.
- Student Reviewer – Aidan Murnane, PhD student, School of Informatics, University Edinburgh.

Referring to the review documentation, the Academic Secretary advised that this consists of the ISER, the institutional profile, 35 case studies in quality, annual quality reports to QQI, and the findings of the survey 'we value your opinion of quality in Trinity'.

The ISER, the Academic Secretary commented, is descriptive and reflective, and demonstrates evidence of effectiveness, the implementation of quality assurance procedures, and the enhancement of quality through governance, policy and procedures. The report also identifies gaps in provision and areas for improvement. She explained that the narrative is required to demonstrate compliance with relevant national and European legislation/guidelines and Trinity policies and strategies and be critically reflective in nature. The ISER consists of three main sections – 'Institutional Governance', 'Research, Teaching and Learning', and 'Supporting Students', each of which prioritises, as appropriate, the following areas:

- Where governance/responsibility lies, with flow charts to aid visualisation.
- Quality assurance procedures including College policies, audits, risk registers and surveys.
- Student voice (national surveys, international barometer, focus groups).
- Enhancements introduced since the last institutional review in 2012.
- Ongoing issues, and where appropriate, action plans to address these.
- Responses to Covid-19.

Section 2 'institutional governance', of the report presents the governance, information, staffing and physical environment in which the university operates. The Academic Secretary noted that Section 2 highlights many of the cross-cutting challenges that emerge in Sections 3 and 4 including:

Incorporating any amendments approved at subsequent Council meetings

- Usage/effectiveness of the College IT systems.
- The condition of research and teaching (physical) spaces.
- The staff to student ratio.
- Communication.
- Governance and decision-making.

The narrative of Section 3 'Research, Teaching and Learning', the Academic Secretary remarked, is one of continual enhancement since 2012, as research, teaching and learning have been transformed over the past decade through international partnerships, flexible learning pathways, entrepreneurship training, and commercialisation of research resulting in increased opportunity for staff and students, but also increased complexity. She added that the section highlights the numerous strategies that have been developed over the past decade and demonstrates Trinity's compliance with QQI's Access, Transfer and Progression Policy, 2018.

Section 4 'Supporting Students' provides an overview of the formal and informal structures that support the student experience, and highlights 'what students say' of their experience, and the challenges and actions/plans to address these. The Academic Secretary noted that Section 4.2 demonstrates compliance with QQI's Code of Practice which is the benchmark for supporting international students coming to Ireland.

The Academic Secretary emphasised the importance of a positive institutional review for Trinity highlighting that it will protect Trinity's autonomy as a Designated Awarding Body, its reputation for the recruitment of domestic and international students, and engagement in international partnerships. She added that the review report will receive media and social media attention and will be viewed by Trinity's external stakeholders including, the Department of Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science, the Higher Education Authority (HEA), research funding bodies, and international partners.

The Provost thanked the Academic Secretary for her comprehensive report and invited questions and comments.

Responding to a query raised by the Vice-Provost/Chief Academic Officer concerning areas of the report where gaps may be identified and where Trinity may demonstrate non-compliance, the Academic Secretary highlighted that she had no concerns in this regard, however, she noted that the review panel may identify IT systems from Section 2 'institutional governance' as an area requiring development. Commenting on a query raised by the Provost concerning the review panel's recognition of the efforts of Trinity to deliver quality against the backdrop of financial constraints, the Academic Secretary highlighted that while the report presents, for example, the journey taken by Trinity to develop its IT infrastructure over the past ten years there may be a recommendation for Trinity to invest more in its IT systems.

The Senior Lecturer/Dean of Undergraduate Studies referred to the student voice querying if this is sufficiently addressed, and if this would be an area of interest to the review panel. The Academic Secretary noted that a significant part of the ISER is devoted to the student voice and that students are very much a part of Trinity's governance structures. She acknowledged that student engagement is an area that could be improved upon and although significant progress had been made since the last review there is a need for greater student engagement in areas such as module evaluations, the response rate to the Irish Survey of Student Engagement (ISSE), and that a greater follow-up of issues in Faculties and Schools is required.

Responding to a query raised by the Dean of Research on the Trinity representation at meetings with the review panel, the Academic Secretary reported that the Quality Officer has done significant work on this, which will be brought to the next meeting of Council.

Decision:

CL/21-22/024.1: Council approved the draft Institutional Self-Evaluation Report (ISER) and recommended it to Board for consideration and approval.

The Quality Officer left the meeting.

CL/21-22/025 Change of Name of School of Religion**XX**

The Dean of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences (AHSS) presented the proposal on the change of name of the School of Religion to the School of Religion, Theology, and Peace Studies. She informed Council that the Quality Review of the Confederal School of Religions, Peace Studies and Theology (March 2017) recommended that the name of the School be changed to the School of Religion and that this recommendation had been accepted by Council in June 2017. She explained that the change in name had been problematic for some School members as the majority of academics in the discipline of peace studies are social scientists whose work has no connection to Religious Studies resulting in them being overlooked internally and externally as a result of the School title. Furthermore, there has been a decrease in student numbers on the Peace Studies Masters over the past two years which is attributed to the invisibility and misidentification of course-content caused by the name 'Religion'. In addition, the Loyola Institute feels that its mission is not captured under the title 'Religion', as it was brought into Trinity to provide research and teaching in theology.

The Dean of AHSS advised that staff engagement in the School on the name change was very high and that the School Executive Committee at its meeting on 26 May 2021 had reviewed and discussed the suggested names and agreed that the School name should be changed to the School of Religion, Theology, and Peace Studies. She noted the importance of the Oxford comma as it distinguishes Peace Studies from Theology. She highlighted her endorsement of the proposed change.

The Provost thanked the Dean of AHSS commenting that the focus of study in the Irish School of Ecumenics, Trinity's Belfast Campus, is captured by the name change.

Decision:

CL/21-22/025.1: Council approved the change of name of School of Religion to the School of Religion, Theology, and Peace Studies.

CL/21-22/026 Any Other Urgent Business

There was no any other urgent business.

SECTION B**CL/21-22/027 Global Relations Committee**

The minutes of 4 October 2021 were noted and approved.

CL/21-22/028 Graduate Studies Committee

The minutes of 23 September 2021 and 7 October 2021 were noted and approved.

Incorporating any amendments approved at subsequent Council meetings

CL/21-22/029 Library Information Policy Committee

The minutes of 17 May 2021 were noted and approved.

CL/21-22/030 Quality Committee**Decisions:**

CL/21-22/031.1: Council noted and approved the minutes of 16 September 2021 and Appendix 1: Marino Education (MIE) Academic Policies and noted Appendix 2: Marino Institute of Education (MIE) and Royal Irish Academy of Music (RIAM) Statutory Policies.

CL/21-22/031 Research Committee

The minutes of 4 May 2021 were noted and approved.

CL/21-22/032 Student Life Committee

The minutes of 14 September 2021 were noted and approved.

CL/21-22/033 Undergraduate Studies Committee

The minutes of 28 September 2021 were noted and approved.

SECTION C**CL/21-22/034 Higher Degrees—Reports of Examiners**

The Council noted and approved the reports of examiners on candidates for higher degrees, approved by the sub-committee of Board and Council on 22 September 2021 and noted by Board on 6 October 2021.

(i) Higher Degrees by Research Alone

MD We Fong Siah; Thavakumar Subramaniam;

PhD Kariem Ahmed Elbadawi Abdelrehim Ahmed Fahmi; Ahmed Alawais; Emily Barnes; Sara Marta Bojarczuk; Andrea Bonfante; Katherine Bowen; Rory Boyle; Catherine Maria Bromhead; Emanuele Cappello; Luiza Erthal Cardoso Dos Santos; Rebecca Ann Carr; Federico Caruso; Tejo Krishna Chalasani; Joao Felipe Facó Cals Cruz Santos; Kai Chung Fung; Jorge Alberto Garcia Coindreau; Bruno D'Agostino; Jason Marcel Denis Delente; Tadhg Dornan; Anne Dubéarnès; Sarah Egan; Jane Feeney; Ylva Ferstl; Aleksandr Firanchuk; Roghaiyeh Gachpaz Hamed; Koustav Ghosal; Emer Gilmartin; Apostolos Galanopoulos; Graham Scott Gwozdecky; Grace Hoffman; Caroline Izart; Eoghan Keane; Ruth Kelly; Tanya Elizabeth Kelly; Vera Kuznetsova; Sarah Marie Ledwidge; Elisabetta Leopardi; Alexandra Maria Madela; Sophia Masterton; Róisín McMackin; Catherine Nora Moran; Angana Nandy; Manon

Incorporating any amendments approved at subsequent Council meetings

Valérie Geneviève Nouvian; Amy O'Callaghan; Daniel O'Driscoll; Carmen Maria Ortiz Granero; Kate Oxsen; Urvesh Patil; Sharon Phelan; Sophie Tawaree Liliane Saget; Siobhan Scarlett; Katarzyna Siewierska; George Sterpu; Joanna Turley; John Tighe; Melissa Anne Tutty; Felim Vajda; Lindsey Louise Vincent; Guy Samuel Jon Walker; Xiaoxiao Yu; Jiayu Zhang; Meishan Zhang; Ainur Zhussupbekova; Kuanysh Zhussupbekov;

MSc Andrew Allan; Nicole Byrne; Lydia Corbin Marks; Kate Marie MacNamara; Dima Saber Mahmoud; Ragy Tadrous.

CL/21-22/035 Course Co-ordinators

The Council noted and approved the following nominations:

- (i) Professor Ben Wold as Co-ordinator of the B.A. in Religion Course
- (ii) Professor Michael Kirwan as Co-ordinator of the Christian Theology Course

CL/21-22/036 Examinations Outside the Formal Assessment Sessions

The Council noted and approved the Memorandum from the Academic Registry Activity Lead: Assess, Progress and Graduation, dated 12 October 2021.

SECTION D

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

Signed

Date