

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 9 February 2022 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 P. O'Grady, Professor A. Bray, Professor D. Romelli, Professor A. O'Connor, Professor M. Lyons, Professor M. Monaghan, Professor M. Ruffini, Professor B. O'Connell, Professor L. O'Driscoll, Professor M. Gill, Professor C. Donnellan, Dr. O. Gobbo, Professor A. Long, Prof. S. Smith, Ms. B. Genockey, Ms J. Bochenek, Ms. Z. Cummins, Ms. A. Bhattacharjee, Mr. D. Lee.
<i>Apologies</i>	Professor A.M. Malone, Vice-President for Global Engagement, Ms. S. Sutton, 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.
<i>Observers</i>	-

SECTION A.1

The Provost welcomed everyone to Council and requested that Council members declare any potential conflicts of interest relating to the agenda. The Secretary advised that there were no conflicts of interest reported.

CL/21-22/093 Declarations by New Members and Observers

The Secretary to College advised that agenda item C18 Membership of the University Council - Representative of Senate be brought forward for Council approval of the Senate representative. Council approved the Senate representative as a member of University Council. The Provost extended her thanks to Ms. D. Kelleher, the outgoing Senate representative for her contribution to Council as representative of Senate.

The new members of Council made the required statutory declaration.

CL/21-22/094 Minutes

The minutes of the meeting of Council on 15 December 2021 were approved and signed.

Ms Z. Cummins joined the meeting. Ms. A. Bhattacharjee left the meeting.

CL/21-22/095 Matters Arising

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The Dean of Graduate Studies referred Council to minute CL/21-22/083.3 explaining that the matter of postgraduate student representatives had been raised at the Graduate Studies Committee (GSC) meeting in January 2022. She advised that the Graduate Students' Union (GSU) reported that student representatives had been elected where students had engaged with the process. The Academic Secretary advised Council that she had formally requested, on behalf of Council, a list of postgraduate student representatives from the GSU, and that while a list had not been received the GSU had reported that it was liaising directly with Schools on this matter. Several Council members expressed concern that postgraduate student representatives were not yet in place in all Schools with the Dean of STEM reporting that there has not been a postgraduate student representative in attendance at STEM Faculty meetings since the beginning of the academic year. A member highlighted that the School of Chemistry will not have a postgraduate student representative in place until 2022/23 and he called for the election process of representatives to be simplified. The postgraduate student member (Health Sciences) reported that a School convenor is in place in two of the four Health Sciences' Schools along with postgraduate student representatives and class representatives. Responding to a query from the Registrar on whether elections had taken place, the Students' Union Education Officer explained that there is a perception amongst a high number of postgraduate students that the TCDSU elections are for graduate representatives, and she highlighted that it is standard practice for the outgoing TCDSU representatives to notify Schools of incoming representatives.

Speaking to the item, the Provost emphasised the importance of having postgraduate student representatives in place so that there is a student voice on School committees. She advised that she will work with the Dean of Graduate Studies to address the matter.

Action:

CL/21-22/095.1: The Provost and the Dean of Graduate Studies to follow-up with the GSU and Schools to ensure that postgraduate student representatives are in place.

CL/21-22/096 Provost's Report

Referring to the phased return to campus, the Provost highlighted that College is continuing to monitor the situation and she thanked the College community for the role it had played on this.

i) Higher Education Authority Bill

The Provost informed Council that a communication will be issued to the College community on the Higher Education Authority (HEA) Bill 2022, published in January 2022. She highlighted that the Bill, which will reform the legislative framework for the higher education system providing greater oversight and regulation of higher education institutions is advancing through the Houses of the Oireachtas. While The Bill recognises the distinct legal basis of Trinity there are wider elements of The Bill that have implications for the higher education sector, and these require careful consideration. She reported that an additional Board meeting dedicated to the HEA Bill was held in January 2022 and that Trinity has gathered input from across College on the legislation and is working with the Irish Universities' Association (IUA) on proposed amendments to The Bill.

ii) Postgraduate Renewal

Responding to an invitation from the Provost to report on progress relating to postgraduate renewal, the Dean of Graduate Studies reported that the data gathering phase had commenced with an issuing of a survey to the College community. She advised that while there has been good engagement with the survey to-date from postgraduate research students and academic and research staff, there is a need for greater engagement from postgraduate taught students. She urged Council members to encourage their colleagues and students to respond to the

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survey, the deadline for which has been extended to mid-night on 11 February 2022. The Provost thanked the Dean of Graduate Studies and encouraged Council members to engage with the survey.

Mr Nick Skelton, SUMS Consulting, and Mr Patrick Magee, Director of IT Services joined the meeting.

CL/21-22/097 Benchmarking Digital Learning Strategies

The Provost welcomed Mr Nick Skelton, SUMS Consulting and the Director of IT Services to the meeting advising Council that the item presents an opportunity for a discussion of digital learning with the view to informing the direction that College wishes to take on this. Speaking to the item, the Academic Secretary drew attention to the Trinity Strategic Plan 2020-25, which commits to the implementation of a full-spectrum digital learning strategy by 2022 (Goal 3 – We will practice next-generation teaching and learning). The findings of the ‘student and staff experiences of teaching, learning and assessment at Trinity 2020-21’ survey presented to the December 2021 Council meeting (CL/21-22/075), she advised, will provide a baseline for a digital learning strategy. Trinity Teaching and Learning (TT&L) and IT Services commissioned SUMS Consulting to benchmark digital learning strategies in other higher education institutions. The Academic Secretary introduced Mr Nick Skelton from SUMS Consulting to Council.

Mr Skelton informed Council of the work undertaken by SUMS Consulting on Benchmarking Digital Learning Strategies. He advised that digital is an enabler that offers opportunities to deliver teaching and learning beyond the constrained campus, to provide flexibility for busy students, to improve global reach and help people to connect and develop community. Common digital threads arising from a study of institutions across the UK and US were presented and he drew attention to the practices of four institutions, namely, the University of Leeds, the University of Derby, the University of Edinburgh, and Michigan State University.

Opportunities presented by digital learning, Mr Skelton explained, consist of active blended learning provision on campus for undergraduate students, online postgraduate conversion courses for older students looking to change career, and new forms of Continuing Professional Development (CPD) in the form of short courses that are non-credit bearing. As higher education emerges from the pandemic there will be a shift from delivering content online to providing human, connected and engaged experiences for students through next-generation digital learning tools such as ZOOM and TEAMS.

Outlining the four levels of the digital learning mature model to Council, Mr Skelton highlighted that the levels range from level 0 ‘pre-digital’, which is fragmented and consists of locally driven digital initiatives, to level 3 ‘post-digital’, where digital and physical environments are seamlessly integrated with a learning strategy in place. Acknowledging the challenges associated with mainstreaming digital learning, he highlighted the need to straddle the chasm from early adopters to regular activity by all. Digital and flexible learning requires a partnership approach to working and academic and teaching staff will require support as they transition from solo working to partnership working. He highlighted that students will also require support to help them take a greater ownership of their learning, and are provided with opportunities to express their voice in the decision-making process.

Mr Skelton outlined the ten-step model for transformation in digital learning which is underpinned by a robust IT infrastructure, and he provided a brief overview of the resource allocation models required to deliver a high-quality student experience, as follows:

- Resourcing a professional digital learning function that is funded centrally.
- Splitting additional fee income between academic Schools and the Institution.
- Incentivising individual academic staff to produce digital learning materials.

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Concluding, Mr Skelton highlighted some considerations for further reflection when planning a digital learning strategy, as follows:

- Scaling a class of 20 to a class of 40 rather than scaling programmes to thousands of students.
- Attracting nearby new students whose needs are not met by the current offer rather than attracting students in the competitive global marketplace.
- A single digital learning strategy that reuses material and skills from one area of the business in another rather than online and on-campus as distinct areas of business.
- Building community rather than delivering content.
- Putting institutional mission first rather than finances first.
- Digital as a theme within research and teaching strategies rather than a digital strategy as an entity in itself.

The Provost thanked Mr Skelton for his presentation and invited questions and comments.

Responding to a comment from the Vice-Provost/Chief Academic Officer on the importance of IT infrastructure and systems investment, Mr Skelton advised that some institutions see flexible learning as an opportunity to generate income rather than placing the institution's mission at the centre. The Vice-Provost/Chief Academic Officer noted that Trinity will need to invest in significant systems development to make flexible learning a reality. The Senior Lecturer/Dean of Undergraduate Studies commended SUMS Consulting on its report and noted the importance of achieving a balanced approach to blended learning provision. Citing the case studies as particularly helpful, the Dean of Graduate Studies emphasised the importance of embedding digital and flexible learning in the university's vision. She highlighted the appetite in the postgraduate space for exploiting the potential of technology to enhance learning. She urged Trinity to start small and expand its offerings over time and commented on the importance of a financial model that makes digital learning possible so that it is cost neutral to Schools.

Responding to a comment from the Provost on the finance and resources required to develop, maintain, and transition technologies over time, Mr Skelton cited the approach taken by the University of Leeds, which had invested in a range of IT solutions and platforms to accommodate the needs of disciplines and had provided significant pedagogical resources, including 90 members of staff, to support academic and teaching staff in developing flexible learning opportunities. This enabled the university, which is comparable to Trinity, to produce digital content in the longer term and across courses.

Speaking to assessment in a digital environment, Mr Skelton highlighted that assessment methods are discipline specific, and that while Leeds has an online assessment system its assessment is driven by the needs of disciplines and is responsive to the requirements of professional/regulatory bodies.

The Director of IT Services highlighted that Trinity has had some successes in offering flexible learning opportunities and that it is now necessary to decide on whether to move from niche to centrally available provision.

The Provost thanked Mr Skelton and Council for their contributions noting that digital and flexible learning warrants further discussion in the future.

Decision:

CL/21-22/097.1: Council noted the report on Benchmarking Digital Learning Strategies.

Mr Nick Skelton, SUMS Consulting, and Mr Patrick Magee, Director of IT Services left the meeting.

Professor A. O'Connor joined the meeting.

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CL/21-22/098 Revised Procedures for Online Viva Voce Examinations

The Dean of Graduate Studies advised that in response to the pandemic, Council approved a proposal to facilitate online *viva voce* examinations as a temporary measure. Guidelines for the conduct of such examinations were approved to ensure that quality assurance was maintained. Having considered the advantages and limitations of the online format based on the experience over the past two years, GSC has recommended the revision of 'Procedures for the Conduct of Online *viva voce* examinations' for Council's consideration. The Dean of Graduate Studies explained that in-person examinations remain the standard form of examination, while the option of an online format can be considered following consultation with all parties by the Director of Teaching and Learning Postgraduate (DTLP). The quality assurance measures in the procedures include the requirement for written permission of all parties and specification of essential operational requirements, including the infrastructure that should be in place; consideration of time demands to ensure that a student is not disadvantaged; and the requirement to note in the examiners' report that the *viva voce* was conducted online. The Dean of Graduate Studies highlighted GSC's support for the proposals.

A member expressed his support for the proposal noting the positive impact that online *viva voce* examinations have from a climate action perspective. Responding to a request for clarification on the decision to hold online *viva voce* examinations, the Dean of Graduate Studies confirmed that all parties need to agree to an online *viva voce* and that discussion in Schools is required on this.

Decision:

CL/21-22/098.1: Council approved revised Procedures for the Conduct of an Online *Viva Voce* Examination of a Research Thesis or Dissertation.

CL/21-22/099 Award for Excellence in Research: Student Supervision

The Dean of Graduate Studies advised that an initial proposal on a new award for excellence in the supervision of research students was developed in consultation with TT&L and discussed at GSC in November 2021 and again in January 2022. In their discussions GSC members highlighted the importance of supporting both early-stage academics and those who have had an opportunity to build a sustained portfolio of research student supervision experiences. The proposed process allows for an initial review of nominations at School level, from which one nominee per School can be put forward for consideration for a Faculty-level award in each award category. It is proposed that there be a total of six awards annually, two for each Faculty, one in each category.

The Provost thanked the Dean of Graduate Studies and invited questions and comments.

Responding to a query on the definition of research students, the Dean of Graduate Studies confirmed that the supervision of students on research programmes, including postgraduate research programmes (Masters), is within scope, but that all nominees will have completed one supervision of a PhD. A member highlighted the importance of ensuring that the process is not too onerous as this may have an impact on applications. She drew attention to inconsistencies between the quality and characteristics of a good supervisor and the proposed assessment criteria outlined on page 4 of the document and suggested that the number of completions be included under point 3 of the proposed assessment criteria. Drawing attention to the variation that can exist across Schools in research student recruitment and supervision, she asked how each of the six assessment criteria will be rated.

The Dean of Research thanked the Dean of Graduate Studies for the initiative and highlighted that 'completed PhD' and 'societal impact of the supervision' be included in the assessment criteria. Referring to the six awards, two categories of awards proposed per Faculty, the Dean

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of STEM suggested that 'at least one' would be preferable as this would provide flexibility if needed, and she queried how multi-faculty is accommodated.

The Dean of Graduate Studies drew attention to the omission of the Dean of Research from the Panel and advised that the document would be updated accordingly. She thanked Council members for their contributions and advised that their comments and suggestions would be taken into consideration and that the document would be updated.

Decision:

CL/21-22/099.1: Council approved a new Award for Excellence in Supervision of Research Students.

CL/21-22/100 Academic Integrity Working Group – Terms of Reference and Membership

The Dean of Research appraised Council of progress on academic integrity since the November 2021 meeting of Council, advising that the Vice-Provost/Chief Academic Officer had invited the Senior Lecturer/Dean of Undergraduate Studies, the Dean of Graduate Studies, and the Dean of Research to develop and propose to Council, terms of reference and membership for a working group on academic integrity. He advised that an *ad hoc* group met to develop the proposals in January 2022. Following the meeting the proposed terms of reference and membership of an academic integrity working group were developed. He explained that on approval of the terms of reference and membership of the working group by Council there may be a need to establish one or more sub-groups, membership of which will be appropriate to the assigned task(s), to fulfil the terms of reference.

The Provost thanked the Dean of Research and invited questions and comments.

Responding to recommendations on the membership of the working group, the Vice-Provost/Chief Academic Officer emphasised the importance of keeping the size of the working group manageable though bearing in mind the need for the membership to be inclusive. She noted that the working group will devolve into sub-groups that will include a wider membership that is appropriate to the assigned task(s). The Provost and Senior Lecturer/Dean of Undergraduate Studies welcomed a member's recommendation that the working group include a member with knowledge of professional body requirements and who is involved in externally accredited programmes, and that it be important for current students to be members of the sub-groups. The Dean of Research clarified that the Chair of the Research Policy Ethics Committee is proposed as a member of the working group. Following further discussion on potential members, it was agreed that the membership should be reviewed to ensure a workable number and representation of a member with experience of professional body accreditation requirements.

Decision:

CL/21-22/100.1: Council approved the Terms of Reference and Membership for a working group on Academic Integrity subject to a review of the membership to include a member with experience of professional body accreditation requirements.

SECTION A.2

The Provost referring to minute CL/21-22/047 'Council Format 2021-22' explained that under the new agenda format Section A.2 items are for approval and noting as the items have been considered and discussed by the Academic Committees of Council and as a result do not require further discussion unless needed.

CL/21-22/101 Postgraduate Course Proposals**(i) MPhil in Applied Intercultural Communications****Decision**

CL/21-22/101.1: Council approved the proposal for the blended course in Applied Intercultural Communications (HCI Pillar 3) leading to an MPhil (90 ECTS)/Postgraduate Diploma (60 ECTS)/Postgraduate Certificate (30 ECTS) in Applied Intercultural Communications at NFQ level 9 offered by the School of Languages, Literatures and Cultural Studies, with a first intake in September 2022/23.

(ii) MSc in Global Mental Health**Decision**

CL/21-22/101.2: Council approved the proposal for the one-year full-time/two-year part-time course in Global Mental Health leading to an MSc (90 ECTS)/Postgraduate Diploma (60 ECTS) in Global Mental Health at NFQ level 9 offered by the Schools of Psychology and Medicine, with a first intake in September 2022/23.

CL/21-22/102 Quality: Academic Practice Review Recommendations**XX****Decision:**

CL/21-22/102.1: Council approved the recommendations arising from the Quality Review of Academic Practice, namely:

- (i)** The time to completion for the Special Purpose Certificate in Academic Practice to be reduced from five to **three years** with allowance for a longer time to completion, but not exceeding five years, for participants who for personal or professional reasons cannot complete within the three-year period.
- (ii)** To change the title of the course to “Special Purpose Certificate in Teaching, Learning, & Assessment for Academic Practice”.
- (iii)** The title ‘CAPSL’ as an operational entity no longer exists in any meaningful way and Council approved the recommendation that ‘CAPSL’ be replaced with the title ‘ACADEMIC PRACTICE.’

CL/21-22/103 Any Other Urgent Business

The Secretary to Council advised that he had discussed the resumption of in-person Council meetings with the Provost and that subject to public health advice it is proposed that the March meeting of Council is in-person. Members of Council will be written to following the meeting to establish if members are comfortable with an in-person meeting in March. The Provost highlighted the importance of meeting in-person from time-to-time and proposed an approach that alternates between in-person and remote meetings.

SECTION B**CL/21-22/104 Engagement Advisory Group**

The minutes of 14 October 2021 were noted and approved.

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CL/21-22/105 Graduate Studies Committee

The minutes of 27 January 2022 were noted and approved.

CL/21-22/106 Research Committee

The minutes of 16 November 2021 and 14 December 2021 were noted and approved.

CL/21-22/107 Student Life Committee

The minutes of 7 December 2021 were noted and approved.

CL/21-22/108 Undergraduate Studies Committee

The minutes of 25 January 2022 were noted and approved.

SECTION C

CL/21-22/109 Fitness to Practice Committee Membership

The Council noted and approved the circulated Memorandum from the Secretary to the Fitness to Practice Committee dated 31 January 2022.

CL/21-22/110 Burkitt Medal Committee Membership

The Council noted and approved the circulated Memorandum from the Provost dated 1 February 2022.

**CL/21-22/111 Membership of the University Council – Representative of Senate
XX**

The Council noted and approved that Professor Stephen Smith has been elected by Senate and will serve on the University Council until the Senate election in Michaelmas term 2023.

CL/21-22/112 Higher Degrees—Reports of Examiners

The Council noted and approved the reports of examiners on candidates for higher degrees (Higher Degrees List, circulated) dated 9 February 2022

(i) Higher Degrees by Publication

Sc.D. Richard Reilly

(ii) Higher Degrees by Research Alone

M.D. James Henry Gregory Mahon; Zbigniew Marchoki; Roisin Mary Plunkett

Ph.D. Esraa Ali Hassan Abdelmonem; Aisling Anderson; Leonhard Magnus Austmann; Chiara Borrelli; Marlon Esteban Brenes Navarro; Tim Alexander

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Butcher; Luuk Joseph Coopmans; Orla Deevy; Stephanie Anne Elisabeth Dossou; David Dunne; Conor Foley; Maria Teresa Guerra; Marta Gulman; Moonyoung Hong; John Gerard Hughes; Grainne Jameson; Yin Lu; Catherine Mary McNicholas; Laura Murphy; Niall Murphy; Samuel Robert Peter-James Ross; Andrea Salvi; Fiona Mairéad Shannon; Harry Shipley; Ciara Shortall; Rikke Siersbaek; Anne Spiering; Michel Summer; Kevin Sullivan; Calvin Swords; Liam Townsend; Sophie Van Der Valk

D.Ch.Dent Suha Aljudaibi

M.Sc. Jessica Poppy Dolliver; Jennifer Marie Whitney

M.Litt. Marcus Benjamin Gaffney

CL/21-22/113 Head of School

The Council noted that the Board had approved the nomination of Professor Blanaid Daly as Head of School of Dental Science from 1 January 2022 to end of Trinity term 2026.

CL/21-22/114 School Directors
XX

The Council noted and approved the nomination of Professor Brendan Grufferty as Head of Division II, School of Dental Science, from 1 January 2022 to 31 December 2025

CL/21-22/115 Acting Head of Discipline
XX

The Council noted and approved the nomination of Professor Michael Cronin as Acting Head of Discipline of French, School of Languages, Literatures and Cultural Studies, from 24 January 2022 to 29 April 2022

SECTION D

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

Signed

Date

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