



**Trinity College Dublin  
The University of Dublin**

**A meeting of the University Council was held on 11<sup>th</sup> March 2026 at 11.15am in Trinity Board Room, Trinity Business School.**

<i>Present</i>	Provost, Vice-Provost/Chief Academic Officer, Registrar, Senior Lecturer and Dean of Undergraduate Studies, Senior Tutor, Dean of Students, Dean of Graduate Studies, Dean of Research, Dean of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences, Dean of Health Sciences, Dean of Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics, Professor D. Geary, Professor V. Colasanti, Professor C. Kenny, Professor D. Nolan, Professor H. Siljak, Professor D. Brennan, Professor AM. Malone, Professor K Neenan, Ms D. Alexander, Mr M. McAndrew, Mr B. Whaley, Ms G. Villa, Ms E. Martin, Mr A. Zafar.
<i>Apologies</i>	Vice-Provost Global Engagement, Dr N. O'Dwyer, Professor M. Stock, Professor L. O'Driscoll, Professor G. Watson, Professor P. O'Grady, Ms K. Grogan, Ms L. Mpofu.
<i>In attendance</i>	Chief Operating Officer; Secretary to the College/Director of Governance; Librarian and College Archivist; Academic Secretary; Heads of Schools Representative; Education Support Officer, Academic Affairs; Professor Eleanor Denny, Bursar/Chief Strategic Developments Officer for item 132; Ms Leona Coady, Programme Director, Postgraduate Renewal Project for item 133.
<i>Observers</i>	Ms C. Persello.

**SECTION A.1: Policy Matters**

Provost welcomed Council members to the meeting.

**CL/25-26/130 Minutes**

**Action/Decision:**

CL/25-26/130: The minutes of the meeting of Council on 11th February were approved, subject to the correction of a spelling error in the text of item [CL/25-26/107].

**CL/25-26/131 Matters Arising from the Minutes**

There were no matters arising.

*Professor Eleanor Denny, Bursar/Chief Strategic Developments Officer joined the meeting.*

**CL/25-26/132 All-Campuses Masterplan**

The Provost welcomed the Bursar and Chief Strategic Developments Officer to the meeting and introduced the purpose of the discussion.

The Provost outlined that the University is currently undertaking a comprehensive review and planning exercise on the Estates portfolio and emphasised that the proposals being presented are not commitments but are potential options for the development of Trinity's multiple campuses over the medium to longer-term. It was noted that these options have not yet been prioritised and that any project would be contingent on identifying appropriate funding as well as other key factors such as sustainability, conservation and external stakeholder engagement.

The Provost noted that the objective of today's presentation is to seek Council members' feedback and this will help to ensure that the information is appropriately framed for the wider university audience.

*The Dean of STEM joined the meeting.*

Professor Eleanor Denny, Bursar/Chief Strategic Developments Officer presented the key elements of the masterplan which had been produced by a professional team led by [Allies and Morrison](#) Architects. The presentation provided an overview of opportunities across a number of Campus locations [including the city centre Island Campus, the hospital campuses at St James' and Tallaght, Trinity East, and the Iveagh Grounds] with a range of opportunities for physical estates' enhancement. The Bursar provided a high-level summary overview of possible projects, which included a focus on architectural enhancements to "open" the island campus to the surrounding city streetscapes, at key entry and exit locations; extensions and refurbishments to existing campus buildings, additional sports facilities and proposals on how to reduce on-campus general vehicle routes and car parking.

The presentation described the wide engagement, internally and externally, that had already taken place to inform the proposals, and it was noted that planning was underway for the publication of the plans and an exhibition on campus, following Board approval.

Council engaged in a discussion on the presentation and the following points were noted:

- Members commended the work completed and thanked the Bursar for the clarity of her presentation.
- Preservation orders on buildings do present a challenge and are being taken into account. When projects are selected, further detailed studies will be performed on feasibility.
- Suggested outward-facing developments onto Pearse Street (e.g. a new public entrance to the Beckett Theatre) and other suggested enhancements to the island campus Entry/Exit locations, were well received by Council members.
- Local communities have been consulted, and this consultation will increase as projects are selected, recognising that past College developments did not always improve the college connection with local communities.
- Currently, the congested Pearse Street/Westland Row junction/intersection poses traffic-related dangers for students as well as staff and the general public. College has advised Dublin City Council about this issue. The proposed entrance at East Gate may help alleviate this challenge.
- In relation to the proposal to consolidate student-facing services in a physical one-stop shop location, noted that there are benefits to be gained by co-location of several types of activities and services within single buildings/physical spaces as experience shows that this encourages organic collaboration and innovation.
- Further discussion will be needed about the fate of some existing estate buildings that are ear-marked for potential disposal in the Plan. Decisions to retain and invest in such buildings will need to be balanced with information on the realistic potential for re-purposing, including implications for their carbon footprint and suitability as working locations for staff and students.
- The existing Darty student accommodation site could expand to accommodate additional student numbers in the future. Current Government policy is moving towards public/private partnerships for student accommodation builds, rather than direct grants for HEIs to build and owner-occupy.
- The current draft Campuses masterplan differs from the model now in use in many urban universities worldwide, where science campuses are increasingly being placed outside of main campus locations, particularly for research activities. Imperial College's White City science campus was cited as an example.

**Incorporating any amendments approved at subsequent Council meetings.**

- Imperial College is also leveraging international research investment opportunities through strategic, though small-scale, investment of personnel who are tasked with creating partnerships in locations such as Singapore, Mumbai and San Francisco.

*The Registrar joined the meeting.*

In conclusion, the Provost noted that the masterplan will facilitate College to move on physical estate solutions more quickly for our needs as well as provide a platform for philanthropic discussions. Members agreed the presentation received was an engaging summary and suitable for sharing with wider audiences such as Faculty Executives. The Provost thanked the Bursar for the presentation and invited her to return to Council at a future meeting to provide further detail on specific projects or themes.

*Professor Eleanor Denny, Bursar/Chief Strategic Developments Officer and Ms G. Villa left the meeting.*

*Ms Leona Coady, Programme Director Postgraduate Renewal Project joined the meeting.*

### **CL/25-26/133 Postgraduate Renewal Programme: Accomplishment Report**

The Dean of Graduate Studies introduced the item and the Programme Director then made a presentation to highlight aspects of the Accomplishments Report that was circulated. Report highlights included:

- Driving excellence in graduate education at Trinity through the development of the Trinity Triple I Framework to embed interdisciplinary, intersectoral, and international opportunities for multi-dimensional skill development for PGT and PGR students.
- Strengthening postgraduate taught provision through cyclical review frameworks, flexible research dissertation models, and the review of programme approval processes.
- Major enhancements to doctoral education: strengthened research supervision frameworks, assessment processes and quality assurance, clearer PGR student lifecycle guidance, and an enhanced professional development framework.
- Significant advances in data driven decision-making, supported by automation of PGR processes, improved data visibility and reporting through Power BI dashboards.
- Improved financial supports, including increased stipends through consolidation of College award schemes into the new Trinity Research Doctorate Awards, and the PGR tuition fee differential write-down.
- Building postgraduate community and belonging through consistent guidelines, delineation of roles and responsibilities, recognition for contributions by PGR Students engaged in teaching, and enhanced development opportunities.
- The adoption of a collaborative 'Way of Working' (Change project methodology) which is now informing other institutional projects.

It was noted that a college celebration of the Postgraduate Renewal programme and its accomplishments would take place on Monday 23<sup>rd</sup> of March at 12.30pm.

*The Senior Tutor left the meeting.*

During discussion, Council members commended the Dean of Graduate Studies and the Programme Director for their accomplishments; it was noted that the project team had been pragmatic and collegial in their approach, throughout, and the project atmosphere had been consistently positive with incremental wins over the four years really adding up to considerable change. The Heads of Schools Representative on Council noted that the day-to-day operations in relation to PGR students has become so much easier, because of the project deliverables.

It was noted that the original funding had been agreed by the Vice-Provost from the Academic Services Division budget and that further funding had been secured from the Faculty Deans and from Schools, for which the Dean expressed her thanks. In addition, the

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Dean and the Programme Director expressed thanks to the University Council for its steadfast support and input.

*Ms Leona Coady, Programme Director Postgraduate Renewal Project left the meeting.*

**CL/25-26/134 Student Partnership Agreement 2025-26**

The Vice-Provost/Chief Academic Officer introduced the Student Partnership Agreement 2025-26 which had been approved by the Student Life Committee, USC and GSC.

The Vice Provost introduced the item, reflecting that it represents the culmination of work undertaken by the TCDSU/AMLCT Education Officer who has worked collaboratively with College Officers and staff in Academic Services Division, including the Dean of Students, Dean of Graduate Studies and the Senior Lecturer/Dean of Undergraduate Studies. The Vice-Provost noted that the Education Officer came to his role with an agenda to make a difference in several specific areas, building on the work on Mr Eoghan Gilroy (previous TCDSU/AMLCT Education Officer 2024/25). The Vice-Provost congratulated the TCDSU/AMLCT on the move to online voting for elections, as an example of an initiative that has quietly made a positive difference by democratising the election process further, leading to the visible increase in the number of votes in the recent election.

The TCDSU/AMLCT Education Officer noted that the Agreement lays the groundwork for the Union-College collaborative partnership and will be reviewed and renewed annually. Thanking the Vice-Provost and the Dean of Students for their support, the Education Officer went on to make a short presentation, during which the following points were noted:

- Inclusion is at the heart of the Agreement; major themes include: the adoption of Universal Design for Learning principles as a framework for creating a more inclusive learning environment at Trinity; the importance of the LENS reports for students with learning needs; the need to evolve policy and guidelines on the use of GenAI tools across the student body and the current development of university policy on the Recording of Lectures, which the TCDSU/AMLCT is actively participating in.
- As the Trinity student population is highly international in composition, it is essential that the College supports students from diverse backgrounds and ethnic minorities.
- Several key topics are currently being progressed, including:
  - o Developing policy and associated actions to support students who are working part time, given the impact of the rising cost-of-living crisis.
  - o Advocating for a policy to permit and enable modular repeats; this is widely supported by the student population. The current Working Group, led by the Senior Lecturer/Dean of Undergraduate Studies, is assessing the feasibility of modular repeats and billing which will make the student experience more dynamic and enhance student belonging.
  - o Developing capacity for delivery of academic material through Irish. It is the third year since the TCDSU/AMLCT has appointed a sabbatical Officer to further the use of the Irish language, ensuring the TCDSU/AMLCT is bilingual.
- The Agreement is intentionally a living document providing the foundation for future projects and themes.

The Provost thanked the Education Officer for their excellent presentation. During discussion on the item, the Dean of Students commented that the Agreement has both constant and flexible elements and is worthwhile and constructive. Mr McAndrew from the Senior Tutor's Office added that this agreement has carefully considered representation from the PGR student community and this marks a significant enhancement. This recognises that Universal Design for Learning principles are applicable to all students and recognises the complexity of the student community.

**Action/Decision:**

CL/25-26/134: Council approved the Student Partnership Agreement 2025-2026.

**Incorporating any amendments approved at subsequent Council meetings.**

**CL/25-26/135 Vice-Provost/Chief Academic Officer's Report**

The Vice-Provost provided a verbal update on three substantive topics:

- A sectoral IUA-led Micro-Credentials capstone event had taken place in mid-February, with Trinity as a key participant. This event marked the completion of the IUA sectoral MC project and highlighted the quality of flexible Micro-Credentials now available across the sector.
- In recent reporting and debate in the national media, the University of Galway's proposals to review and restructure its omnibus Arts degree were represented as decisions, which was incorrect. The Vice-Provost noted that current CAO 2026 applications suggest a rise in applications for Arts at Trinity (6.5% in first preferences albeit from a larger overall pool of applicants this year), however there are disparities across the country, and it was noteworthy to see that TU Dublin is introducing a new liberal arts BA degree, starting in September 2026. The Vice-Provost emphasised Trinity's commitment to Arts and Humanities education, given the increasing importance of teaching transferable skills such as critical thinking.
- In relation to the 2026 CAO application numbers for Trinity, the Vice-Provost noted that first preference applications have increased by 6.2% however it should be noted that overall CAO applications are also higher across the sector. Overall, Trinity is currently holding steady at 28% of all applications.

During discussion, the Dean of AHSS provided information that colleagues at the University of Galway were discussing a realignment of their arts and humanities course provision. The Dean emphasised the strength of the Arts and Humanities at Trinity and commended the hard work of the staff on the ground, and the leadership and support from College.

**CL/25-26/136 Provost's Report**

The Provost reported on a recent meeting of the Global Research-Intensive Universities Network (GRIUN) which examined the evolving international research and Higher Education landscape. The Provost noted that GRIUN is composed of research-intensive university networks from around the world, such as the Russell Group in the UK and the Group of Eight in Australia.

The Provost highlighted three key discussion topics that were part of this meeting: (i) the rise in political populism and governments' perspectives on Higher Education across many countries; (ii) concerns about national security; and (iii) the imperative for universities to collaborate at scale.

During the discussion, the Provost noted she had heard a presentation on the perceptions of the value of university education and suggested the presenter might be invited to address a future meeting.

The Provost also noted that Taighde Éireann-Research Ireland's recently published strategy speaks to development of international partnerships and that Trinity will be seeking and assessing the opportunities available in existing and new areas, globally, under the new Strategic Plan, *Thrive*.

*The Registrar left the meeting.*

The Dean of Research noted recent discussion on international research partnerships at the Research Committee, emphasising the desire to develop connections with universities in a regional sense, bringing further breadth and depth to Trinity's partnerships. The Provost invited the Dean of Research to give a direct update on research matters to Council at an appropriate juncture, notwithstanding the comprehensiveness of the Research Committee minutes.

*The Chief Operating Officer left the meeting.*

**Incorporating any amendments approved at subsequent Council meetings.**

**Action/Decision:**

CL/25-26/136: The Provost to invite a speaker to address Council on his research on Public Perceptions of Higher Education at a future meeting of Council.

**CL/25-26/137 Any Other Urgent Business**

There was no other urgent business.

**SECTION A.2: Policy Matters which have already been considered by Committees****CL/25-26/138 Erasmus Mundus funded Joint Master's Programme in Theatre SPACes (Theatre in Social, Participatory Art, Community, and Education Contexts) with Høgskulen på Vestlandet, Western Norway University of Applied Sciences, and Universitatea de Arte din Târgu Mureş, Romania, and Joint Award of Master in Education (M.Ed. *conjunctim*)**

The Dean of Graduate Studies highlighted this master's programme and award to Council given that this is a joint (not a dual) degree but that for the first time, two awards of MA and MEd (*conjunctim*) would be awarded on students, on a single joint-degree parchment. This arises as Trinity College does not award the qualification of MA for academic achievement therefore Trinity will award M.Ed. *conjunctim*. The Dean noted thanks to the Registrar and Dean of AHSS for their expertise during consultation.

*Professor Ciaran Kenny left the meeting.*

**SECTION B: Reports from Committees****CL/25-26/139 Global Engagement Committee****Action/Decision:**

CL/25-26/139: The draft minutes of 24<sup>th</sup> February 2026 were noted and approved.

**CL/25-26/140 Graduate Studies Committee****Action/Decision:**

CL/25-26/140: The draft minutes of 26<sup>th</sup> February 2026 were noted and approved.

**CL/25-26/141 Research Committee****Action/Decision:**

CL/25-26/141: The minutes of 20<sup>th</sup> January 2026 were noted and approved.

**CL/25-26/142 Undergraduate Studies Committee****Action/Decision:**

CL/25-26/142: The draft minutes of 17<sup>th</sup> February 2026 were noted and approved.

**SECTION C****CL/25-26/143 Higher Degrees – Reports of Examiners**

The Council noted and approved the circulated reports of examiners on candidates for higher degrees (Higher Degrees List) dated 11 March 2026.

**M.D.** Aoife McFeely; Ciara Eithne O'Byrne.

**Incorporating any amendments approved at subsequent Council meetings.**

- Ph.D.** Suhail Akhtar; Abdulaziz Najem Saleh Alotaibi; Zain Mohammedfaozi Zain Baazeem; Aron Bell; Aoife Clancy; Méabh Bonham Corcoran; Cong Danh Bui; Gabriel Coleman; Melody Cui Sun; Elizabeth Culleton-Quinn; Colin Daly; Munirah Ghariani; Aoife Glynn; Vaibhav Gusain; Karlijn Hertsig; Khadijah Jabal; Aoife Kavanagh; Cathal Keane; Cormac Donncha Keegan; Nathan Keenan; Pamela Rose Kelly; Fiona Kennedy; Ella Kopčić; Tsit Sze Jeremy Lam; Jessica Beth Lambe; Sadie Lavelle Cafferkey; Paul Gerard Leavy; Neil Ciarán Lowndes; Yiming Liu; Chang-Jung Lu; Artur Machado Lacerda; Aaron Moore; Cáit Murphy; Irene Murphy; Declan Patrick Nell; Eilís Ní Chorcora; Oluwaseyi Ayotunde Ogun; Elizabeth Ann Pascoe-Van Zyl; Tomasz Maciej Pawlak; Inés Rabadán González; Swaetha Ramkumar; Conor Joseph Reddy; Martina Seveso; Alanna Slater; Harry Vincent Smith, II; Elena Valli; Weihao Yuan; Zhe Zhang; Yuqi Zheng; Honghui Zhu; Laqiqige Zhu.
- D.Ed.** Robert Matthews.
- D.Mus.Perf** Róisín O’Grady.
- M.Sc.** Diarmuid Balfe; Xuyuan Guo; Rhea Anne Latosa; Ruairi Francis O'Neill; Aisling Maria Reid

**CL/25-26/144 Heads of Discipline**

The Council noted and approved the following nominations:

- (i) Professor Mícheál Hoyne as the Head of the Discipline of Irish and Celtic Languages, School of Languages, Literatures and Cultural Studies, from 1 June 2026 to 31 May 2029.
- (ii) Professor Katerina García as the Head of the Discipline of Hispanic Studies, School of Languages, Literatures and Cultural Studies, from 1 June 2026 to 31 May 2029.
- (iii) Professor Ashley Clements as the Head of Discipline of Classics, School of Histories and Humanities, for a second term, until the end of Trinity Term 2029.
- (iv) Professor Ben Thomas as the Head of Discipline of History of Art and Architecture, School of Histories and Humanities, from 1 June 2026 to the end of Trinity Term 2029.
- (v) Professor Lindsey Earner-Byrne as the Head of Discipline of History, School of Histories and Humanities, from 1 June 2026 to the end of Trinity Term 2029.

**SECTION D**

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

Signed .....

Date .....

Incorporating any amendments approved at subsequent Council meetings.