



**Trinity College Dublin
The University of Dublin**

Minutes of a meeting of Student Life Committee

29 April 2025, 11am, TBS Boardroom

Present: Prof Richard Porter (Dean of Students, in the Chair), Dr Stephen Smith (Senior Tutor), Mr Hamza Bana (Equality and Welfare Officer, Students' Union), Mr Ciaran Doherty (Director, Careers Advisory Service), Ms Trish Murphy (Director, Student Counselling Services), Dr David McGrath (Director, College Health Centre), Ms Breda Walls (Director of Student Services), Ms Michelle Tanner (Director of Sport & Physical Activity), Mr Declan Treanor (Director, College Disability Service), Dr Donal MacDonaill (Junior Dean & Registrar of Chambers), Ms Louise Staunton (Associate Director of Trinity Global), Mr Marcus Boggan (Chair of Trinity Sports Union), Ms Faith Olopade (President, Central Societies Committee), Ms Eimear Rouine (Transition to Trinity Officer), Mr Martin John McAndrew (Postgraduate Student Support Officer), Ms Susan Kirwin (Coordinator, SLD), Ms Camilla Persello (representative, Scholars' Committee), Mr Joel McKeever (Equality Officer), Ms Rachel Skelly (Dignity, Respect & Consent Response Manager), Mr Peter Dudley (Deputy Head of Readers' Service).

Apologies: Ms Jenny Maguire (President, Students' Union), Rev Peter Sexton (Chaplaincy), Mr Nigel Stevenson (Warden of Trinity Hall), Ms Kay Williams (Secretary to Trinity Publications),

In attendance: Ms Cristina Boccardo (Secretary)

The Dean of Students welcomed everyone to the fifth Student Life Committee meeting of 2024/25.

SECTION A: Policy and Implementation Matters

SLC/24-25/49

A.1 Minutes

The Committee approved the minutes dated 18th March 2025.

SLC/24-25/50

A.2 Matters Arising

There were no matters arising from the minutes or from the previous SLC meeting, the Dean of Students welcomed new members of Student Life Committee, Ms Rachel Skelly, Dignity, Respect and Consent Response Manager, Mr Peter Dudley, Deputy Head of Readers' Service and Ms Camilla Persello, nominee for Scholars' Committee Representative (Item C.1 from agenda).

SLC/24-25/51

A.3 DisAbility Service annual report

The Director of the Disability Service presented the Service's Annual Report to the Committee, highlighting developments and achievements over the 2023–24 academic year.

The report provided a comprehensive overview of service activity, strategic changes, innovations in practice, and future planning.

The Service supported 2,560 disabled students this year, representing 11.6% of the student population. A total of 874 needs assessments were completed, 2,310 students received exam accommodations, 2,242 occupational therapy appointments took place, and support was provided to 208 students on placement and 316 international disabled students.

Key highlights from the year included the expansion of the ADHD Clinic and the introduction of a Mental Health Social Worker. An 85% success rate in disability accommodation applications was reported. The completion of the TCD Sense Map and Accessibility Audits further supported efforts to enhance the student experience. Disability Week was successfully delivered, featuring Senator Tom Clonan, an ADHD discussion panel, and the purple lighting of College buildings.

The Service introduced several innovative practices, including the adoption of Blackboard Ally, used by over 10,000 students. The Inclusive Internship Programme received 305 applications, resulting in over 100 interviews and 25 placements across 17 departments. The Path 4 ID programme continued to foster inclusive learning.

Structural changes were made to align the Service under four core pillars: Strategy, Vision & Direction; Mental Health & Wellbeing; Admin, Data & Systems; and Disability Support Management. These changes aim to improve leadership, cross-team collaboration, and overall efficiency.

Operational improvements included an internal audit undertaken in 2024, development of a new case management system, updates to LENS sharing within SITS for module coordinators, and the implementation of a complaints tracking system and training plans. Regular reviews were introduced for non-standard accommodation requests.

Challenges identified over the year included the need to strengthen implementation and clarity of LENS accommodations, address communication gaps between the Disability Service and Schools, resolve technical dissemination barriers within current IT systems, develop formal accountability mechanisms, and expand targeted staff training. The RA policy also requires further clarity and oversight.

The Service Level Agreement with MIE continued to evolve to meet increasing student numbers, with 0.4 FTE support provided during term time. New disability support services were also introduced at RIAM.

Looking ahead to 2024–25, the Service aims to redefine support models (e.g. DS4 for Mental Health & Wellbeing), implement its forthcoming Strategic Plan 2025–2030 under the theme 'Leave No One Behind', and develop a five-year universal accessibility plan. There will also be a renewed focus on supporting disabled staff and preparing for the replacement of the SID system and the introduction of a new CRM.

The Service will continue its partnerships to promote an inclusive student life and events, enhance physical space accessibility, expand internship and placement opportunities, and support student-led audits and engagement.

In response to the presentation, a Committee member noted the significant and growing number of students registered with the Disability Service, raising the question of how best to ensure appropriate and sustainable support across the university. It was acknowledged that Schools may require additional guidance in implementing accommodations effectively. The proposed new extension policy was welcomed as a means to help ease some of the administrative burden currently experienced in this area. The Committee also recognised the positive impact of the recent Students' Union campaign in raising awareness and fostering a more inclusive culture around disability supports.

ACTION: Student Life Committee received the Disability Service annual report and complimented the Director and all the staff for the excellent level of service provided as well as the progress made through the 23/24 year.

SLC/24-25/52

A.4 Trinity Sport annual report

The Director of Sport and Physical Activity presented the annual report for the 2023/24 academic year, which focused on key achievements, growth in student participation, enhancements to facilities, and strategic initiatives aimed at fostering inclusivity and excellence in sport at Trinity College Dublin.

Annual Facilities Update

Trinity Sport reported sustained growth in the use of its facilities during the 2023/24 academic year. Between September 2023 and August 2024, the Sports Centre recorded 323,491 attendances, marking a 5.51% year-on-year increase. Outdoor facilities also saw substantial use, with 116,411 attendances in the same period. Students continued to be the primary users, accounting for 74% of all visits.

Facility usage highlights included over 181,000 visits to the fitness theatre, more than 62,000 pool turnstile entries, upwards of 13,000 visits to the Climbing Wall, and approximately 13,500 attendances at live studio fitness classes. A significant enhancement to the sporting infrastructure was the opening of new indoor facilities at Printing House Square, which now accommodate sports such as squash, GAA handball, racquetball, and Olympic target shooting. Trinity Sport also maintained the highest national quality standard for facilities for the eleventh consecutive year.

Student Sport Clubs

During 2023/24, a total of 7,265 students registered with Trinity's sport clubs. Across the year, these clubs collectively facilitated an average of 353 training hours per week, hosted around 15 fixtures weekly, ran approximately 10 sporting events per month, and organised 20 international trips.

Among the many achievements, Trinity Women's Basketball and Trinity Women's Tennis both won intervarsity titles. Trinity Badminton secured both the Student Sport Ireland League and Cup. The Women's Soccer team triumphed in the FAI Division One College and Football League, while the Men's Soccer team reached the Collingwood Cup final for the first time since 2015. Both Men's and Women's Volleyball teams won their respective

Student Sport Ireland Cups, with the Women's team also finishing second in Volleyball England's Cup.

High Performance Support

In the same academic year, Trinity Sport awarded 63 sports scholarships across 17 disciplines, supporting elite student-athletes such as Irish rugby internationals Kathryn Dane, Ryan Baird, and Joe McCarthy. Over 250 student athletes were supported as part of the high-performance pathway programme, which recorded 7,912 attendances – representing a 46% increase compared to the previous year.

Support services provided included 735 strength and conditioning sessions, 313 physiotherapy sessions, and a suite of holistic services such as sport science support, lifestyle coaching, a menstrual cycle nutrition seminar, and access to the sport medical pathway.

Social Sport and Student Participation

There was a significant increase in student engagement in recreational sport during the 2023/24 academic year. A total of 1,312 participants took part in social sport events, marking a 247% increase compared to 378 attendees in the previous year.

A notable development was the launch of a new flagship event, 'Trinity on the Move', in March 2024. The initiative featured a 12-hour relay-style challenge and successfully raised €10,199 for Trinity's student hardship funds, with 199 members of the College community participating. Other well-attended events included the Campus 3k, Walktober Step Challenge, Campus 5k, and the Women in Sport Launch, each drawing well over 100 participants.

Women in Sport Campaign

On 7 February 2024, Trinity Sport formally launched its 'Women in Sport' campaign at Trinity Business School. The campaign aligns with Sport Ireland's 2023 Policy and Trinity's own strategic goals as outlined in Realising Potential: A Strategy for Sport at Trinity 2022–2026.

The campaign focuses on four thematic pillars: leadership and governance, active participation, visibility, and coaching and officiating. The launch event featured a presentation of the campaign's objectives and deliverables, followed by a panel discussion, underscoring Trinity's commitment to promoting gender equality and inclusivity in sport through to 2026.

Olympians 100 Project

To celebrate 100 years of Team Ireland, Trinity Sport spearheaded the Olympians 100 Project—a cross-university initiative that honoured Trinity's Olympic and Paralympic legacy in the lead-up to the Paris 2024 Games. Involving six departments, the campaign unfolded over a 100-day period through a combination of digital and in-person events.

Highlights included a three-day exhibition in the Exam Hall featuring memorabilia from Trinity Olympians, which attracted over 2,500 visitors; a formal launch reception attended by alumni, Olympians, and representatives from the Olympic Federation of Ireland; the illumination of Trinity's Front Gate in Olympic Rings and Team Ireland colours, which received national media attention; the creation of an online archive documenting the profiles of 64 Trinity Olympians from 1924 to 2024; and a well-attended Olympics watch party co-hosted with Trinity Sports Union, PTSB, and OFI.

Strategy Implementation: Realising Potential (2022–2026)

Trinity Sport continued the implementation of Realising Potential: A Strategy for Sport and Physical Activity 2022–2026, which outlines the University’s long-term vision for sport. The strategy is underpinned by a clear vision to place sport at the heart of the Trinity experience, and a mission to inspire, engage, and connect people through sport in a sustainable, inclusive, and supportive environment. The guiding values are: Invested, Professional, Inclusive, Collaborative, and Integrity.

A key strategic focus remains the embedding of Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) principles across all areas of planning and delivery. The strategy continues to guide Trinity’s efforts to ensure sport is a vibrant, accessible, and integrated part of university life.

Following the presentation, the Committee engaged in a constructive discussion on the importance of increasing visibility and participation of women in sport. The conversation touched on the value of inclusive club structures that welcome all genders, with an emphasis on broadening representation across campus. Members noted that gender-neutral clubs have already been successfully established and expressed hope that this approach could be extended to more traditional sporting societies. The Committee also welcomed the positive update on the Iveagh Grounds redevelopment, viewing it as a promising opportunity to expand facilities, create additional space, and support the continued growth of sport at Trinity.

ACTION: Student Life Committee received the annual report from Trinity Sport and congratulated the Service on the excellent achievements, enhancements and service levels.

SLC/24-25/53

A.5 Student Services achievements and advancements

Student Services at Trinity College Dublin continues to evolve, providing an increasingly dynamic and responsive environment for students. The 2024-25 academic year has been marked by significant milestones that reflect Trinity's deep commitment to inclusivity, student success, and the overall well-being of its community. The Director of Student Services shared these developments with the Student Life Committee, highlighting a variety of new programs, initiatives, and improvements in systems, all aimed at enhancing student experiences and engagement. Below are some of the key highlights from the year.

The Disability Service celebrated its 25th anniversary with a series of impactful events, including the AuDHD Seminar on neurodiversity, the Christy Nolan Event exploring creativity in disability services, and the Bristol Case Seminar, which focused on disability inclusion and innovations in academic access. Additionally, the launch of the Disability Internship Programme marked a significant step forward in promoting career readiness and inclusion for students with disabilities.

The Academic Registry saw a full return to on-campus exams, following the disruptions caused by the pandemic. At the same time, improvements were made to the SITS Processes, including the implementation of Digital Garda Vetting, which enhanced administrative efficiency and streamlined services for students and staff alike.

For Transition to Trinity, a range of new initiatives were introduced to support students. The Skills for Success program, a three-part series, equipped students with the essential tools for academic and professional achievement. The 3-Minute Thesis Competition also

gave students a platform to present their research in a concise and engaging way. Furthermore, the Services Expo & Christmas Market fostered a stronger sense of community by connecting students with the various services available to them on campus.

In Student Counselling Services, a new service model was rolled out, which included Daily Drop-in Assessments and the introduction of Therapy Groups and Workshops. These changes have led to a significant reduction in the waitlist for services, ensuring quicker access to support. Additionally, the Student Advisory Board was renewed, and the Case Manager Model was successfully implemented, offering personalized guidance and assistance to students in need.

Trinity Sport marked a notable expansion with the opening of the PHSq Facilities, offering new specialized sports facilities such as Rifle, Squash, and Handball. The Women in Sport Campaign led to a 55% increase in female participation, promoting inclusivity and equality within Trinity Sport. The year also saw a remarkable 207% increase in Social Participation, reflecting a broader engagement with the services provided. In addition, Alumni Engagement surged, with a 400% increase in alumni interaction and a 160% rise in alumni funding, strengthening the bond between Trinity's current and former students.

The Nursery service contributed to the development of staff by offering Staff Education (Level 8 & 9) programs, while also facilitating increased Parental Cultural Involvement through events such as Dinosaur Live, Sports Day, World Cultural Day, and World Book Day.

The Medical Centre introduced Ireland's First Student PrEP Clinic, offering vital health resources for students. Furthermore, the Health Promotion Manager Role was established to oversee student health initiatives, and the ADHD Clinic was launched, providing integrated support from GPs, psychiatrists, and disability services.

Several Other Initiatives were introduced, including the continuation of Period Dignity initiatives, in line with agreed funding, and the development of Student Spaces in key areas such as T Hall and Hamilton to provide more accessible and supportive environments for students.

Looking ahead, exciting developments are on the horizon. The Enquiries & Case Management System will streamline the management of student cases and inquiries, ensuring even greater efficiency in service delivery. Additionally, Iveagh Grounds are set to undergo further development, with planning permission in progress to enhance the campus infrastructure and provide more resources for student services.

The Director of Student Services concluded the presentation with an acknowledgement of the excellent work carried out by staff across all service areas, highlighting their commitment to innovation, responsiveness, and student well-being. One Committee member commented specifically on the recent renewal of the Halls common space, noting that it represented a particularly effective transformation of a previously underutilised area into a valuable and welcoming environment for students.

ACTION: Student Life Committee received the update from the Director of Student Services and was very complimentary about the quality and dedication showed throughout all services.

SLC/24-25/54

A.6 Central Societies Committee update on postgraduate events and operation

The CSC reported on the positive impact of the new Capitation Funding stream dedicated to postgraduate society engagement. While societies have always welcomed postgraduates, this funding allowed for more structured and targeted support. Efforts included early access to the Societies Hub Portal during postgraduate orientation, one-on-one grant support, and collaboration with the Postgraduate Student Support Officer, Martin McAndrew.

Notable initiatives funded included:

- Hiking Society: Relaxed postgraduate picnics in St Stephen's Green.
- DU History Society: A full postgraduate event series with academic and career focus.
- Korean Society: A cultural networking and mentorship evening.
- DUPA & DUDJ: A large-scale creative careers and nightlife event with 300+ attendees.

Societies were encouraged to include Postgraduate Officers on committees, and a new Postgraduate Engagement Award was introduced at the CSC Awards. Events were well attended, inclusive, and aligned with postgraduate interests and schedules. The CSC confirmed strong interest in continuing the initiative next year and noted that societies are increasingly embedding postgraduate engagement in their planning and handovers. Some Committee members expressed particular appreciation for the excellent resources made available to postgraduate students through CSC funding. The high level of engagement was also commended, with members noting the significant positive impact these initiatives have had on the postgraduate community, especially in fostering intercultural connections and promoting inclusivity across campus.

ACTION: Student Life Committee received the update from the CSC President with many congratulations for the very good results achieved throughout the academic year.

SLC/24-25/55

A.7 Dean's Report

The Dean of Students updated the Committee about the intention of developing more activities for students, into the new academic year. The Sustainability Committee also provides new opportunities of engagement in various initiatives.

ACTION: Student Life Committee received the Dean's report and thanked him for all the work with the students' engagement.

SLC/24-25/56

A.8 Any other urgent business

There was no other urgent business for discussion.

SECTION B: Reports from SLC working groups

SLC/24-25/57

B.1 Student Centre Working Group

The Dean of Students updated the Committee that the students space project is making good progress with the establishment of a steering group in April, chaired by the Dean.

SLC/24-25/58

B.2 Orientation Steering Group

The Transition to Trinity Officer updated the Committee on the just completed Skills to Success programme, with consistent, albeit slightly lower compared to past events. Works have already begun for new academic year Orientation, with starting date confirmed as 8th September for Postgraduates and 15th September for first year's Undergraduates.

SECTION C: Items for noting and/or approval

SLC/24-25/59

C.1 Student Life Committee membership 2024/25

The Dean of Students brought the item forward and introduced the new members at SLC meeting opening.

SLC/24-25/60

C.2 Student Life Committee circulation and meetings dates 2024-25

To note the remaining Student Life Committee dates for this academic year as follows:

Circulation date

Meeting Date

13 May

20 May

Venue: Trinity Boardroom, Trinity Business School
Meeting times: 11am – 1pm
