



**Trinity College Dublin
The University of Dublin**

Minutes of a meeting of Student Life Committee

10 March 2026, 11am, TBS Boardroom

Present: Present: Prof Richard Porter (Dean of Students, in the Chair), Dr Stephen Smith (Senior Tutor), Ms Grace McNally (President, Students' Union), Ms Deirdre Leahy (Equality and Welfare Officer, Students' Union), Ms Camilla Persello (representative, Scholars' Committee), Rev Peter Sexton (Chaplaincy), Ms Orla Bannon (Director, Careers Advisory Service), Ms Breda Walls (Director of Student Services), Mr Declan Treanor (Director, College Disability Service), Ms Louise Staunton (Associate Director of Trinity Global), Ms Jane Prendergast (Chair of Trinity Sports Union), Mr Conchúr Ó Cathasaigh (Chairperson, Central Societies Committee), Mr Maximillian Evans-Schmid (Chairperson, Trinity Publications), Dr Dónal MacDónaill (Junior Dean & Registrar of Chambers), Ms Eimear Rouine (Transition to Trinity Officer), Mr Martin John McAndrew (Postgraduate Student Support Officer).

Apologies: Ms Trish Murphy (Director of Student Counselling Services), Ms Michelle Tanner (Director of Sport & Physical Activity), Dr David McGrath (Director, College Health Centre), Mr Nigel Stevenson (Warden of Trinity Hall), Mr Aziel Zafar (Postgraduate Taught Officer, Students' Union) Ms Rachel Skelly (Dignity, Respect & Consent Response Manager).

In attendance: Ms Cristina Boccardo (Secretary), Mr Peter Dudley (Deputy Head of Readers' Service), Mr Joel McKeever (Equality Officer), Ms Susan Kirwin (Coordinator, Student Learning Development) Ms Wendy Crampton (Director of Trinity Access Programmes).

The Dean of Students welcomed members to the fifth meeting of the academic year 2025/26 and informed the Committee that, due to unforeseen circumstances, items A.6 and C.4 of the agenda, would not be presented at the current meeting, but would feature at the following one in March.

SECTION A: Policy and Implementation Matters

SLC/25-26/44

A.1 Minutes

The Committee approved the minutes dated 3 February 2026.

SLC/25-26/45

A.2 Matters Arising

There were no matters arising from the minutes or from the previous SLC meeting.

SLC/25-26/46

A.3 DisAbility Service annual report

The Director of the Disability Service presented the Annual Report for 2024/25, providing an overview of service activity, student engagement, and key trends emerging across the academic year.

It was reported that a total of 2,860 students engaged with the Disability Service during the reporting period, representing approximately 12.6% of the overall student population and 16.1% of the undergraduate cohort.

This reflects a continued and significant growth in demand for supports, with the number of students registered increasing substantially over time.

The Committee noted that the majority of students accessing the service are undergraduate students (2,491), with a smaller but important postgraduate cohort (347). A total of 709 new entrant undergraduate students registered with the Disability Service, accounting for 13.4% of all new entrants. Members observed that this indicates both increased disclosure and growing awareness of available supports at point of entry.

In terms of disability profile, mental health conditions (22.1%), ADHD (20.4%), and specific learning difficulties (17.5%) represent the largest categories among registered students.

It was further highlighted that 31% of students disclosed more than one disability, reflecting increasing complexity in student needs and the importance of holistic support approaches.

Faculty distribution data indicated that the largest proportion of students registered with the service are within the Faculty of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences (37%), followed by Engineering, Mathematics and Science (25%), Health Sciences (20%), and multi-school programmes (17%). The Committee noted the broad distribution of need across all academic areas.

The report outlined a significant volume of reasonable accommodations provided across teaching, learning, and assessment. This included nearly 5,000 course-based accommodations and over 18,500 Disability Service-led supports, encompassing assistive technology, academic supports, and specialist interventions. Examination accommodations remained a key component, with over 3,700 provisions recorded across the academic year. The scale of these supports was noted as indicative of both the complexity and the operational intensity of service delivery.

The Committee also noted the continued expansion of placement-related supports (PLENS), with identified impacts including fatigue, concentration, stress and anxiety, and organisational challenges. A range of tailored reasonable accommodations were reported as being implemented in professional and clinical placement settings.

ACTION: SLC members noted and welcomed the report and acknowledged the significant growth in demand for the service, alongside the breadth and complexity of supports provided. The importance of continued resourcing, cross-service collaboration, and alignment with inclusive teaching practices was emphasised.

A.4 Careers Advisory Service annual report & Graduate survey outcome report

The Director of Careers presented the Annual Report for 2024/25, together with an overview of the Graduate Outcomes Survey for the Class of 2024.

The Committee noted trends in student engagement across Careers Service activities. While there was a slight decrease in attendance at appointments and CV clinics during the reporting period, engagement with practice interviews increased, and a blended model of delivery remains in place, with a significant proportion of students continuing to access supports online. It was observed that student engagement patterns continue to evolve, with flexibility and accessibility remaining key considerations in service delivery.

An overview of communications and outreach activity highlighted the importance of dynamic and targeted engagement strategies, with social media data indicating stronger engagement with more interactive content. The Committee noted the ongoing need to adapt communications approaches in line with changing student behaviours.

The report outlined a wide range of initiatives supporting student employability, including large-scale employer engagement, skills development programmes, and targeted supports for specific student cohorts. Key activities included employer fairs, employability bursaries, and structured skills development pathways, alongside continued collaboration with academic Schools and external partners. Members also noted the development of inclusive initiatives, including the introduction of a new Inclusive Student Employment Officer role, reflecting a cross-service approach to widening participation.

In relation to the Graduate Outcomes Survey, the Committee noted generally strong employment and progression outcomes for Trinity graduates, alongside emerging trends in the graduate labour market. It was reported that, while recruitment remains relatively stable overall, there are signs of tightening in certain sectors and increasing uncertainty linked to broader global conditions. The growing influence of artificial intelligence was highlighted as a key factor shaping both recruitment practices and the nature of graduate roles.

The Committee noted a shift towards skills-based hiring, with increased emphasis on adaptability, interdisciplinary competencies, and the ability to effectively integrate AI within domain expertise. It was also observed that graduates are increasingly required to navigate more complex and non-linear career pathways, with multiple entry points and evolving role definitions.

Looking ahead, the report outlined key strategic priorities for 2025/26, including the further development of the “Map My Future” framework, expansion of employer engagement, enhanced use of AI within careers support, and the strengthening of alumni-to-student connections.

ACTION: The Committee welcomed the report and noted the continued evolution of both student engagement and the graduate employment landscape. The importance of maintaining a responsive, inclusive and future-focused careers service was emphasised.

A.5 Dean's report

The Dean of Students presented an update on recent student-facing initiatives and developments across College.

The Committee was informed that a new iteration of the Student Volunteer Awards is currently in development, building on the success of the Dean of Students Award for Bravery and the Civic Engagement Awards. This initiative is being progressed in collaboration with the Students' Union and Civic Engagement, with the aim of further recognising and celebrating student contribution and engagement across the University.

The Dean also acknowledged the recent "Walk-out and Information Session on Sexual Violence", which took place on 9 March, following International Women's Day. The event, led by the Students' Union sabbatical team in collaboration with the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Office and a wide range of College and external partners, was noted as a significant and well-attended initiative raising awareness and providing access to support services.

The Committee noted that the event originated as a student-led initiative by the Students' Union, with College services working collaboratively to ensure a coordinated and timely response. The EDI Office engaged with relevant College Officers to facilitate the organisation of an accompanying information and support session, ensuring both internal and external supports were available on the day.

It was further noted that the event included participation from a wide range of stakeholders, including Student Counselling and Student2Student, the Dignity, Respect and Consent Service, the SpeakOut national office, the Dublin Rape Crisis Centre, the EDI Office, and Community Gardaí liaison officers from Pearse Street Garda Station. Supporting materials were also provided by Coimisiún na Meán in relation to online safety and media literacy.

Members welcomed the initiative and commended the strong collaboration across student representatives, College services, and external partners.

The Committee also received a brief update on the Student Centre, noting that the Student Centre Steering Group is scheduled to meet on 26 March with the project coordinator to progress discussions.

ACTION: The Committee noted the Dean's report.

A.6 Any other urgent business

There was no other business raised.

Section B: Report from SLC Working Groups

SLC/25-26/50

B.1 Student Centre Working Group

The Dean of Students updated the Committee on progress with the Student Centre Project, a meeting is on schedule for March 26 with Rory Greene and a further update will be presented after such meeting. Works remain on schedule with expected completion for beginning of 2028.

SLC/25-26/51

B.2 Orientation Working Group

The Transition to Trinity Officer noted that the Student Survey had so far received an 11% response rate, which is very low, with only a few days remaining before closing. It was hoped that, following reading week, there might be a slight increase in uptake; however, the response rate to date remains somewhat disappointing. It was suggested that the involvement of class representatives could be encouraged to help promote participation, alongside the introduction of some incentivising initiatives.

Section C: Items to note and/or approve

SLC/25-26/52

Financial Assistance Committee protocol version 1.4

The Committee approved the updated protocol.

SLC/25-26/53

Financial Assistance Committee draft minutes, meeting 2026-02-23

The Committee approved the minutes.

SLC/25-26/54

Capitation Committee draft minutes, meeting 2025-11-27

The Committee approved the minutes

SLC/25-26/52

C.1 Student Life Committee circulation and meetings dates 2025-26

Student Life Committee noted upcoming dates for the current academic year.

The meeting ended at 12:00 noon.