Trinity College Dublin
Coláiste na Tríonóide, Baile Átha Cliath
The University of Dublin

XX = Item is of significance to Council

A meeting of the Undergraduate Studies Committee was held on 13 November 2018 at 2.15pm in the Boardroom.

Present:	Professor Kevin Mitchell, Senior Lecturer/Dean of Undergraduate Studies (*Chair*)
	Ms Patricia Callaghan, Academic Secretary
	Professor Kevin O'Kelly, Dean of Students
	Professor Aidan Seery, Senior Tutor
	Professor Aine Kelly, Associate Dean of Undergraduate Science Education
	Professor Kristian Myrseth, School of Business
	Professor Paula Colavita, School of Chemistry
	Professor Jonathan Dukes, School of Computer Science and Statistics
	Professor Derek Sullivan, School of Dental Science
	Professor Alan O'Connor, School of Engineering
	Professor Alice Jorgensen, School of English
	Professor Frank Wellmer, School of Genetics and Microbiology
	Professor Pauline Sloane, School of Linguistic, Speech and Communication Sciences
	Professor Elizabeth Nixon, School of Psychology
	Professor Vladimir Dotsenko, School of Mathematics
	Professor Paul Eastham, School of Physics
	Professor Valerie Smith, School of Nursing and Midwifery
	Professor John Walsh, School of Pharmacy and Pharmaceutical Sciences
	Professor Christine Poulter, School of Creative Arts
	Professor Michael Wycherley, School of Social Sciences and Philosophy
	Professor Rachel Hoare, School of Languages, Literatures and Cultural Studies
	Professor Peter Crooks, School of Histories and Humanities
	Professor Mark Hennessy, School of Natural Sciences
	Professor Philip Curry, School of Social Work and Social Policy
	Ms Siobhán Dunne, Library Representative
	Ms Aimee Connolly, Education Officer, Students' Union
	Ms Misha Fitzgibbon, Student Representative
Apologies:	Professor Derek Nolan, School of Biochemistry and Immunology
	Professor Linda Hogan, School of Religion
	Professor Ailbhe O'Neill, School of Law
	Professor Joe Harbison, School of Medicine
	Professor Stephen Minton, School of Education
	Professor Stephen Matterson, Director of TSM
In attendance:	Ms Elaine Egan, Academic Affairs Office, Trinity Teaching & Learning; Dr Ciara O'Farrell, Senior Academic Developer, CAPSL, Trinity Teaching & Learning; Ms Breda Walls, Director of Student Services; Mr Kevin O'Connor, CAPSL, Trinity Teaching and Learning, attended for item USC/18-19/023; Ms Jennifer Pepper, Head of Operations, Academic Registry and Mr Ronan Hodson, AR/GR Liaison, attended for item USC/18-19/024; Professor Declan O'Sullivan, Trinity Electives Champion, and Ms Sheena Brown, TEP Project Manager, attended for item USC/18-19/026; Ms Leona Coady, Director of Academic Registry, attended for item USC/18-19/027.

The Senior Lecturer/Dean of Undergraduate Studies opened the meeting and noted apologies from members.

USC/18-19/021   Minutes of the meeting of 02 October 2018
> The minutes were approved subject to corrections being made to the list for 'in attendance'.

USC/18-19/022   Matters arising
USC/18-19/016 The proposed layouts for undergraduate transcripts were approved by Council on 17 October 2018.

USC/18-19/019 Templates for curriculum mapping and gathering approved module data were sent to all programmes and should be returned to academic.secretary@tcd.ie by 14 December 2018.

USC/18-19/023   Use of Turnitin via the College VLE

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A document, 'Using TURNITIN via the College VLE Blackboard Learn' had been circulated. Mr Kevin O'Connor, CAPSL, Trinity Teaching and Learning, spoke to this item. Turnitin is the software used by College for plagiarism detection, online assignment submission and feedback. It had been used on a standalone basis until 2017 when it was integrated into Blackboard – College's Virtual Learning Environment (VLE). This integration allows staff and students to access Turnitin via Blackboard. Accessing Turnitin through Blackboard allows for a greater level of support to be available to staff and also provides a higher level of security. In September 2018 Turnitin advised they would be doing away with join codes for instructors on Turnitin.com which will create administrative and security issues. The circulated document proposed therefore that from October 2018 all lecturers in Trinity should use Turnitin via Blackboard and move away from using Turnitin.com as standalone software.

A member suggested that it might be better for staff to familiarise themselves with the use of Turnitin within the VLE now and migrate over in the next semester. He requested that in the circulated proposal document 'from October 2018' be changed to 'from Hilary term 2019.' Mr O'Connor accepted this change request.

It is hoped that in time CAPSL will help to migrate any existing users of Turnitin.com to accessing Turnitin through the VLE. Mr O'Connor advised that staff can contact bblearn@tcd.ie if they need assistance with this.

Guides on using Turnitin through Blackboard for lecturers are available at https://www.tcd.ie/CAPSL/resources/onlineassessment/assignments.php while guides for students are available via the 'student help' tab within Blackboard.

Decision
USC/18-19/023.1: USC recommended the proposal that all lecturers in Trinity use Turnitin only via Blackboard from Hilary Term 2019/20.

USC/18-19/024   Revision of language requirements for undergraduate admission

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Course-specific and general matriculation language requirements
A memorandum from Head of Operations, Academic Registry and AR/GR Liaison, dated 6th November 2018 had been circulated. Ms Jennifer Pepper, Head of Operations, Academic Registry and Mr Ronan Hodson, AR/GR Liaison, attended for this item.

Mr Hodson advised that Global Relations and Academic Registry (AR) had undertaken a review of entry requirements for admission to undergraduate degree programmes in respect of qualifications in languages other than English. The analysis was prompted by the first joint assessment of applications for the Dual BA with Columbia University, wherein applicants must satisfy requirements of both universities. Six applications that were accepted by Columbia had not met Trinity's requirements and were referred to the Senior Lecturer/Dean of Undergraduate Studies as admissions cases. Following assessment by staff in the relevant

language disciplines, the six applicants were deemed to meet or exceed academic expectations for admission to Trinity language programmes.

Current matriculation and course-specific requirements are available in the Admissions Requirements section in Calendar Part II and are defined in terms of the Irish Leaving Certificate and GCE only. Equivalencies for EU qualifications are set out by the CAO and there are no clear equivalencies for non-EU qualifications.

Mr Hodson noted that there has been an increase in applications that require assessment from non-EU applicants due to the increasingly diverse background of applicants in terms of qualifications and education. There has been a corresponding increase in students who are bilingual and/or whose first language is not English and Trinity does not currently have a method to assess these students. Currently applications involving non-standard language qualifications are brought to the Senior Lecturer/Dean of Undergraduate Studies and considered on an ad-hoc basis.

Course-specific language requirements

The following proposals were made:

a) the introduction of a streamlined process to assess qualifications not previously recognised by the University. The process would involve submitting a proposal for recognition of a qualification to AR. The proposal would be assessed by academic staff in the relevant language disciplines for benchmarking against peer institutions and/or mapping. AR would assess the proposal with regard to implementation. The outcome would be submitted to Council for noting;

b) to introduce the option of an interview for assessment of applicants of native or near-native fluency in a language other than English as a substitute for a formal language qualification;

c) that in cases where an applicant presents with a non-standard language qualification but meets all other entry requirements, the application will be referred to the relevant academic unit for additional assessment and to consider whether a) or b) above should be implemented when reviewing the qualification.

The meeting noted the absence of the Senior Lecturer/Dean of Undergraduate Studies in the process and given the statutory role of the Senior Lecturer/Dean of Undergraduate Studies to oversee admissions, it was proposed and agreed that following the assessment of the proposal by AR, the outcome would be submitted to the Senior Lecturer/Dean of Undergraduate Studies for consideration and recommendation to the USC. If approved, the proposal would be recommended to Council.

Matriculation requirements
The Head of Operations, Academic Registry, spoke to this item. She explained that under current admissions policies, Trinity requires all applicants for undergraduate degree courses to have formal study in a language other than English as part of their secondary school curriculum. This can place students from non-English speaking countries at a disadvantage as they may not have formally studied their first language beyond primary level.

She proposed the introduction of an exemption from the second language requirement for non-EU students who are required to present an English Language Proficiency Qualification (such as IELTS, TOEFL or the PTE Academic).

It was noted that there has been a move away from the second language matriculation requirement at a sectoral level. It was noted also that the CAO manage matriculation requirements for EU applicants.

In response to a query regarding putting forward a proposal for recognition of a qualification, it was noted that there are a number of proposals currently ready to be submitted.

Decision
USC/18-19/024.1: USC approved and recommended to the University Council the proposed changes to the admissions procedures for non-EU applicants subject to the changes recommended (revised proposal attached to these minutes).

USC/18-19/025   **Proposed changes to Calendar Part II 2019/20**
A memorandum from Ms Elaine Egan, Trinity Teaching and Learning, dated 7 November 2018 had been circulated. Ms Egan spoke to this item.

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She noted the significant variance in the level of information presented across different programme entries in Calendar Part II with some entries providing details on all available modules across years and other programmes referring to the programme handbook for module information. She noted that a Programme Handbook Policy had been introduced in June 2018 and that this included an extensive list of content that must be included in handbooks. This means that there is a significant overlap between the programme-related content of the Calendar Part II and the content of handbooks. Ms Egan proposed that in order to reduce the duplication of information, information in the Calendar be significantly pared back and details relating to modules, workload, key dates, etc, should be removed. Regulations would be retained in the Calendar.

TEP progression and award regulations came into effect for most courses in 2018/19. This necessitated a new section in the General Regulations and meant that individual programme regulations are only required in the few instances where there are deviations.

The introduction of TEP Phase 2 and the new Joint Honors programme in 2019/20 will need to be reflected in the Calendar. It is proposed that a section on TEP curriculum architecture, the decoupling of entry and exit routes, and the flexibility this can provide, be added to the General Regulations. Sample templates across different entry routes had been circulated and these demonstrated how the Calendar would still provide information based on entry to a programme but would also include details of possible exit awards. The sample templates also demonstrated how the phased implementation of award calculation on the 30:70 basis could be captured clearly in each programme entry.

Members welcomed the proposal to reduce the level of programme information in the Calendar. A member noted that the level of detail required by the Programme Handbook Policy was extensive and required considerable work on the part of the DUTL. It was agreed that the implementation of this policy would be reviewed.

The importance of the Calendar as an archival document was discussed and it was agreed that Schools should keep an archival copy of their handbooks. The Programme Handbook Policy would be amended to reflect this. It was agreed that further consideration would be given to procedures for archiving programme handbooks. It was also noted that the ongoing curriculum mapping and information retained in SITS would provide an archive for module information. The purpose of the Calendar as a regulatory instrument was emphasised and it was confirmed that regulations relating to progression will always be retained in the Calendar. In response to a query about exemptions to the approved common Progression Regulations, it was advised that exemptions that contravene the common Progression

Regulations will require Council approval, however, if there are local regulations that do not contravene the common Progression Regulations, these would not need Council approval but should also be included in the Calendar entries for transparency purposes as they may inform student case decisions.

It was agreed that issues around off-books, non-satisfactory attendance and modular billing would be discussed at future meetings of USC.

It was agreed that handbooks should be monitored to ensure that they contain the required information. The Academic Secretary and the Senior Lecturer undertook to consider this and revert to a future meeting of the Committee.

It was agreed that the TSM section in the Calendar should be retained until the programme has been phased out. The TSM section will contain information on general TSM regulations and will be distinct from the new Joint Honors section. The TSM subject entries will be removed as the information is not of a regulatory nature and is available elsewhere.

Decision
USC/18-19/025.1: USC approved and recommended to the University Council the proposed changes to the Calendar Part II 2019/20 (proposal attached to these minutes).

Actions
USC/18-19/025.2 USC agreed to retain a section in the Calendar on the General Regulations for TSM Courses until the programme has been phased out.
USC/18-19/025.3 USC agreed that the implementation of the Programme Handbook Policy should be reviewed.
USC/18-19/025.4 USC agreed that a procedure for archiving programme handbooks should be established and that consideration would be given to how best to monitor handbooks to ensure they contain the required information.
USC/18-19/025.5 USC agreed to discuss issues around off-books, non-satisfactory attendance and modular billing at a future meeting.

USC/18-19/026   **Proposals for Trinity Electives**

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Five proposed Trinity Electives, together with a memorandum from Professor Aine Kelly, Associate Dean of Undergraduate Science Education and Chair of Workstream #3 TEP Features, and Professor Declan O'Sullivan, Trinity Electives Champion, dated 1 October 2018, had been circulated. Ms Sheena Brown, TEP Project Manager, and Professor Declan O'Sullivan, attended for this item.

The Associate Dean of Undergraduate Science Education reminded USC of the Council-approved principles of the Trinity Electives (TEs). She noted that they were standalone modules without pre-requisites; not core to any programme; chosen by students; and drawn from across the university under the three categories of the University's research themes, key societal challenges and languages. TEs comprise a 5 ECTS weighting, are designed to be taken in the Senior Fresh or Junior Sophister year and provide opportunities for students to develop the Trinity graduate attributes.

Thirteen TEs have already been approved and of these, ten will commence in 2019/20 and three in 2020/21. The Associate Dean provided the meeting with a brief summary of the circulated proposals that had been previously evaluated by the Trinity Electives Subgroup. It was noted that the language proposal involved nine different languages that would be taught at two levels.

A discussion arose around whether the total capacity of the TEs would be sufficient to meet student demand. The proposers advised that they are reasonably confident that there will be sufficient supply to meet demand in the 2019/20 academic year. A probability analysis on the worst and best case scenarios had been carried out and has indicated that it was likely that capacity would be met; although this analysis is ongoing as the subgroup works with module coordinators to finalise capacity in each module.

In response to a query from a member it was noted that the TEs Subgroup had not investigated the status (full vs part-time) of the teaching staff for each module as this is a matter for Schools and that modules had been signed off by the Heads of Schools.

A member noted that best practice would be to stagger the semester in which a student can take a TE in the SF and JS years in order to ensure access to the widest possible range of electives and also to spread the demand. The proposers noted that timetabling of the TEs was currently being looked at and that it was hoped the last set of modules that are presently under consideration would be approved by January 2019.

Decision
USC/18-19/026.1: USC approved and recommended to the University Council the proposed Trinity Electives (proposals attached to these minutes).

USC/18-19/027	**Proposed timetable structure for the shared curriculum within the common architecture, years 1 and 2**

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A paper from the Senior Lecturer/Dean of Undergraduate Studies, dated 8 November 2018 had been circulated. Ms Leona Coady, Director of Academic Registry, attended for this item.

The Senior Lecturer/Dean of Undergraduate Studies spoke to this item and explained that the curriculum changes arising from TEP had necessitated a review of the timetable. The new timetabling structure is required to enable the shared curriculum within the common architecture, the introduction of Approved Modules and Trinity Electives, and the uptake of new 2nd / 3rd subjects. These changes have significantly increased the level of cross-compatibility required in the system and demand a general timetabling structure that can enable the TEP features in a systematic way. The timetable must be future-proofed to allow for new subject combinations and must remain stable from year-to-year. The proposed structure would allow for all of this and also enable earlier publication of the timetable and improved efficiency in the usage of space.

The scope of the proposed new timetabling structure was limited to years 1 and 2 of subjects in the common architecture and would involve the scheduling of core hours only. Modules taken by single-honors students only are not part of the proposal and non-core contact hours, such as small group teaching and labs, will continue to be scheduled locally. Years 3 and 4 present different challenges and will be dealt with at a later stage.

The Senior Lecturer/Dean of Undergraduate Studies explained that the TSM review had placed subjects in different pillars as a basis for combinations for entry. These pillars form the underlying structure of the proposed timetabling structure. The timetable blocks are 10 hours per week, and 5 hours per week for Trinity Electives. Each pillar will be assigned to a block. Not all subjects were part of the TSM review for entry combinations and therefore are not assigned to any pillar. In order to model the system, the blocks have been scheduled using modules from 17/18 Junior and Senior Fresh curricula. The blocks were labelled A to D and were given a certain set of hours. This allows for non-pillar Joint Honors subject modules to fit into unused gaps in the blocks.   This has been shown to permit the necessary combinations approximately 95% of the time. The blocks rotate year to year to ensure that staff are not always scheduled for the same hours each week across all years of the

programme. The proposed structure allows each individual student access to all available Trinity Electives and two-thirds to three-quarters of Approved Modules and New Subjects.

Trinity Electives have their own dedicated timetable slots. It is proposed that Academic Services will centrally timetable the core hours for the relevant modules for Junior Fresh in 2019/20 and for Senior Fresh in 2020/21 into rooms. This will remove the competition between Schools for rooms and should allow a more efficient usage of space than is seen with the current system. A new role has been created to assist with the planning of space.

The Senior Lecturer/Dean of Undergraduate Studies recognised that there are many local constraints, e.g. postgraduate teaching and modules offered as extra-mural courses, and emphasised that populating modules into particular hours will be done in close consultation with Schools.

The proposed timetabling structure does not apply to programmes in Engineering, Science or Health Sciences except with regard to the availability of Trinity Electives and Approved Modules for these students. Modules in these disciplines that are identified as suitable Approved Modules for students outside that programme should be scheduled in such a way as to respect the block structure of the Joint Honors timetable, thus enabling cross-compatibility.

A limitation of the proposed structure is that cross-year teaching within subjects is proving problematic to accommodate. This impacts a number of modules in Mathematics and Classics, in particular, and the Senior Lecturer/Dean of Undergraduate Studies noted that discussions with these Schools have already taken place to discuss their concerns and will continue to resolve remaining issues.

The new timetabling structure must run in parallel with the old structure for a number of years which will present challenges.

The Senior Lecturer/Dean of Undergraduate Studies asked the committee to accept that remaining issues with the proposed structure will continue to be reviewed and to approve the approach of the proposed timetabling structure as presented.

A member noted that the paper does not mention the TSM core hours which enable the teaching of all possible combinations in the freshman years. A concern was raised about the possibility that a lecturer could end up with an excessively long teaching block and it was noted that that by liaising closely with Schools, the system should have the flexibility to move things around as necessary.

The DUTL in the School of Natural Sciences wanted it recorded that geography slots are fixed and are tied to other Science slots. The Senior Lecturer/Dean of Undergraduate Studies noted that the Science slots were provisional and while it was hoped that the slots could be accommodated, they may be impacted by the new timetabling structure.

The DUTL in the School of Mathematics spoke about the issue of cross-year teaching within subjects and noted that the School had identified some instances where the issue can be resolved but in other instances the cross-year teaching is critical to the curriculum. He would like to see protection put in place for good-practice cross-year teaching within subjects. The allocation of ten hours per week per subject is also of concern to Mathematics, especially in the case of a joint honors programme with 20 + 10 ECTS per semester in the SF year which would require 15/16 hours per week for mathematics. The Senior Lecturer/Dean of Undergraduate Studies noted that a solution for this on a general level was not available at this time but he envisaged that creative workarounds may be possible for solving some of the

issues at a local level. It was noted that ten hours per week would be sufficient for the core teaching hours in a shared curriculum, in most but not all cases.

The DUTL from Engineering raised a concern that despite being one of the first Schools to implement the revised TEP curriculum, they were not included in one of the subject pillars and this would limit the range of available Approved Modules for their students. Engineering students need to take 20 credits outside of their core subject and it would appear that a very small pool of Approved Modules will be available. The Senior Lecturer/Dean of Undergraduate Studies noted that Engineering, like Science and Health Sciences, have their own self-contained timetable that will allow students to take an Engineering module from a different stream as an Approved Module. He noted that Approved Modules do not need to provide optionality for students and that certain modules could be timetabled in such a way to enable them as Approved Modules for students in these disciplines.

The DUTL in the School of Social Science and Philosophy noted he was concerned about the transition period and the impact that not using TSM core hours in first year would have on Senior Fresh students. The Senior Lecturer/Dean of Undergraduate Studies advised that this could hopefully be managed at a central level to minimise the overall disruption.

The DUTL in the School of Nursing outlined that due to their new curriculum, Senior Fresh timetabling would need to be carried out as a matter of urgency and that they need to have sight of what rooms will be available in College. The Senior Lecturer/Dean of Undergraduate Studies noted that Health Sciences will be insulated from much of the new timetabling structure and that a timeline of key dates will be included in the document that is presented to Council.

DUTLs from a number of other Schools raised similar concerns regarding local issues and issues with flexibility. The Senior Lecturer/Dean of Undergraduate Studies assured members that Schools would be consulted and local arrangements would be accommodated where possible, but he noted that there would inevitably be situations where local issues could not be resolved. To try to solve all issues that arise at a local level would eliminate the flexibility from the overall timetabling structure. He advised that timetabling for 2019/20 would begin by January 2019 which would allow significantly more time than in other years.

It was agreed that the concerns of individual Schools would be outlined in the minutes of the meeting that would be circulated to Council. USC accepted the undertakings to continue to review outstanding issues and to work closely with Schools to resolve these. USC approved that the proposed timetabling structure be recommended to Council.

Decision
USC/18-19/027.1 USC approved and recommended to the University Council the proposed timetabling structure, and requested that the issues raised at the meeting are communicated to the Council.

Action
USC/18-19/027.2 The Senior Lecturer/Dean of Undergraduate Studies undertook to work closely with Schools to review outstanding issues with the proposed timetabling structure.

USC/18-19/028   Any other business
Members raised concerns with the Semester 1 assessment timetable that had been circulated by AR. The meeting ran out of time to hold a discussion on the issue.

USC/18-19/029   Items for Noting
There were no items for noting.