



Trinity College Dublin

Coláiste na Tríonóide, Baile Átha Cliath

The University of Dublin

A meeting of the Undergraduate Studies Committee was held 25th March 2025 at 2.00 pm in the Boardroom, Trinity Business School.

Present: Professor Vincent Wade, Senior Lecturer Dean of Undergraduate Studies (*Chair*)

Professor Stephen Smith, Senior Tutor

Professor Mark Sweetman, Associate Dean of Undergraduate Common Architecture (ADUCA)

Professor Fraser Mitchell, Associate Dean of Undergraduate Science Education (ADUSE)

Professor Julie Bates, School of English

Professor Goetz Botterweck, School of Computer Science and Statistics

Professor Tylor Brand, School of Languages, Literatures and Cultural Studies

Professor Anna Chahoud, School of Histories and Humanities

Professor Richard Deane, School of Medicine

Professor Paul Dockree, School of Psychology

Professor Miranda Fay Thomas, School of Creative Arts

Professor Alexandra Grieser, School of Religion, Theology, and Peace Studies

Professor Dino Hadzic, School of Social Sciences and Philosophy

Professor Sarah Hamill, School of Law Professor Kevin Kelly, School of Engineering

Professor Damian Murchan, School of Education

Professor Juan Pablo Labrador, School of Genetics and Microbiology

Professor Yvonne Lynch, School of Linguistic, Speech and Communication Sciences

Professor Jan Manschot, School of Mathematics

Professor Cormac McGuinness, School of Physics

Professor Martha O'Hagan Luff, Trinity Business School

Professor Ana Perez-Luno, Academic Director of Portal

Dr Pauline Rooney, Head of Academic Practice

Ms Breda Walls, Director of Student Services

Mr Eoghan Gilroy, Education Officer, Students' Union

Mr Conchúr O Cathasaigh, Student Representative

Apologies: Ms Patricia Callaghan, Academic Secretary

Professor Phillip Curry, School of Social Work and Social Policy

Professor Deirdre D'Arcy, School of Pharmacy and Pharmaceutical Science

Professor Jean Fletcher, School of Biochemistry and Immunology

Professor Valeria Nicolosi, School of Chemistry

Professor Richard Porter, Dean of Students

Professor Heather Reilly, School of Dental Science

Professor Matthew Saunders, School of Natural Sciences

In attendance: Ms Joanna Kozielc, Academic Affairs, Ms Siobhán Dunne, Library Representative Ms Rima Fitzpatrick, Assistant Academic Secretary: Academic Affairs, Dr. John Gallagher Fellow in Educational Sustainability Development (to item USC/24-25/056); Professor Mark Hennessy Programme Director Dual Degree Columbia (to item USC/24-25/057); Marie Mc Peak, Undergraduate Common Architecture Office Manager (to item USC/24-25/057); Dr. Liz Donnellan Development Policy Officer (to item USC/24-25/059) ,Mr. Ronan Hodson, Head of Admissions (to item USC/24-25/060); Jenny Barber, Deputy Head of Admissions ((to item USC/24-25/060).

USC/24-25/052 Minutes of the meeting of 25th February 2025

The minutes of the meeting of 25th February were approved in principle subject correcting typo in **USC/24-25/045 action/decision** adding: “Year 1” to proposed changes to the Medicine curriculum.

USC/24-25/053 Matters arising

- i. **USC/24-25/044** The proposal for a Dual Degree Programme in Social Policy and Human Rights with the University of Sydney was approved by Council.
- ii. **USC/24-25/045** proposed changes to the Medicine curriculum for Year 1 were approved by Council.
- iii. **USC/24-25/048** (i) the revised Assessment and Academic Progression Policy approved by Council.

USC/24-25/054 Senior Lecturer’s Updates

The Senior Lecturer and Dean of Undergraduate Studies gave a short presentation to USC on the following matters:

- i. Blackboard Ultra: website is live and easy to navigate. Dashboards displaying staff participation in training are available to Heads of Schools and key staff. However, overall participation is currently low at 20%, and there is a need to encourage Schools to engage more with essential training before June. Tom Hayes from IT Services can be contacted if any guidance is needed.
- ii. Academic Year Structure 2026/27: Trinity Week and Assessment week will need to be swapped in 2026/27. This is to ensure that Trinity Week is in Trinity term as required by College Statutes. There are no changes to assessment dates for 2026/27.

USC/24-25/055 Review of agreement School of Medicine (SoM)with Brunei

Professor Richard Deane, DUTL for School of Medicine spoke to the memorandum dated 19th March. He sought USC approval for the curriculum mapping for Undergraduate Medicine programme between Trinity and Universiti Brunei Darussalam (UBD), including the entry years of 2025/2026 and 2026/2027.

Action/Decision:

USC/24-25/055 USC approved the curriculum mapping between School of Medicine, Trinity College Dublin and Universiti Brunei Darussalam until 2026-27 subject to addressing minor gaps in documentation before submitting to Council in April.

USC/24-25/056 Embedding Education for Sustainable Development**USC/24-25/056 Embedding Education for Sustainable Development proposal**

Dr Pauline Rooney (ESD Programme Director) and Professor John Gallagher (ESD Fellow) spoke to the memorandum, dated 14 March which proposed that all new undergraduate course proposals include at least one programme learning outcome (PLO)which speaks to ESD themes and/or competencies. A brief discussion followed where the main points of concern were addressed as follows:

- Exemptions from this requirement are possible where explanation and justification are provided.
- Where PLOs address ESD competencies (e.g. critical thinking), competency development should ideally take place within the context of ESD themes.
- Schools will have flexibility and autonomy in determining how they embed ESD themes and competency development within their programmes. The ESD Team and Centre for Academic Practice will work with Schools to help staff consider how they might do this via pedagogical approaches, teaching strategies and assessment methods.

Action/Decision:

USC/24-25/056 USC approved “Embedding Education for Sustainable Development” proposal and recommended it to Council.

USC/24-25/057 Dual Degree Calculations Columbia

A memorandum from Dual Degree Programme Director, Professor Mark Hennessey, was

circulated, dated 14th March. Professor Hennessy presented proposal to USC for approval of revised degree calculation based on 20% Senior Fresh Marks and 80% of marks from combination of Junior & Senior Sophister marks. This is in lieu of additional 30 Trinity ECTS dropped as a requirement. This would apply for students entering the programme from 2026/27. The proposal was approved by USC.

Action/Decision:

USC/24-25/057 USC approved revised Dual Degree Calculations Columbia for students entering from 2026/27 and recommended to Council.

USC/24-25/058 Proposed changes to Physical Sciences (TR063) entry requirements

Professor Cormac McGuinness, DUTL School of Physics presented the memorandum dated 14th March on revising entry requirements for Physical Sciences (TR063) including raising mathematics requirement from H6/O4 to H3 and revised subject entry requirements for students entering from 2027/28 academic year. USC discussed School's analysis that supported the request. The Senior lecturer and Dean of Undergraduate Studies noted that due to grade inflation current H3 could become H4 when grade inflation is eliminated over time.

Action/Decision:

USC/24-25/058 USC approved proposed changes to Physical Sciences (TR063) entry requirements from 2027/28 and recommended for Council.

USC/24-25/059 Academic Policies

i. Revisions to the Return of Coursework Policy

Dr. Donnellan presented a memorandum dated 19 March 2025, outlining the consultation process and revisions to the policy based on feedback received. Regarding section 7.8 and the associated footnote, a member suggested that it was important to clarify that the recheck/remark regulation can only be applied after the Court of Examiners in semester 2 has convened.

Action/Decision:

USC/24-25/059 (i) USC approved the revisions to the Return of Coursework Policy subject to the inclusion of the suggested clarification and recommended it to Council.

ii. Policy on Late Submission of Assessments (Extensions Policy)

Dr. Donnellan presented a memorandum dated 19 March 2025, circulated with the meeting papers, which outlined the consultation process undertaken regarding the proposed revisions to the policy and the changes incorporated to reflect the feedback received. Following request from a member to include a footnote after each reference to the module coordinator, stating "or whomever the person responsible for extensions is," the Committee approved the Policy.

Action/Decision:

USC/24-25/059 (ii) USC approved the Policy on Late Submission of Assessments (Extensions Policy) subject to responding to minor clarification and recommended to Council.

iii. Revisions to the VLE policy

Dr. Donnellan presented a memorandum dated 19 March 2025, which outlined the proposed changes to the VLE Policy based on an initial review of the document. USC had a detailed discussion and proposed some feedback and changes.

Action/Decision:

USC/24-25/059 (iii) Education Policy Developer to take feedback on board and bring a revised Policy back to the Committee for consideration and approval.

USC/24-25/060 Admission Policies

i. Revisions to the Admission and Transfer Policy

Mr Hodson spoke to a memorandum, dated 19 March 2025, circulated with the papers which outlined the key updates to the policy following a consultation process. A short

discussion took place during which the following points were made, and actions emerged:

- Regarding point 4.4 -it was requested to include a change to it as all collaborative programmes still must comply with the Lisbon Recognition Convention.
- the Senior Lecturer and Dean of Undergraduate Studies clarified that the changes in relation to transfer means that transfer would be treated the same as advanced entry.
- A query was raised on how feedback is provided to unsuccessful applicants, as required by Trust Ed. At the undergraduate level, Admissions provides feedback, while at the postgraduate level, applicants are directed to the course coordinator.
- The position on RPL for internal transfers was discussed. It was noted that this should be covered in the RPL Policy, but to be clarified. The policy must align with existing regulations, which state that students who fail a module and transfer to another course cannot carry the failed module but must retake it as part of the new course.

Action/Decision:

USC/24-25/60 (i) USC approved the revisions to the Admission and Transfer Policy subject to addressing comments and recommended to Council.

ii. Revisions to the Recognition of Foreign Qualifications Policy

Mr. Hodson spoke to a memorandum, dated 19 March 2025, circulated with the papers which outlined the consultation process that had taken place regarding the proposed revisions to the policy and the changes that had been incorporated to reflect feedback received. There were no additional comments, and the meeting approved the Policy.

Action/Decision:

USC/24-25/60 (ii) USC approved the revisions to the Recognition of Foreign Qualifications Policy and recommended it to Council.

iii. Revisions to the English Language Policy

Mr. Hodson spoke to a memorandum, dated 19 March 2025, circulated with the papers which outlined the key updates to the policy following a consultation process. In response to the query about point 7.2.7 and moving English criteria to a higher band, Mr. Hodson confirmed it requires case-by-case revision with USC approval. For students who are required to re-take their English Language assessment, it was suggested to move the exam ideally to the end of the first semester, with further direction on this from the Senior Lecturer and Dean of Undergraduate Studies to follow.

Action/Decision:

USC/24-25/60 (iii) USC approved the revisions to the English Language Policy subject to the Senior Lecturer and Dean of Undergraduate Studies coming back re whether the retest students at the end of 1st Semester and recommended it to Council.

USC/24-25/061 Admissions Calendar Regulations and associated processes

i. Updates to the Admissions Section of the Calendar Part II

Mr. Hodson spoke to a memorandum which set out proposed Calendar changes for consideration by the USC, with a view to implementing in the upcoming Calendar revision for 2025-26. In response to member queries, he confirmed that language exemptions would be included, along with clarification regarding students who failed or took OBA.

Action/Decision:

USC/24-25/061(i) USC approved the updates to the Admissions Sections of the Calendar Part II which will be submitted as part of the overall Calendar submission to Council in the next USC.

ii. Updates to the language waiver regulations

Mr. Hodson spoke to a memorandum about the proposal to modern language exemptions that would bring Trinity into line with other HEIs in the country.

Action/Decision:

USC/24-25/061(ii) USC approved the updates to the language waiver regulations and recommended for Council.

iii. Updates to the Admissions Appeals Application Form

Mr. Hodson presented a memorandum regarding the admission appeal process. A member suggested specifying a response time to applicants, which was agreed to be within 20 days.

Action/Decision:

USC/24-25/061(iii) USC noted the updates to the Admissions Appeals Application Form.

USC/24-25/062 Any Other Business

None

USC/24-25/063 Minutes (Section B)

USC noted and approved the following minutes:

- 1. Undergraduate Common Architecture Governance Committee**
Minutes of the meeting of 11th February

USC/24-25/064 Section C (For information)

USC noted and approved the following item:

- 1. Guidance on Operational Procedures for Examiners during the Examination Period**