



A meeting of the Undergraduate Studies Committee was held on 27 January 2026 at 2.00 pm in the Boardroom, Trinity Business School.

Present: Professor Vincent Wade, Senior Lecturer & Dean of Undergraduate Studies (*Chair*)
Ms Patricia Maguire, Academic Secretary
Professor Mark Sweetnam, Associate Dean of Undergraduate Common Architecture (ADUCA)
Professor Andrew Jackson, Associate Dean of Undergraduate Science Education (ADUSE)
Professor Stephen Smith, Senior Tutor
Professor Martha O'Hagan Luff, Trinity Business School
Professor Damian Murchan, School of Education
Professor Mark Faulkner, School of English
Professor Dan Geary, School of Histories and Humanities
Professor Tylor Brand, School of Languages, Literatures and Cultural Studies
Professor Brian Barry, School of Law
Professor Yvonne Lynch, School of Linguistic, Speech and Communication Sciences
Professor Alexandra Grieser, School of Religion, Theology, and Peace Studies
Professor Goetz Botterweck, School of Computer Science and Statistics
Professor Jean Fletcher, School of Biochemistry and Immunology
Professor John Southern, School of Chemistry
Professor John Gallagher, School of Engineering
Professor Cormac McGuinness, School of Physics
Professor Jan Manschot, School of Mathematics
Professor Robin Edwards, School of Natural Sciences
Professor Jan de Vries, School of Nursing and Midwifery
Professor Judith Meehan, School of Medicine
Professor Deirdre D'Arcy, School of Pharmacy and Pharmaceutical Science
Mr. Buster Whaley, Education Officer, Students' Union
Ms. Eve Martin, STEM Faculty Convenor for TCDSU/AMLCT
Ms Siobhán Dunne, Trinity Library
Ms Breda Walls, Student Services

Apologies: Professor Paul Dockree, School of Psychology; Professor Paul Scanlon, School of Social Sciences and Philosophy; Professor Julie Byrne, School of Social Work and Social Policy; Professor Heather Reilly, School of Dental Science; Professor Richard Porter, Dean of Students; Professor Susan Pike, Academic Director of Portal; Dr. Pauline Rooney, Head of Academic Practice

In attendance: Ms. Rima Fitzpatrick, Assistant Academic Secretary: Academic Affairs; Dr. Solange Daini, Academic Affairs; Ms. Jennifer Pepper and Ms. Karen Bebbington for item USC/25-26/039; Prof. Monica Gale for item USC/25-26/040; Dr. Liz Donnellan, Academic Affairs for item USC/25-26/042 and USC/25-26/043.

The Senior Lecturer & Dean of Undergraduate Studies welcomed all members to the meeting.

USC/25-26/033 Minutes of the meeting of 18th November 2025

The Committee approved the minutes of the meeting of 18 November 2025.

USC/25-26/034 Matters arising

There were no matters arising.

USC/25-26/035 Senior lecturer updates

The Senior Lecturer & Dean of Undergraduate Studies updated the committee on the progress of the working group on recording of lectures, the working group on modular repeats, key aspects of the Student Partnership Agreement (item C4) and final figures regarding the implemented migration to Blackboard Ultra.

USC/25-26/036 USC workplan progress report

Presentation of this item was deferred.

USC/25-26/037 Trinity Electives Annual Report 2024/25

The Associate Dean of Undergraduate Common Architecture, as Chair of the Trinity Electives Sub-Committee, presented the Annual Report on Trinity Electives, noting continued strong student engagement and feedback on these modules, and increased participation from Health Sciences following Pharmacy's adoption of electives. Portfolio developments for 2025/26 (including suspensions/cessations and new proposals) and ongoing operational issues were noted.

The School of Nursing and Midwifery advised that due to placement requirements students in the School cannot take Trinity Electives and instead access a separate suite of School-based electives requiring agreements with healthcare providers; committee members also queried whether capacities should be reduced where electives consistently underrecruit, to support more effective resource planning. The Committee members commended the Trinity Elective sub-Committee for its work.

Decision:

USC/25-26/037: The Committee approved the Trinity Electives Annual Report 2024/25.

USC/25-26/038 Academic Registry Annual Report 2024/25

The Director and Deputy Director of Academic Registry presented the Academic Registry Annual Report 2024/25, which highlighted sustained demand for Registry services, growth in the registered student population, and the successful delivery of fully on campus examinations and graduations. Members noted continued systems and service improvements during the year, including a new enquiry/case management system, further enhancements to student records systems, progress on digitising Garda Vetting, and expanded communications activity. The Committee also noted trends across admissions and the student body, positive audit outcomes in student finance, a slight reduction in student case volumes, and continued increases in exam activity, including demand for accommodations. The Committee acknowledged the efforts to maintain a consistent student experience across process changes.

Decision:

USC/25-26/038: The Committee noted the Academic Registry Annual Report 2024/25.

USC/25-26/039 Changes to Columbia Majors for Dual Degree Programme

Prof. Gale, Department of Classics, presented proposed changes at Columbia University affecting the Dual Degree Programme in Classics, Ancient History and Archaeology (CLAHA). Columbia will discontinue the Ancient Studies and Classical Studies majors and replace them with a revised Classics major comprising five tracks (Classical Languages and Literatures, Greek, Latin, Classical and Ancient Civilizations, and Classical Reception and the Classical Tradition). It was confirmed that there will be no changes to Trinity awards, pathways, or programme content, and that Columbia module choices will continue to be reviewed by the Trinity Academic Advisor to ensure appropriate disciplinary coverage. The revisions relate solely to the Trinity–Columbia programme interface (Fresh years at Trinity; Sophister years at Columbia) and are expected to modestly expand student options while maintaining pathway requirements. While retrospective approval is unusual, the Committee approved the updated degree mapping for implementation from 2025/26, including for students already enrolled.

Decision:
XX USC/25-26/039: The Committee approved the Changes to Columbia Majors for Dual Degree Programme for implementation from 2025/26, including for students already in the programme.

USC/25-26/040 Trinity Elective review Working Group interim report

The Associate Dean of Undergraduate Common Architecture and Chair of the Trinity Electives Review Working Group presented on interim report from the Trinity Elective review Working Group.

Members noted progress on the review across assessment, teaching and learning/workload, governance/administration and benchmarking, including analysis of existing data and the coordinator survey now in circulation. The Working Group reaffirmed that electives should not be assessed by examinations, highlighted the need for TE-specific guidance on generative AI in assessment, and noted potential enhancements to results reporting, and to moderation oversight. The Committee noted that, where recommendations require policy or structural change, these should be brought forward in sufficient time to enable implementation in the preceding year. Members noted that the Working Group will seek information from elective coordinators to understand how Trinity Elective grade profiles align with School/module results.

Decision:
USC/25-26/040i: The Committee noted the Trinity Elective review Working Group interim report.

Action:
USC/25-26/040ii: The Working Group will gather comparator information from elective coordinators on how Trinity Elective grade profiles align with School/module results.

USC/25-26/041 Working Group Reviewing of admission section of calendar part II Terms of Reference

The Senior Lecturer and Dean of Undergraduate Studies presented on the proposal to establish a Working Group to review undergraduate admission regulations and associated processes as set out in Calendar Part II.

Decision:
USC/25-26/041: The Committee approved the Terms of Reference for a Working Group to review admission section of calendar part II.

USC/25-26/042 Revised Appeals Policy

Dr. Liz Donnellan presented the latest minor amendments in relation to the revised Appeals policy. Members noted the introduction of clearer guidance at postgraduate level, specifying that a ten-working-day window will normally apply between publication of results and submission of appeals, and revised wording to confirm that late appeals will only be considered at the discretion of the relevant Chair or decision-maker.

Decision:
USC/25-26/042: The Committee approved the revised Appeals Policy.

USC/25-26/043 Procedure for Court of First Appeals (revised)

Dr. Liz Donnellan presented on further refinements to the Procedures for the Conduct of Courts of First Appeal, including clearer distinction between members of the Court and those attending to provide supporting information, revised guidance on managing conflicts of interest (with provision for members to recuse themselves), clarification of the number and role of School/Discipline representatives, and confirmation that the student representative will normally be a postgraduate student to avoid potential conflicts. The Committee notes additional changes that clarify the role of Course Coordinators or School representatives in

providing background information and confirm that the Chair has discretion to proceed in cases where a student is unable to attend.

Decision:

USC/25-26/043i: The Committee approved the revised Procedure for Court of First Appeals.

Action:

USC/25-26/043ii: Academic policy developer will circulate an email to the USC members with changes reflecting Committee's discussion.

USC/25-26/044 Any Other Business

There was no any other business.

USC/25-26/045 Minutes (Section B)

The Committee noted and approved the following items:

- i. MIE Associated College Degrees Committee - minutes of the meeting of 1 December 2025, with a note to amend item USC/25-26/045i. from: 'TESC/25-26/009 refers repeatedly to 'Travel and the English Language' to 'TESC/25-26/009 refers repeatedly to 'Travel and the English Literature'.
- ii. Trinity Electives Sub-Committee - minutes of the meeting of 24 November 2025.
- iii. Undergraduate Common Architecture Governance Committee - minutes of the meeting of 21 October 2025.

USC/25-26/046 For Information (Section C)

The Committee noted and approved the following items:

- i. Undergraduate Common Architecture Approval of two New Trinity Elective proposals for 2025/26 (*The Art of Climate Change* and *Cultivating Creative Confidence: The Journey of an Idea*).
- ii. Undergraduate Common Architecture Annual Report 2024/25.
- iii. 2026-27 New Minor Subject Principles and Offering.
- iv. Student Partnership Agreement 2025/26.