



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

2019-2020

# Executive Summary

Disability Service Annual Report

Disability Service  
TRINITY COLLEGE DUBLIN

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## Executive Summary

This is an executive summary of the Disability Service Annual Report covering the academic year 2019-2020. Below is a table summarising the Key Performance Indicators developed by the Disability Service (DS) to capture the breadth of work carried out by the service.

KPI Indicator	Year 2019-2020
Number of new UG entrants with disabilities entering with the required points (RP) / DARE <sup>3</sup> / Mature Students (Age 23 – 61)	RP: 48 DARE: 167 Mature: 16 <b>Total: 231</b>
Number of new students with disabilities registering with DS – UG / PG / Foundation	UG: 498 PG: 60 Foundation: 9 <b>Total: 567</b>
Number of International students (non-Irish)	New in 19/20: 91 <b>Total: 183</b>
Number of students with disabilities in College / as a percentage of (total student population)	1,777 9.4 % (18,941)
Number of needs assessments carried out	582
Number of students in receipt of General Disability support	1142
Number of students supported / funded by ESF student disability fund	New in 19/20: 505 <b>Total: 1,451</b>
Number of students receiving exam accommodations	1,526
Number of Assistive Technology assessments	43
Number of Assistive Technology appointments	176
Number of Academic Support appointments	259
Number of students receiving Occupational Therapy supports	172
Number of Occupational Therapy appointments	772
Number of students availing of Professional Placement support	140
Number of students and/or parents supported pre-entry	140

Number of Student Ambassadors engaging annually	43
Number of students whose residential accommodations applications were supported	Semester 1: 34 Semester 2: 41 <b>Total: 75</b>
Number of DLO and departmental meetings	25
Number of students supported by ESW	25
Number of staff with disabilities supported	9
Number of student's referrals to Case Co-Ordinator across Counselling, Disability & Health	106

## Introduction and Service Structure

Trinity College Dublin Disability Service (DS), addresses the needs of students with disabilities in Trinity by providing advice, support, and academic accommodations in partnership with service users and academic departments/schools and service areas.

The DS has two principle functions:

- To provide supports and services to Trinity’s disabled community (which comprises of students, staff, and indirectly, visitors) and to recommend policy and procedural changes as required.
- To ensure Trinity is compliant with the Disability Act 2005 and other relevant legislation and codes of practice.

The DS Strategic Plan (2015-2020), aims to develop clear and effective support systems at all stages of the student journey. It supports disabled students by continuing to move from a transactional model of provision, where students are passive recipients of supports, to a transformational model of resource usage, where students take an active part in planning their educational journey. This model engages students across all three phases of their Higher Education journey:

- Pre-entry, admission, and the first-year experience;
- Building and maintaining a Trinity career;
- Transitioning to employment and developing work-related skills and experiences.

One of the key elements of this plan is to deliver on Trinity’s strategic objective to “encompass an ever more diverse student community, providing a distinctive education based on academic excellence and a transformative student experience”, as well as, the College’s declared objective to increase the percentage of under-represented groups enrolled on undergraduate courses to 25% by 2019.

This strategic approach enhances the student experience by engaging prospective students, current students, and staff, with the intention of improving practice and implementing change across the whole institution. It is an evidence-based approach, collecting data and

evaluating supports on an ongoing basis to improve the student journey. Each phase is aligned to:

- The Strategic Objectives of Trinity College Dublin, the University of Dublin;
- National targets for students with disabilities set by the Higher Education Authority (HEA) in Ireland;
- Recommendations from the OECD (2011) report on students with disabilities in higher education.

Since its inception in June 2000, the DS has undergone enormous growth and development. Students registered with the service have increased from 64 in 2000-01 to 1,777 in 2019-20. During this time a comprehensive range of [student supports](#) have been developed to enable students with disabilities pursue degree programmes across each of the University's faculties.

What follows are the annual highlights and key take-away points pertaining to each of the Disability Service's processes from Pre-entry and first year experience (DS1) through Disability Service funding (DS5) to Graduate attributes and employability skills (DS10).

## DS1 - Pre-entry and first year experience

DS Code	DS Process	KPI Indicator	Year 2019-2020
DS1	Pre-Entry to First Year Experience Activities	Number of new UG entrants with disabilities entering with the required points (RP) / DARE <sup>3</sup>	RP: 48 DARE: 167 <b>Total: 215</b>
DS1	Pre-Entry to First Year Experience Activities	Number of students/parents supported pre-entry	140

### DS1 Highlights

- The annual Disability Service pre-orientation event took place on Friday 30<sup>th</sup> August 2019 in the Trinity Business School and was attended by 166 students and 139 parents/guardians. The event was co-facilitated by the DS team and 9 Student Ambassadors and was delivered with the support of TCDSU and S2S.
- The Disability Service orientation supports included a number of specialised programmes for new entrants with disabilities. The 'Getting Help to Succeed in College' workshop series was attended by 36 students. A series of sensory library tours and small-group lab induction sessions were delivered in collaboration with the library and the School of Chemistry.
- Cycle 3 of the 1916 Leaders and Learners Bursary was administered in 2019-20 and 3 students with disabilities were awarded this scholarship.
- Disability Service staff and student Ambassadors supported 4 pre-entry events during the academic year: the TCD Open Day, the Better Options College Fair, the DARE/HEAR applicant information day and the MSO Information Morning.
- The Trinity Ability Co-op was established in May 2020 as a collaborative initiative between students, staff and other stakeholders working towards inclusion in Trinity. The Co-op's activities to date include the following projects and media campaigns: Pride and Disability, The Anxiety Project, the Invisibles of Trinity and Student's Experiences of Online Learning and Exams.

### DS1 Issues Emerging

- Availability of an appropriate venue for the annual pre-orientation event is an ongoing concern due to large numbers seeking to attend and the broad accessibility requirements of attendees.
- A review of the pre-entry and orientation communications tools and methods is required as student feedback indicates that students do not feel well-informed of the supports available.
- There is a need to develop pre-entry and orientation activities aimed at engaging with postgraduate students and raising awareness of the supports and resources available.

### DS2 - Disability Service Needs Assessment

#### DS2 – Disability Service Registration and Needs Assessment

DS Code	DS Process	KPI Indicator	Year 2019-2020
DS2	Trinity Admission and Disability Service Registration	Number of new students with disabilities registering with DS – UG/PG/Foundation	UG: 498 PG: 60 Foundation: 9 <b>Total: 567</b>
DS2	Trinity Admission and Disability Service Registration	Number of students with disabilities in College / as a percentage of (total student population)	1,777 9.4 % (18,941)
DS2	Disability Needs Assessment	Number of needs assessments Incoming students Continuing students	582 564 18

The DS2 process includes a detailed one-to-one [Needs Assessment](#), that involves matching specific student needs to a range of individual [supports](#). The DS2 process often culminates in a disclosure to schools and departments through a [Learning Educational Needs Summary \(LENS\)](#).



- There were 582 needs assessments carried out in 2019-20 with 564 being new registrants seeking supports.
- All LENS reports were disseminated via the student portal (my.tcd.ie) and communicated to the course/school via SITS.

### **Group registration and themed information sessions**

To help students meet examination deadlines set for the semester 1 examination period and due to the volume of applicants seeking support in September we offered students group registration sessions to support them in applying for general disability supports. These supports included examination accommodations, special borrowing privileges in the Library and access to assistive technology.

DS Code	DS Process	KPI Indicator	Year 2019-2020
DS2	General Disability support	Number of students in receipt of General Disability support	1,142 (A)

- 9 Disability support sessions ran from September 2019 to January 2020. 36 students attended.
- From January to May 2020, 15 students were met for one-to-one General Disability support meetings.

### **DS2 Needs Assessment Issues Emerging**

- Examination deadlines are causing significant pressure on students and services and lead to an inferior support experience at the beginning of the students' journey in Trinity. Due to exams going online and will remain so in AY 20-21 a request has been made to review these deadlines and have a greater length of time to ensure experience with DS is meaningful.
- General Disability Support route will cease in the next academic year and all students will be met in person or online to ensure they fully are aware of the suite of supports available to them.

## DS2 – Examination Accommodations

DS Code	DS Process	KPI Indicator	Year 2019-2020
DS2	Exam Accommodations	Number of students receiving exam accommodations	1,526

### Issues Emerging

In Semester 1, 2019/20 the deadline for arranging exam accommodations (September 27<sup>th</sup> 2019) presented students and staff with the challenge of applying to the Disability Service and completing 360 Needs Assessments. An additional 80 students applied to the Disability Service after the deadline in Semester 1. The existence of such early deadlines in each Semester needs to be reviewed as it is inevitably too early for many students and is open to legal challenge. In Semester 2, the sudden changes due to Covid-19 resulted in the cancelling of all shared and College based exam venues. March and April 2020 saw a period of uncertainty around how examinations and assessments would proceed. For the staff in the Disability Service, there was a pressing need to clarify exam details and exam accommodations. The move to take-home exams, open-book and exams of extended durations presented a new set of challenges for students and staff. There was an increase in stress and disrupted home study for some students, while others were able to benefit from having more time and control of their study spaces. While many standard exam accommodations were not needed, such as the use of College based computer labs or specific venue types, there was added complexity due to the absence of invigilation, the risk of increased plagiarism, and some schools and courses specifying a maximum word count. Other issues that are not usually significant in formal examination sessions suddenly took on more importance, such as citations, submission formats and no detriment. In both Semesters, students with disabilities continued to be scheduled two exams in the same day despite their LENS reports stating that this should be avoided. Appeals and Non-Standard Reasonable Accommodation requests needed to be made to seek alternatives. These are not always granted, and students are then put under pressure to either sit two exams on the same day or defer.

## DS2 – Professional placement planning

DS Code	DS Process	KPI Indicator	Year 2019-2020
DS2	Professional Placement Supports	Number of students availing of Professional Placement support Number of students with disabilities on Professional Courses	140 431 (24%)

### Issues Emerging

The number of students with disabilities on professional courses increased marginally in 2019/20 (up 16 from 415 in 2018/19). In December 2019 Disability Service staff met Midwifery practice tutors to explain the process of the provision of reasonable accommodations for students on professional courses and to discuss the implications of GDPR requirements on the dissemination of PLENS to placement supervising staff.

In Semester 2, as part of the Disability Service's School Communication process, staff met allocation staff on 14 Professional Courses in Trinity to discuss access to PLENS on SITS, GDPR and PLENS distribution. While most courses are circulating PLENS reports via SITS or email, other courses are not or continue to ask students to send their own PLENS reports to their placements.

The importance of clear protocols for data sharing continues to be an essential discussion point among staff on professional courses. The Data Sharing Protocols address many of these concerns; the need for understanding about the explicit purpose for data being shared, about what supports are reasonable while on placement and who the data is being shared with.

## DS2 – Erasmus Supports

### Issues Emerging

For outgoing students there is a process of supports co-ordinated between the Disability Service and Academic Registry. This runs in parallel with the application phase of Erasmus places. Additional funding for students with disabilities is available through Erasmus+ (administered in Ireland by the HEA). A key issue for outgoing students with disabilities is that there is often a lack of insight on accessibility and supports available in host universities.

Incoming students with disabilities, can generally avail of the same supports available to all students while in Trinity. If needed, they can apply for additional funding through their home university. A key issue for visiting students is that they can miss out on supports and information as there is less time to prepare and adjust. This is especially true for students who start their visit in January.

In Semester 2 2019-20, Erasmus plans for students were put on hold due to the outbreak of COVID-19. The Disability Service proceeded to engage with Erasmus Co-ordinators and the Vice Provost for Equality, Diversity and Inclusion through two meetings in May 2020. One outcome from these meetings was the need to identify accessible universities across Trinity's range of partner universities.

## DS2 – Residential Accommodation

DS Code	DS Process	KPI Indicator	Year 2018-2019
DS2	Trinity Residential Accommodation	Number of students whose residential accommodations applications were supported	Semester 1: 34 Semester 2: 41 Total: 75

### Issues Emerging

- The Disability Service supported 34 applicants to Trinity Hall in August 2019 and an additional 5 incoming students with disabilities were given rooms on campus in September 2019.

- As of May 2020, there is no decision on room allocations for September 2020. Of all the applicants completing the Special Consideration Form 63 were registered with the Disability Service and 41 of these were supported in their applications.
- Provisional applications for the 2020-21 academic year opened in March for Trinity Hall with 1,800 applications. In September 2020, due to COVID-19, accommodation on the Trinity campus and at Trinity Halls may be required to operate at reduced capacity, perhaps 50%. Incoming international students will need to self-isolate in student accommodation for a period of 2 weeks.
- A funding application was submitted for the automation of doors in three accommodation houses on the Trinity campus and for one apartment at Trinity Hall.
- The criteria for DS applicants remains unsatisfactory. Priority is given to fourth year students unless students complete a special consideration form. In Semester 2 2019-20, the DS proposed that a mandatory question on disability/mental health was asked of all College accommodation applicants.

### DS3 – Assistive Technology

DS Code	DS Process	KPI Indicator	Year 2019-2020
DS3	Assistive Technology	Number of Assistive Technology assessments	43
		Number of Assistive Technology appointments	176
		Number of Academic Support appointments	259

#### DS3 Highlights

- The Assistive Technology (AT) support provides assessment, information, 1:1 training, and short-term technology loans to students registered with the Disability Service. In 2019-20, there were 43 new student referrals for a 1:1 AT appointments. The minor reduction from 2018-19 is due to the promotion of group assistive technology sessions available to students throughout the academic year.

- Students with a mental health diagnosis were the highest users of the service (7), while students with a specific learning difficulty (5) and an AS diagnosis (5) being the second and third highest categories of disabilities referred to the service.
- Of the students met, 18 had a primary need for notetaking supports via the use of technology, and 11 required support for academic support technologies to assist them with reading and error checking of their work.
- 284 students were invited, following a referral via SITS, to attend a group Assistive technology session. Nine sessions ran from mid-September 2019 to the mid-January 2020. All students were emailed every second week to make them aware of the sessions. In total 36 students attended these sessions while those students who did not attend were sent online links to the technologies demoed and their relevant support pages.
- 36 online meetings were held with students during the College closure as a result of COVID-19. These sessions focused on getting student tech-ready for exams, troubleshooting software issues, and introducing new technologies to enable students adjust to the new online academic environment.
- The ATIC area reconfiguration is near completion with additional power sockets, low distraction study pods, increased access to printing, and free scanning tools made available. The area has also been configured for swipe access which is intended to restrict access to the area for students registered with the service only. This is due for full activation upon the return of staff to the University campus in August 2020.

### **DS3 Academic Support**

- The Academic Support Tutor met with 259 students during 2019-20 through the DS2 needs assessment and referral process. The number of academic support appointments increased from 245 in 2018-19 (that included provision from an additional trainee Educational Psychologist) to 259 provided by a single Educational Psychologist in 2019-20. Of these, 70 supports sessions took place remotely via Microsoft Teams during the COVID-19 restrictions.
- Of the 259 meetings, 31% of students were on the Autism Spectrum (ASD), 20% were students with a Mental Health Condition, 12% were students with a Specific Learning Difficulty, and 5% were students with ADHD. The focus in most sessions in semester 1 was primarily concerned with organising study time, developing efficient reading

strategies, enhancing writing skills, and creating a revision timetable. In semester 2, sessions were wholly focused on managing study and revision in a remote environment, understanding different assessment methods, and completing exams online.

- Academic support was provided to students from FAHSS (68), FEMS (46), HS (26), Marino (3), and TAP (1).
- Repeat appointments averaged between 4 and 7 sessions and were requested principally from students with ASD and DCD, furthermore, 20 students with ASD availed of a regular support appointment.
- Four one-hour orientation workshops were provided to incoming students by an Occupational Therapist and the Educational Psychologist, between late September and late October 2019.

### **DS3 Issues Emerging**

- Overlap of content in Academic Support sessions and Assistive Technology sessions would suggest a move towards a more streamlined approach for support provision is needed. Initial discussion on merging Assistive Technology support with the Academic Support route took place at the DS annual review. This will ensure that there is no overlap in resources and that both students and staff are aware of inclusive technologies that can assist in improving their academic ability and course progression. This combined approach will be renamed 'DS3 Inclusive Learning and Technology' or TILT.
- Non-attendance remains an issue, in 2019-20 a total of 144 new referrals for academic support were received and contacted to initiate support, and of these 60 students did not respond to an offer of an appointment.
- With the move of the service to Printing House Square discussions have taken place with the Trinity Ability Co-op on a potential name change for the ATIC area to make the space more student focused and identifiable. The DS is also considering developing a role for students to take ownership and provide supervision in this area, treating it as a student zone.

### **DS4 – Occupational Therapy Supports**

DS Code	DS Process	KPI Indicator	Year 2019-2020
DS4	Occupational Therapy Supports	Number of students receiving Occupational Therapy supports	172
		Number of Occupational Therapy appointments	772

### DS4 Highlights

- Occupational Therapists met with 307 students in 2019-20 through the DS2 Needs Assessment and DS4 Occupational Therapy Processes. The number of DS2/DS4 appointments by OTs has increased from 1021 appointments in 2018-19 to 1114 appointments in 2019-20. During the COVID-19 restrictions, 309 MS Teams and Phone student meetings took place while the OTs also recorded 268 email contacts with student.
- 167 Students engaged with the on-going DS4 process in 2019-20, a decrease from 192 students in 2018-19. However, the number of DS4 meetings increased from 725 in 2018-19 to 772 meetings in 2019-20. This led to an increase in the average number of meetings per student from 2.6 in 2018-19 to 4.2 in 2019-20. This increase is in line with the aim of the OT approach to provide on-going support to students who need it most.
- Of the 772 OT student meetings, 49% were with students with a mental health difficulty, 30% with students on the autistic spectrum, 7% with students with ADHD, 6% with students with DCD, and the remaining appointments were with students with a Significant Ongoing Illness, a Physical/Sensory Disability, or a Specific Learning Difficulty. The focus upon students with a mental health difficulty and those on the autistic spectrum reflects the higher numbers of students disclosing these disabilities within Trinity (above national figures) and the lower rates of retention among these student groups compared to other disability categories and the wider student population.
- During 2019-20, the Occupational Therapists have formed a strong network with other OTs (TCD, TU Dublin, UCD, and the Trinity Centre for People with Intellectual Disabilities), who all use the research-based approach developed within Trinity by Dr. Clodagh Nolan. This network engages in shared resource development, training, journal clubs and peer support over the course of the year. This engagement supports the supervision and



continuous professional development required by CORU, the professional regulatory body for Occupational Therapists in Ireland.

- The three Occupational Therapists within the service have also engaged with targeted activities to enhance the student experience for students with disabilities as follows:  
**Kieran Lewis:** Trinity Sensory Processing Project; Employability and Internship Supports.  
**Clare Malone:** DS Ambassador Programme and the development of the Trinity Ability COOP; ‘Managing TCD with ASD’ group in collaboration with SCS.  
**Aisling Claffey:** Review of the engagement pattern and student journey of students with Development Coordination Disorder in response to low levels of engagement with DS Supports; Production of video resources for students in managing mental health and well-being and engagement in student role during the COVID-19 restrictions, in collaboration with OTs from TU Dublin and UCD.

#### DS4 Issues Emerging

- 45 Students who were referred to the DS4 process did not engage, although 34 of these students did reconnect with the Disability in other ways over the year.
- Student feedback has highlighted on a number of occasions and actions to address this in terms of the communication of the OT Approach both in college overall and to students during the Needs Assessment process need to be developed.

#### DS5 – Disability Service Funding

DS Code	DS Process	KPI Indicator	Year 2019-2020
DS5	Disability Support and Funding Determination	Number of students supported/funded by ESF student with disability fund	1,451

#### DS5 Highlights

Funding for the DS comes from a range of sources with the majority coming from non-core Trinity sources. The DS total budget for 2019-20 was €1,222,026 of which:

- 45% (€547,466) Access allocation, HEA Core grant
- 48% (€587,503) European Social Fund, Fund for Students with Disabilities

- 7% (€87,057) SLA with Marino Institute of Education

### **Access allocation**

The Access allocation from the HEA Core grant, based upon the numbers of non-traditional students attending the University, has since 2013 been divided between the Trinity Access Programme and the Disability Service (60:40). In June 2020 it was agreed that the access allocation would also be shared with the newly established Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Unit headed by the Vice Provost for Equality Diversity and Inclusion, Dr. Clodagh Brook.

Going forward the access allocation will be divided as follows:

- 20% Equality and Diversity Unit
- 32% Disability Service
- 48% Trinity Access Programme

### **DS5 Issues Emerging**

The transition to a new funding model introduced by the HEA for the European Social Fund, Fund for Students with Disabilities resulted in a significant underspend for 2019. Under the new funding model block grants will be issued per calendar year while reporting will continue to capture spends within each academic year. The Resource Allocation Return (RAR) submitted annually in May will determine allocations for the coming year, (for example the 2019-20 RAR will inform the 2021 grant allocation). The DS had to develop new reporting mechanisms in line with this transition in order to satisfy HEA reporting requirements.

The COVID-19 outbreak and the closure of the Trinity campus posed new challenges in delivering supports to students through Educational Support Workers. Providing access to externally sourced supports (ISL interpreters, notetakers and personal assistants) proved difficult at times as students, teaching staff and support staff all adapted to the online learning environment. Some supports, class notetakers and subject specific tuition for example, continued seamlessly as access to material for existing students was never an issue.

## DS6 Case Co-ordinator

DS Code	DS Process	KPI Indicator	Year 2019-2020
DS6	Case Co-ordinator	Number of Students referred to the Case Coordinator from the Disability Service, Health Service & Student Counselling Service	106
DS6	Case Co-ordinator	Number of individual Appointments	301
DS6	Case Co-ordinator	Number of Meetings about a student	188
DS6	Case Co-ordinator	Number of Fitness to Study cases	13
DS6	Case Co-ordinator	Number of Medical Repeat Cases	93

This role continues to evolve each academic year. Trinity College remains the only third level institute in Ireland to have a person working in the role of Case Co-ordinator. However, other third level institutes have started the process of recruiting someone to work in a similar role.

### DS6 Highlights

- 106 student referrals to the Case Co-ordinator from Student Services. This is a decrease from 130 in 2018-19.
- 301 individual appointments. This represents an 83% increase from 164 in 2018-19.
- 188 individual meetings about individual students. This represents a 38% increase from 136 in 2018-19.
- 13 Fitness to Study cases, increased from 10 in 2018-19.
- 93 Medical Repeat Applications. A slight decrease from 95 in 2018-19.
- The Case Co-ordinator has continued to work with College Health and the Counselling Service to manage students with mental health difficulties who are registered, or are eligible to register, with the Disability Service.
- During the COVID-19 pandemic the Case Co-ordinator worked with the Counselling Service to assist in booked briefs and emergencies, as well as, taking on a small caseload of students who are registered with the Disability Service and attending the Counselling Service.

- The role of the Case Co-ordinator was amended to add a more clinical element, assisting with monitoring students' vital signs etc. in College Health.
- The Case Co-ordinator has organised staff educational sessions, sits on the Medical Repeat Group and acts as secretary to the Fitness to Study Advisory Group. The Case Co-ordinator is also sitting on the group developing the new Drug Misuse Policy in College.

### **DS6 Issues Emerging**

- There are an increasing number of Fitness to Study cases which are complex, in particular those that involve international students. Cases are time consuming and can cause a lot of distress for students and College staff.
- COVID-19 has reportedly exacerbated existing mental health conditions, and these may have an impact on our continuing and incoming students.
- The reported increases in domestic abuse as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic may also impact on the mental health of our continuing and incoming students, as well as, the added financial consequences of the pandemic.
- The future of the Case Co-ordinator post and the funding for the post was raised as an issue at an end of year review meeting with Student Services.

### **DS7 Marino Disability Service**

#### **DS7 Highlights**

- In Marino Institute of Education (MIE) 31 students applied for reasonable accommodations in 2019-20.
- MIE's Maestro student information system was upgraded to include an online registration system and needs assessment process similar to that available through my.tcd.ie. All hard copy forms were subsequently removed.
- GDPR and Data Sharing Agreements between MIE and placement sites, and MIE and Trinity DS were agreed.
- PLENS reports provided for all students registered with the DS going on placements.
- A physical access audit was carried out of the MIE campus to comply with Disability Act 2005.

- A joint funding application for strategic initiatives was made to the European Social Fund, Fund for Students with Disabilities to allow for some physical access improvements.
- COVID-19 supports were put in place for all students and Trinity DS shared resources with MIE as this took place.

### DS7 Issues Emerging

- Recognised need for designated Trinity DS resource to be put in place for 2020-21

### DS8 Staff with disabilities

DS Code	DS Process	KPI Indicator	Year 2019-2020
DS8	Staff with disabilities	Number of staff with disabilities needs assessments	3
DS8	Staff with disabilities	Number of staff with disabilities disability support appointments	21

### DS8 Highlights

- The DS continues to provide disability needs assessments to staff with disabilities as per the [Trinity Code of Practice applying to the employment of staff with disabilities](#).
- The Equality Committee, following a presentation by Vivian Rath on the needs of staff with disabilities, set up a Disability sub-committee. Membership will be made up of representatives from the Disability Service, IT Services, Estates and Facilities, Human Resources, the Students' Union, the Graduate Students' Union and others. The Chairperson of this group has yet to be appointed.
- A virtual forum called 'How can Trinity better support research students with disabilities' was set up in April 2020 and supported by DS staff. This group has met twice.
- A virtual cafe was also set up to support fourth level students, post-doctoral researchers and staff with disabilities. As of August 2020, the virtual cafe has met three times and continues to support staff remotely.

## **DS8 Issues Emerging**

The quota for the employment of people with disabilities is being increased to 6% in Ireland in 2020 and at present Trinity is not meeting the existing 3% quota. Work is required to develop supports to increase the employment of people with disabilities. The newly appointed Vice Provost for Equality, Diversity and Inclusion will be approached to discuss opportunities here.

## **DS9 School Communication & KPIs and statistics**

### **DS9 KPIs and Statistics**

- Throughout the 2019-20 academic year the Disability Service produced a weekly report recording registration statistics, interactions with students and staff, appointment data for Assistive Technology, Occupational Therapy, Academic Support and the Case Co-ordinator, as well as, other activities engaged in by the DS team.
- The introduction of the Disability Service's Student Information Desk (SID) in July 2020 will enable the DS to collect KPIs, data and statistics more easily, accurately and efficiently than ever before and allow for a wider range of reporting and a high level of transparency.
- Detailed Disability Service KPIs and statistics are included in Appendix 1 of this report.

### **DS9 Communications**

- During 2019-20 a Social Media calendar was developed to better manage and schedule the DS's social media activity. Each of the DS's social media platforms grew during the year (Facebook +5%, Twitter +11%, Instagram +30%) and with greater student involvement targeted in the year ahead it is hoped that this growth can continue.
- The Disability Service Administrator in collaboration with Dr. Patricia McCarthy developed guidance on Social Media Accessibility at the beginning of 2020:  
<https://www.tcd.ie/disability/teaching-info/TIC/materials/social-media.php>  
An information session on Social Media Accessibility was hosted online in April 2020 and a social media campaign focusing on accessibility will launch in advance of the new academic year.
- A new monthly communication mechanism is currently in development that will better structure the DS's communications with both students and staff members. This monthly

newsletter will provide up-to-date Disability related information, host student created content, and encourage interactivity with the DS.

### **DS9 School communication meetings**

In Semester 2 2019-20 all schools were contacted and invited to meet with the DS to discuss disability issues including: Reasonable Accommodations, the Disability module on SITS, Module Manager, LENS distribution and any other issues particular to individual schools. Meetings were attended by 1 or 2 Disability Service staff members and by key staff in each School (Disability Liaison Officer, Director of Undergraduate Teaching and Learning, the School Administrative Manager and the Head of School). In addition to Schools, meetings were organised with staff members from the following areas: professional courses, the Centre for Deaf Studies, Trinity Access Programme, The Lir and the Trinity Centre for People with Disabilities. In total 27 of 35 schools/departments were met by the Disability Service in 2019-20, including online meetings after March 12th. These meetings are invaluable as they provide the Disability Service with the opportunity to listen, learn and share ideas with schools, and allow the service to work with schools towards the common goal of supporting students.

### **DS9 School Communications Issues Emerging**

The implementation of Module Manager within SITS in October 2019 was intended to reduce the numbers of school staff requiring access to LENS reports. Communications with schools in Semester 2 2019-20 included training on the use of this new functionality, as well as, support and troubleshooting to ensure that school staff were utilising this new function to good effect. During the School meetings in Semester 2 it became apparent that most Schools were unaware of the Module Manager function in SITS and continued to rely on either Academic Registry or the Disability Service to access student LENS information such as exam accommodations. The Disability Service will need to continue to communicate and promote the Module Manager function in SITS.

## DS10 Graduate Attributes and employability skills

### **DS10 Highlights**

- A draft Model of Internship Supports has been devised and shared with the Director of Trinity Careers Service, Orla Bannon.
- Defined contact within Trinity Careers Service – Sarah Jones of Trinity Careers Service has been identified as a defined contact within TCS and Aisling Claffey will be the DS Contact for the academic year 2020-21.

### **DS10 Issues Emerging**

- There are many new internship staff across the Schools within the University and there are only established DS connections to a few of these. A joint approach from TCS and the DS will happen over the summer of 2020 with the aim of re-establishing these connections.
- Students are not identifying support needs for internships or how they should disclose these needs. The DS will build supports into the overall Internship Process as outlined in the College's Placement and Internship Policy.
- Knowledge of organisations, options and resources amongst DS staff. These will be defined in the revised DS10 process and any associated staff training carried out with Disability Service Staff.
- Clarity is needed regarding how internships are working in general within courses and indeed how they will work within the context of further COVID-19 restrictions.

## DS Operational Developments

The Disability Service aims to improve the quality of the service it provides through continuous review and operational development. Working towards its ambition to become the number one choice for disabled students in Ireland, in 2019-20 the Disability Service implemented organisational change in the areas of structure, information systems and processes.

### Structure

In 2019-20 new staff members were hired to fill the following roles: Executive Officer in Finance and Administration (shared role with Trinity Sport) and an Occupational Therapist to



enhance the supports we offer to students particularly focusing on internship, mobility via Erasmus, and professional placements.

#### Systems and Processes

In 2019-20 a new mechanism for reviewing each of the Disability Service processes was devised. Each process lead was tasked with analysing their process and identifying issues and changes that could address problems arising. Process leads presented their proposed changes to the DS team as part of the annual peer review before consulting with the DS Director to sign off on their updated process document.

#### Disability Service Information Systems/SITS Development

The Disability Service launched the SITS/Tribal Accessibility Manager Module (AMM) for the 2018-19 academic year. This module provides a system interface based within the current SITS ([my.tcd.ie](http://my.tcd.ie)) solution and allows Disability Service staff to complete and record students' Needs Assessment requirements (LENS report). In 2019-20 additional functionality went live to allow a LENS report to be made directly available to module owners/coordinators via SITS. This new functionality aims to automate this process and reduce the administrative time required to complete this task.

#### Student Information Desk (SID)

Development work and testing was completed during 2019-20 on the Disability Service instance of the current Trinity-owned Student Information Desk and its Case Management functionality (SID) (used by IT services and Academic Registry). SID which went live in July 2020 and will be fully operational for the start of the 2020-21 academic year will allow the Disability Service to manage and record all student interaction and information that is presently recorded on an in-house database. SID will allow the Disability Service to become GDPR compliant in the way that it holds and manages sensitive student data. The tool will allow for the sharing of student case notes externally if or when required, as well as, providing a diary management solution to enable students to book appointments with Disability Service staff via their student portal ([my.tcd.ie](http://my.tcd.ie)) as required.

## Response to COVID-19

The Disability Service reacted to the COVID-19 enforced closure of college by switching immediately to the provision of a full service remotely. Disability Service staff were available to meet with students via MS Teams, Skype, by phone or via email.

The Director of the DS sat on the group that devised Assessments for the Semester 2 2019-20 examination period. The DS worked closely with the Assessment Group to ensure that students with disabilities were provided with exam accommodations and that exams and assessment modalities were accessible and inclusive.

The DS developed a COVID-19 FAQ webpage that housed online learning and assessment and disability related information for both students and staff alike.

## Service review and planning for move to PHS

During the summer of 2020 the DS embarked upon a review of the service as a whole, the supports provided and the service's identity, image and brand ahead of its planned move to the Printing House Square development in 2021. The review process comprises of 5 stages:

1. Empathy (information gathering): Staff members, students, internal and external stakeholders/customers were asked for feedback on the DS and its operations in its current guise.
2. Define (challenge package): Problem statements were defined based upon the feedback gather in the first stage. These problem statements form the basis for the third stage.
3. Ideation: Ideas and solutions are developed for each of the problem statements.
4. Prototyping: Solutions or products are brought to a prototyping stage for micro-testing.
5. Testing: Products that perform well during micro-testing and brought forward to the Testing stage where customers can provide real-world feedback on these solutions.

## DS Strategic Developments

### Trinity disAbility IDentity project

The Disability Service will be moving to its new state-of-the-art home, Printing House Square, in 2021. As part of this move the DS have embarked upon the 'Trinity disAbility IDentity project'. The aims of this project include:

- Creating a clear and accepted identity for disability support in Trinity.

- Ensuring that students have a say in what the unit will do and how it will function.
- Naming of meeting spaces after famous Trinity students with disabilities.
- Opening spaces to the disability community for out of hours use e.g. Autism social groups, disabled activist meeting spaces.
- Commissioning a Disabled Art Project for the new square.
- Ensuring that spaces remain student-centred.

Over the past year the Disability Service has engaged with students, students with disabilities, the TCD Student's Union, and staff, through presentations, surveys, and focus groups, to decide upon a new name for the service when it transitions to its new home at the Printing House Square development. The new name proposed following this consultation and design process is: **'Trinity disAbility Hub'**.

- This name was chosen as it accurately describes the service being provided yet by capitalizing the 'A' **disAbility**: describes the activity being provided yet focuses on the positive aspect of the term, 'Ability'. It allows individuals to choose where they place the emphasis based on their preference.
- **Hub**: will be based at the centre of this new hive of activity and will become the point on the Trinity campus from which all disability related activity/enterprise will emanate.

**Trinity disAbility Hub @ Printing House Square** will:

- Be a 'hub' that will become known for user led best practice in disability support and resources. Student partnership and mutual learning and the raising of awareness for disability related issues will be key.
- Be a multi-stakeholder engagement dynamic space, a collaborative platform, that will provide an environment that will foster the social inclusion of individuals with disabilities and promote innovation in inclusion, diversity and sustainability.
- Become (supporting approximately 10% of the student population) a hive of activity and creativity, a hub for best practice in disability support, student partnership and disability innovation and the point on the Trinity campus from which all disability related enterprise will emanate.

## Trinity Sensory Project

Trinity has made significant improvements within their campuses for students with regard to accessibility. However, there has been little focus upon the impact of the 'sensory environment' (by this we mean, noise, light, smell and touch) upon the student population and in particular upon students with disabilities. The proposed strategic initiative is an ambitious project to develop an inclusive campus by focusing upon developing specialist supports and resources for students who have sensory processing issues, but also in collaboration with key areas of college to create inclusive physical environments and increased awareness amongst staff of sensory processing. So far, this collaboration has included areas such as the Libraries, Science Labs, Student Service offices, Student Accommodation, as well as, in running events such as Student Society Events, Careers Fairs, and Orientations. The Sensory Project is in line with [The Trinity Strategic Plan, 2020-2025](#), [Trinity College Dublin Disability Service Strategic Plan 2015-2020](#), and [Trinity College Dublin & TCD Students' Union Student Partnership Policy](#), and has the following three key strategic aims:

1. To enable students with sensory processing issues to more fully participate in student life.
2. To develop inclusive venues on the college campus from a sensory perspective.
3. To conduct research into the experiences of college students with sensory processing issues and to underpin developments throughout the project.

The timeline for activities is from September 2020 to December 2021 and involves numerous collaborations across college. Funding has been sought from the European Social Fund, Fund for Students with Disabilities for the development of inclusive sensory spaces within the Libraries, Laboratory spaces and informal student spaces or Zon Mac Leinn within Trinity.

## Trinity Ability Co-op

The Trinity Ability Co-op (<https://www.tcd.ie/disability/abilitycoop/>) is a collaborative initiative between students, staff and other stakeholders. The Co-op provides opportunities for students with disabilities to work together towards inclusion in Trinity. The Co-op is a great platform for developing skills in the areas of communications, teamwork, networking and leadership, and gathering experience that is beneficial for personal and academic development, as well as, future employability and career-readiness.

The Ability Co-Op is student-led, and all projects and activities are proposed and mutually agreed by its members. From media campaigns to creative workshops, students and staff can contribute and work together towards enhancing inclusion in Trinity. Recent projects include:

- Creating a clear and accepted identity for disability support in Trinity College.
- Creating Media content to give students with disabilities a platform to share their voice.
- Opening space to the disability community for out of hours use e.g. Autism social groups, disabled activist meeting spaces.

Engagement with students through the Trinity Ability Co-op and TCD Students' Union reflects the DS's commitment to the Trinity College Dublin & TCD Students' Union Student Partnership Policy. The DS's facilitation of, and collaboration with, the Ability Co-op is driven by the following aims:

- Improving accessibility in Trinity College Dublin for students with disabilities;
- Developing casual student spaces and informal learning spaces to enhance the student experience on campus;
- Providing student learning spaces and student learning resources through the Library services.

#### CHARM-EU

Trinity College Dublin was announced as one of the higher education institutions that will pioneer a "European University" alliance in June 2019. Trinity is one of only two Irish institutions selected for this new EU initiative that will enhance the quality and attractiveness of European higher education and boost cooperation between institutions, their students and staff. CHARM-EU (Challenge-driven, Accessible, Research-based, Mobile, European University) alliance partners include: Eötvös Loránd University (Hungary); the University of Barcelona (Spain); the University of Montpellier (France); and Utrecht University (Netherlands). CHARM-EU's ambitious mission and vision to be a pioneer and model in the European Higher Education Area and beyond offering a plural, inclusive,

flexible, student-centred learning experience. The Director of the Trinity Disability Service was asked by the Vice Provost to lead on the inclusiveness work package. CHARM-EU Work Package 6 (WP6 Inclusiveness) supports that inclusion and diversity sit at the heart of the CHARM-EU culture and design and delivery of the work packages.

#### Zon Mac Leinn

The Director of the Disability Service led on this project for the Dean of Students. Work continued on developing sustainable informal student spaces. This partnership with the TCDSU and TCDGSU led to improvements in a number of spaces both on and off campus.

#### Trinity Inclusive Curriculum Project

The Director of the Disability Service with the Associate Vice Provost for Equality, Diversity and Inclusion developed a proposal to make the Trinity curriculum inclusive. The proposal intends to address diversity and ensure that the curriculum becomes an increasingly inclusive one. It intends bringing students into the process of developing this curriculum, helping to co-create it. The goals of this project are to:

- Create an accessible curriculum for both undergraduates and postgraduates;
- Enable our students to see themselves reflected in the curriculum;
- Enable individual students from diverse backgrounds to fulfil their potential as well as possible;
- Equip students with the skills to contribute positively and work in a diverse, global environment.

Work is ongoing and the Disability Service team and Ability Co-op members will drive disability elements of this exciting project.

#### Strategic Initiatives relating to Disability Services in Higher Education Institutions

Trinity College Dublin submitted a funding proposal to the HEA that focused on strategic projects for the provision of services to students with disabilities. This proposal consisted of four projects:

1. Sensory Processing Project
2. Inclusive Technology Project

3. Global Safety & Security Solution
4. Physical Access Improvements

A summary description of the proposal including expected qualitative and quantitative benefits is given here and in each project appendices, a detailed description is given. All four project proposals align with the strategic development of Trinity Disability Service. The new Trinity Strategic Plan, Objective 1.9: Engage the wider university community in empowering students with disabilities, makes it clear that it is the responsibility of the entire College community to ensure that students with disabilities are empowered and enabled to participate in all aspects of College life. In submitting these project proposals significant college wide engagement took place, strong partnerships were developed, and funding was provided to match the aspirations of each of the project proposals. The total cost of the project is €1,061,917, €482,364 of which was requested from the HEA. Each detailed proposal included a proposed budget, a suggested project plan identifying key milestones, and a timeframe for delivery with completion dates within the 2021 calendar year.

## DS Annual Report Appendix: Disability Service KPIs and Statistics 2019-2020

### Summary of Key Findings

While the below statistics comprehensively map 2019-20's activity against the previous year, some significant figures demand particular focus:

- The number of Trinity Students registered with a disability reached its highest ever total at 1777 students. 552 new registrations between August 2019 and May 2020 resulted in a 9% overall yearly increase in the total number of registrations for 2019-20.
- 41% of new students registering with the Disability Service chose a course within the Faculty of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences. 24% of students engaged in a course within the Faculty of Engineering, Maths and Science whilst another 21% chose Health Sciences courses. Economic and Social Studies was the most popular undergraduate course amongst students with disabilities in 2019-20.
- Students with a Specific Learning Difficulty (374 to 381) and those who were Deaf/Hard of Hearing (34 to 32) were the only disability type to undergo small decreases in numbers from 2018-19 to 2019-20. The number of students with Mental Health Difficulties continues to increase significantly annually, from 361 students in 2017-18, to 396 students in 2018-19, to 471 in 2019-20.
- The number of students eligible for ESF funding has continued to grow annually, increasing from 1,356 in 2018-19 to 1,451 in 2019-20.



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## **Abbreviations**

- DS: Disability Service
- RP: Required Points

## **Disability sub-groups**

- ADD: Attention Deficit Disorder (including ADHD Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder)
- ASD: Autistic Spectrum Disorder
- DCD: Developmental Coordination Disorder (Dyspraxia)
- Mental Health: Mental Health conditions including depression, anxiety, eating disorders, bi-polar disorders and OCD
- Neuro: Neurological disabilities including epilepsy, acquired brain injury, sleep disorders and stroke
- Phys: Physical disabilities including arthritis, cerebral palsy, spinal injuries and long-term injuries
- Sensory: Sensory disabilities including blind and visually impaired, deaf and hard of hearing
- SOI: Significant ongoing illnesses including diabetes, Crohn's disease, cancer, and chronic fatigue
- SpLD: Specific learning difficulties includes dyslexia, dysgraphia and dyscalculia

## Disability Service Key Performance Indicators

The Key Performance Indicators developed by the DS capture the breath of work carried out by the service. Admissions KPIs capture entry numbers and routes; under service delivery we record the number and types of services offered. Individual activities and targets are measured and reflected through annual staff reviews, allowing the DS to measure set activities and targets.

KPI Indicator	Year 2019-2020
Number of new UG entrants with disabilities entering with the required points (RP) / DARE <sup>3</sup> / Mature Students (Age 23 – 61)	RP: 48 DARE: 167 Mature: 16 <b>Total: 231</b>
Number of new students with disabilities registering with DS – UG / PG / Foundation	UG: 498 PG: 60 Foundation: 9 <b>Total: 567</b>
Number of International students (non-Irish)	New in 19/20: 91 <b>Total: 183</b>
Number of students with disabilities in College / as a percentage of (total student population)	1,777 9.4 % (18,941)
Number of needs assessments carried out	582
Number of students in receipt of General Disability support	1142
Number of students supported / funded by ESF student disability fund	New in 19/20: 474 <b>Total: 1,598</b>
Number of students receiving exam accommodations	1,526
Number of Assistive Technology assessments	43
Number of Assistive Technology appointments	176
Number of Academic Support appointments	259
Number of students receiving Occupational Therapy supports	172
Number of Occupational Therapy appointments	772
Number of students availing of Professional Placement support	140

Number of students and/or parents supported pre-entry	140
Number of Student Ambassadors engaging annually	43
Number of students whose residential accommodations applications were supported	Semester 1: 34 Semester 2: 41 <b>Total: 75</b>
Number of DLO and departmental meetings	25
Number of students supported by ESW	25
Number of staff with disabilities supported	9
Number of student's referrals to Case Co-Ordinator across Counselling, Disability & Health	106

### Student journey through Trinity

A key feature of the Disability Service’s strategy is the use of objective measures as part of the evidence base from which the service to students can be evaluated and improved. Keeping track of student registrations, disability types, and changes in the rates of progression, withdrawal, and completion allows the service to adapt to issues that may otherwise go unnoticed. The data in this section is presented to illustrate the main features of the student journey. The number of students registering with the Disability Service has risen significantly since 2001. The graph in **Figure 1** below illustrates steady increases in the years after the Service was established, with almost a doubling of registrations over 7 years from 222 in 2001-02, to 434 in 2007-08. In contrast, the rate of increase accelerated from 2007-08, with the numbers more than doubling in just 4 years to 911 in 2011-12, registrations have continued to increase up to 2019-20.

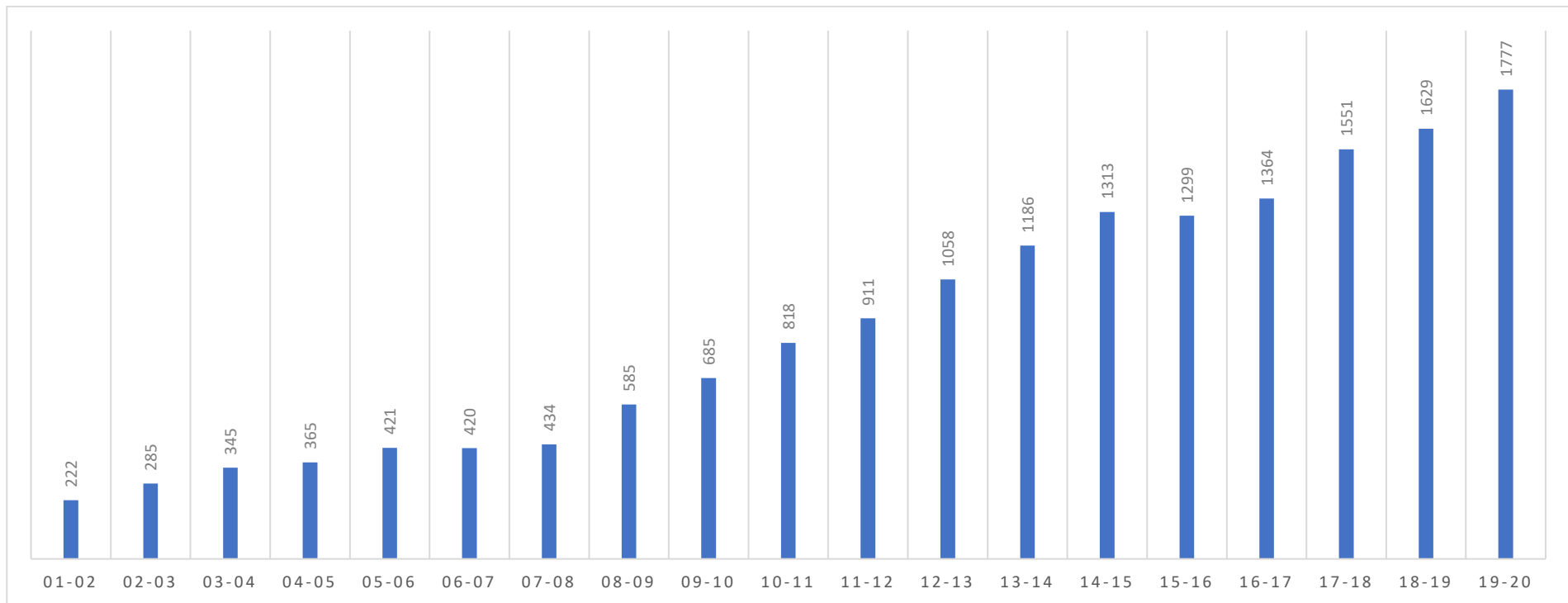


Figure 1: Cumulative Record of Student registrations 2001-02 to 2019-20.

While student numbers in general have increased in Trinity since 2001, the rate of registrations for students with disabilities has also increased proportionately. **Figure 2** below demonstrates proportionate increases approximately in line with the numbers above. In 2001-02, the proportion of TCD students registered with the DS was 1.5%, this had doubled to 3.2% by 2006-07. By 2019-20, the proportion of students registered with DS, as a percentage of the TCD student population, almost tripled to 9.4%. The number of postgraduates with disabilities was first recorded in 2010-11. The trend shows a steady rise in postgraduate students registered up to 2014-15 and an increase in 2017-2018. The proportion of postgraduate students registering with the DS has fallen in the past two years and remains less than the undergraduate level.

Year	10/11	11/12	12/13	13/14	14/15	15/16	16/17	17/18	18/19	19/20
Total Students	818	911	1058	1186	1313	1299	1364	1551	1629	1777
Undergrad Students	731	809	940	993	1063	1088	1185	1327	1474	1613
% of Total Undergrad	6.2%	6.7%	7.7%	8.0%	8.4%	8.6%	9.3%	10%	11.1%	12.0%
Postgrad Students	87	102	118	193	250	211	179	199	155	164
% of Total Postgrad	1.8%	2.0%	2.7%	4.5%	5.6%	4.7%	3.7%	4%	3.0%	3.0%
% of All Students	4.9%	5.4%	6.4%	7.1%	7.7%	7.4%	7.7%	8.6%	8.8%	9.4%

**Figure 2: Number and proportion of students registered 2010-11 to 2019-20**

### Registrations by Disability Type and Faculty

The figure below illustrates the number of registrations by disability type and Faculty during 2019-20. Students with disabilities tend to choose Arts, Humanities and Social Science courses above the other two faculties. However, in recent years there has been a relative rise in the numbers of students with disabilities in Health Sciences.

Disability Category	Total	Arts, Hum. & S. Science	Eng, Maths & Science	Health Sciences	Multi Faculty Multi School includes TSM
ADHD or ADD	147	75	31	20	21
Autistic Spectrum	129	44	61	2	22
Blind / Visual	31	11	9	7	4
Deaf / HoH	32	20	4	5	3
DCD / Dyspraxia	96	40	28	11	17
Intellectual Disability	8	8	0	0	0
Mental Health	471	202	92	92	85
Neurological	82	33	15	17	17
Physical Disability	112	61	12	26	13
Significant Ongoing Illness	281	103	60	86	32
Speech Language & Communication Disorders	14	4	5	4	1
Specific Learning Difficulty	374	130	99	107	38
<b>Total</b>	<b>1777</b>	<b>731</b>	<b>416</b>	<b>377</b>	<b>253</b>

Figure 3: Breakdown of Total Students registered with DS by Disability Category and Faculty in 2019-20

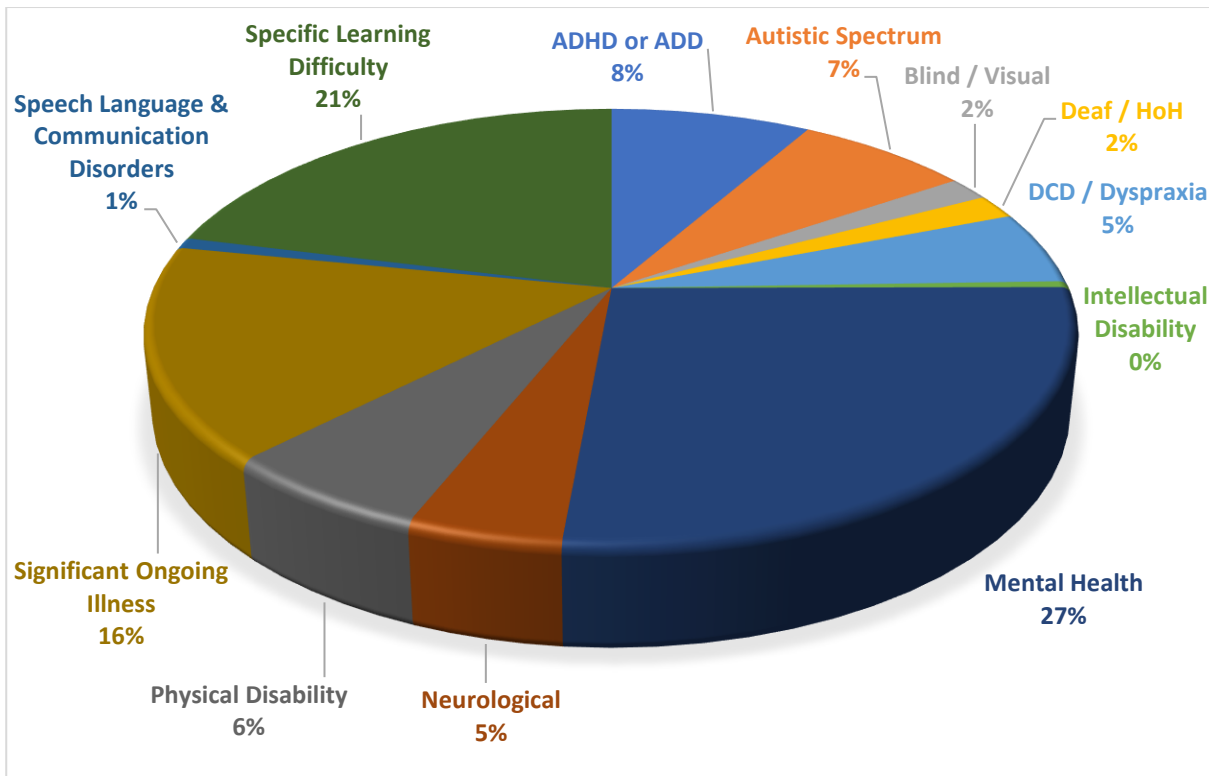


Figure 4: Breakdown of Total Students registered with DS by Category of Disability for 2019-20

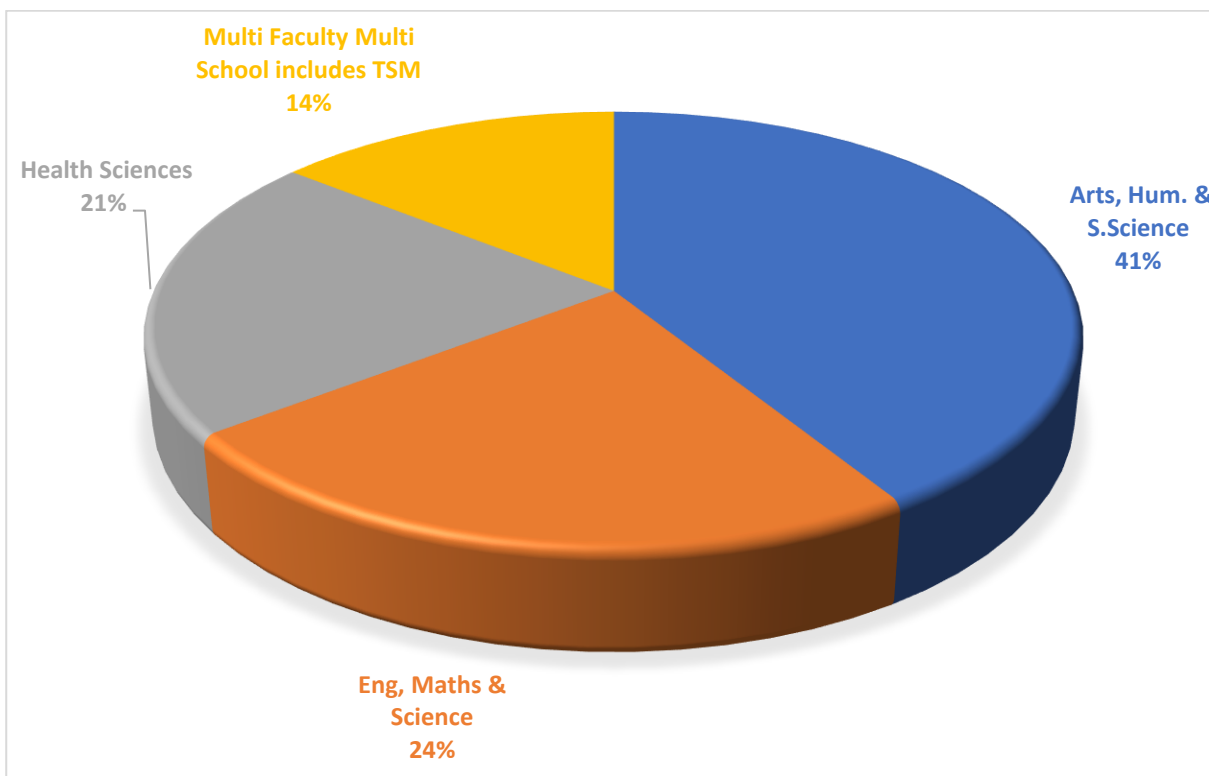


Figure 5: Breakdown of Total Students registered with DS by Faculty for 2019-20



### Rate of increase or decrease of student registrations by disability type

The graphs below (Figures 6 to 13) illustrate the individual growth patterns of student registrations by disability type over a 10-year period: 2010-11 to 2019-20. The number of students with physical and sensory disabilities continues to remain low and under-represented compared with other disability types.

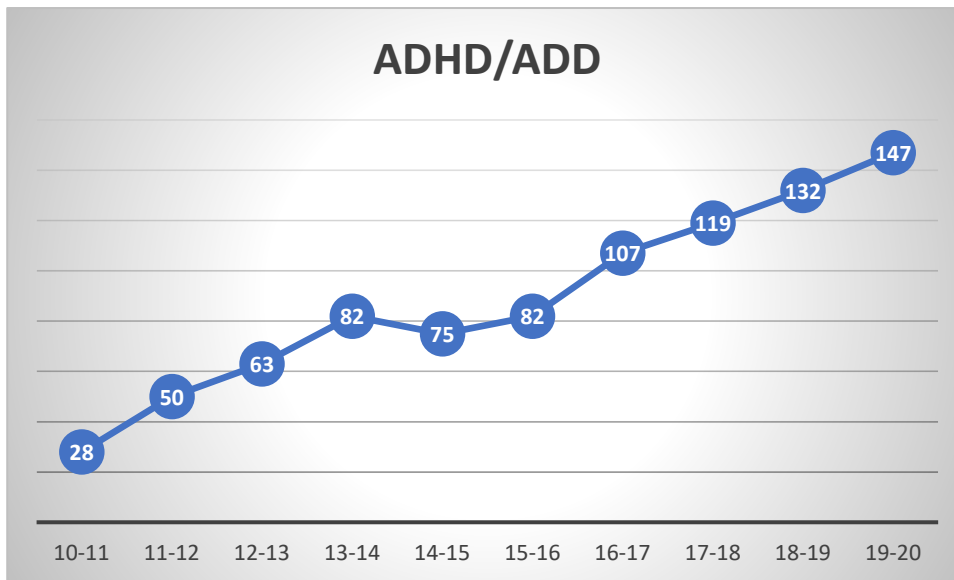


Figure 6: Students with ADD or ADHD 2010-11 to 2019-20

Students with ADD or ADHD are an emerging group since 2007-08. Like students with Autism and DCD prior to 2007-08, as a group they are more likely to be “hidden” among the general student population, or among those with Specific Learning Difficulties.

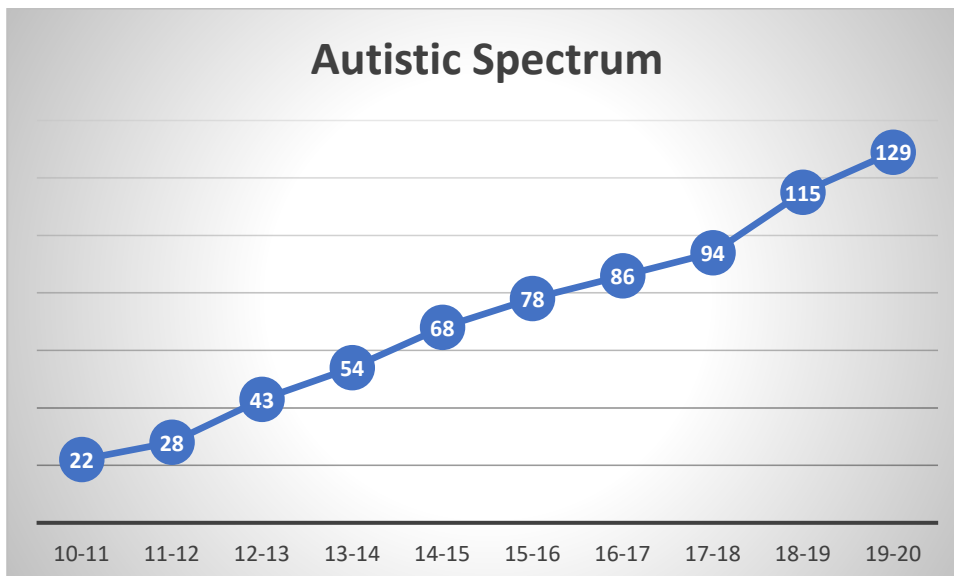


Figure 7: Students with Asperger’s 2010-11 to 2019-20

The increase in students with Autism Spectrum Disorder attending Trinity is significant, albeit from a very low base, since 2007-08. Like the rationale for students with mental health difficulties, there was (and maybe still is), a legacy of under-diagnosis and under-disclosure to ‘catch up on’. Also, through the work of numerous staff and students in various departments over the past decade, Trinity has gained a reputation for being a supportive

environment for students with Autism.

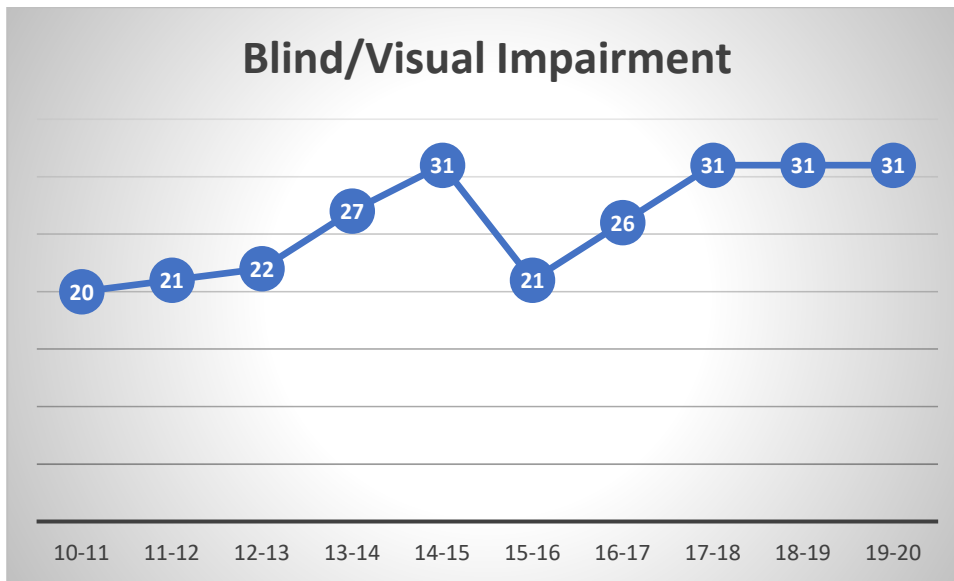


Figure 8: Blind/Visually Impaired students 2010-11 to 2019-20

Students who are blind or visually impaired, like those who are deaf or hard of hearing, enter Trinity in low numbers. In contrast to those who are deaf or hard of hearing, however, they are at low risk of withdrawal.

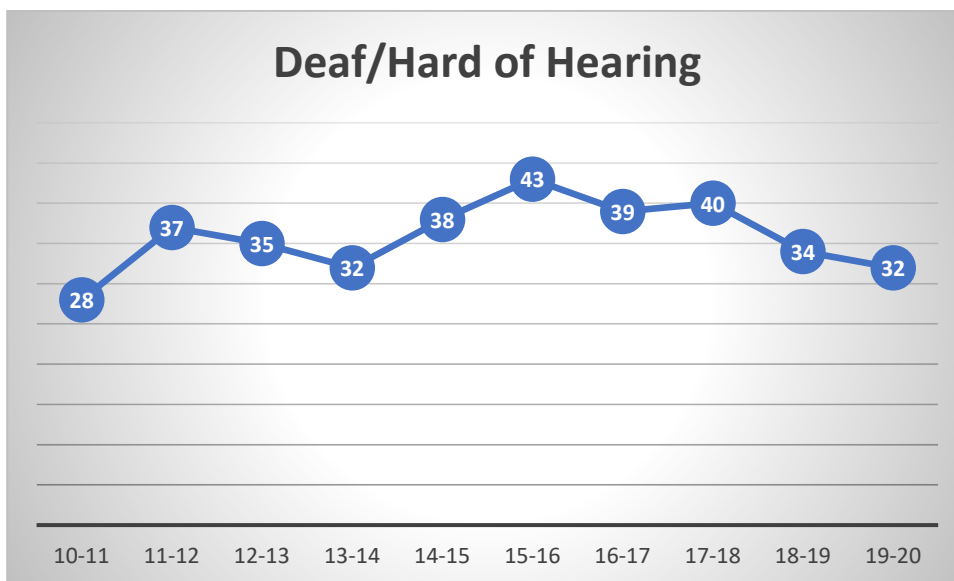
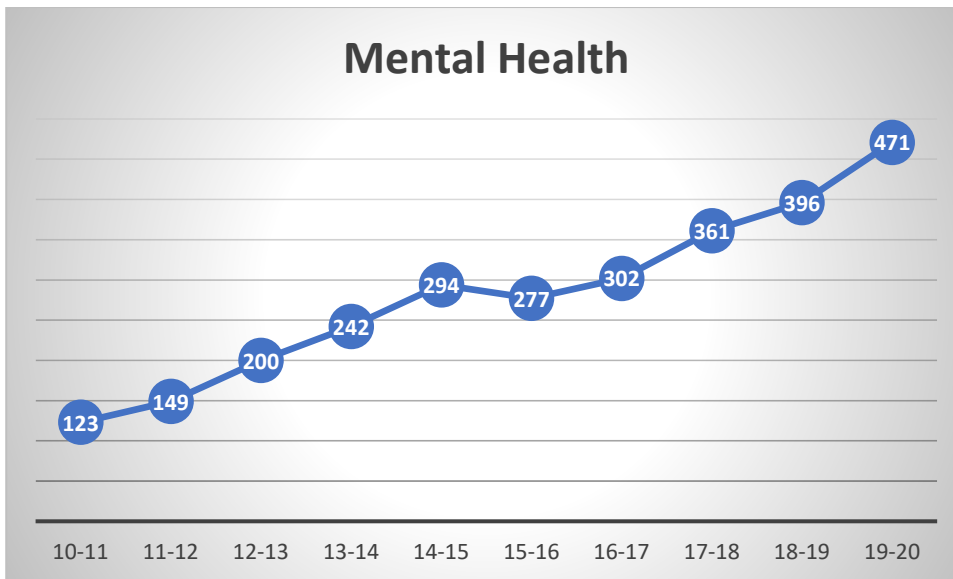


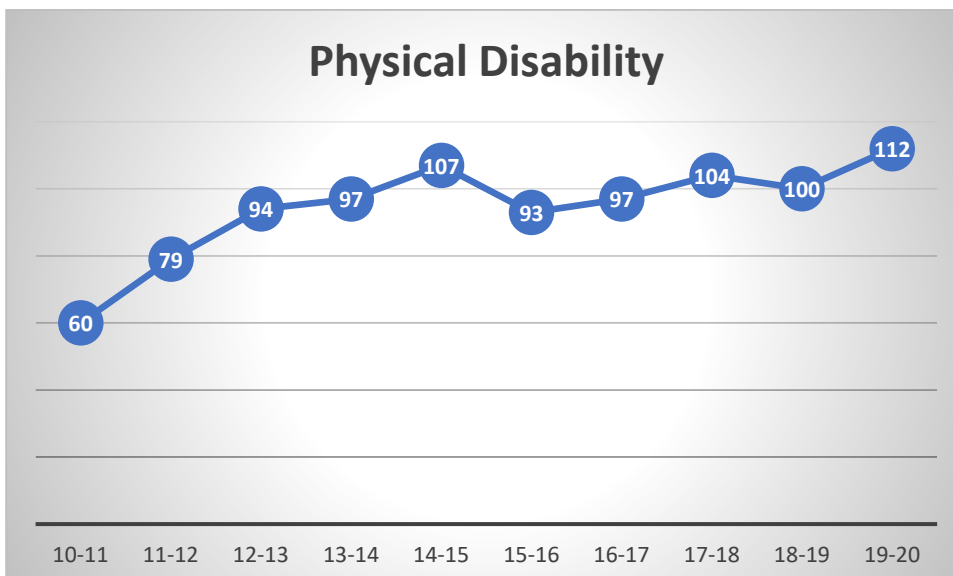
Figure 9: Deaf/Hard of Hearing students 2010-11 to 2019-20

As stated above, deaf or hard of hearing students enter Trinity in very low numbers. As a group, they face considerable difficulties in post-primary education, are less competitive at admissions, and are at higher risk of withdrawal from higher education than any other group by disability type.



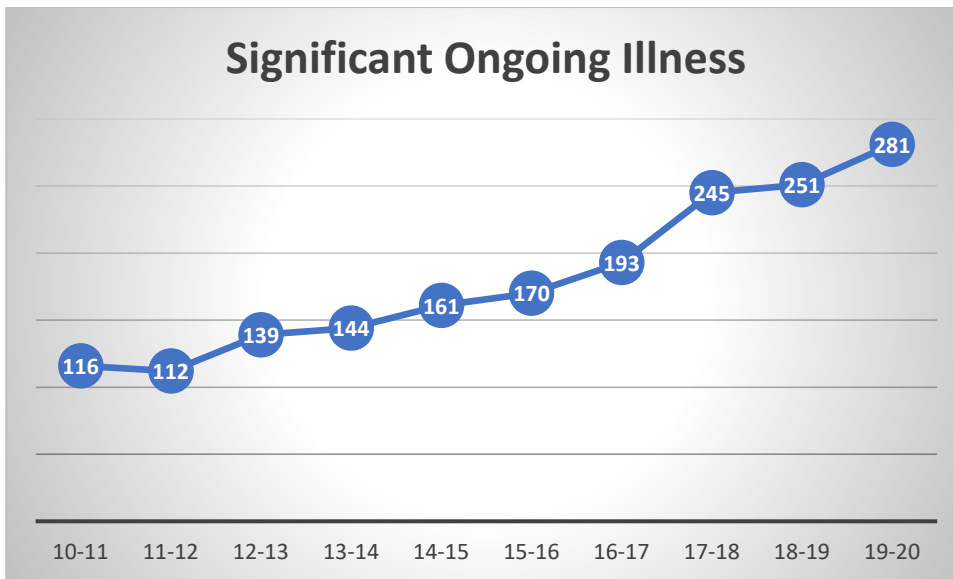
**Figure 10: Students with mental health difficulties 2010-11 to 2019-20**

Trinity has the highest number and the highest proportion of students with mental health difficulties of any HEI in Ireland (AHEAD surveys). Numerous factors have been suggested by way of explanation. Firstly, mental health conditions are regarded as the most prevalent of all disability types and therefore it is likely that they are simply under-diagnosed and under-disclosed in other HEIs. In Trinity, there are considerable resources available to diagnose and support students with mental health difficulties. The Health Centre provides a Psychiatric Service and the Disability Service provides Occupational Therapy support. There is also a College Counselling Service and a Tutorial service. It is suggested that collectively, these supports also attract a higher number of students with mental health difficulties among CAO applicants.



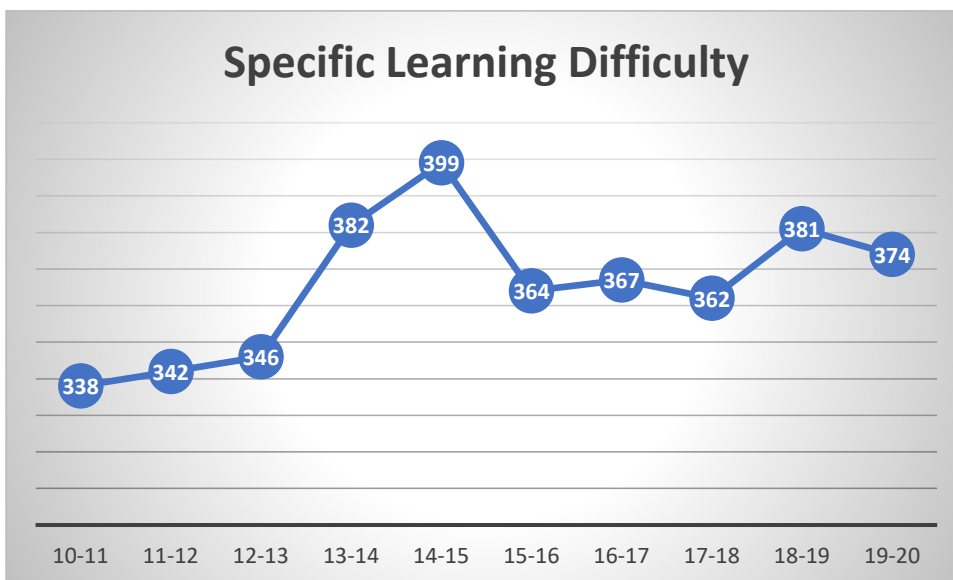
**Figure 11: Students with physical disabilities 2010-11 to 2019-20**

Students with physical disabilities are under-represented in Trinity and Higher Education nationally compared with other disability types. However, in recent years the numbers have increased somewhat compared to those with sensory disabilities.



**Figure 12: Students with significant ongoing illnesses 2010-11 to 2019-20**

Students with significant ongoing illness (SOI) represent the most varied disability type as they are categorised by the broadest criteria. There is no definitive list of all the medical conditions that could be considered SOIs, but the most common conditions are: cancer, chronic fatigue syndrome, Crohn’s disease, diabetes, and multiple sclerosis. There is also an overlap between some SOIs and other categories of disability. For example, arthritic conditions vary and can be considered a physical disability due to the impact on mobility; epilepsy has more recently been considered a neurological condition, and mental health conditions can overlap with fatigue conditions. These discrepancies in categorisation make it difficult to think of the SOI group in clearly defined terms.



**Figure 13: Students with specific learning difficulties 2010-11 to 2019-20**

The number of students with specific learning difficulties, predominantly dyslexia, have decreased marginally over the past 8 years. These decreases due mainly to two factors: firstly, the increase in the diagnosis rates of ADHD, Autism, and DCD has lessened the numbers seeking a diagnosis specifically for dyslexia (there is a high comorbidity among these conditions); secondly, the criteria for DARE ensures that only those with two or more

literacy difficulties (at or below the 10<sup>th</sup> percentile) are eligible for a points reduction at admission.

### When do students register with the Disability Service?

Knowing when students register with the Disability Service is useful because certain groups tend to register early and others later. It is also useful to consider how supports and resources are 'front loaded' at the start of the year. 73% of the students that registered with the Disability Service in 2019-20 registered in the months of August, September and October (403) while the remaining 149 students registered in comparatively low numbers in the other months of the year.

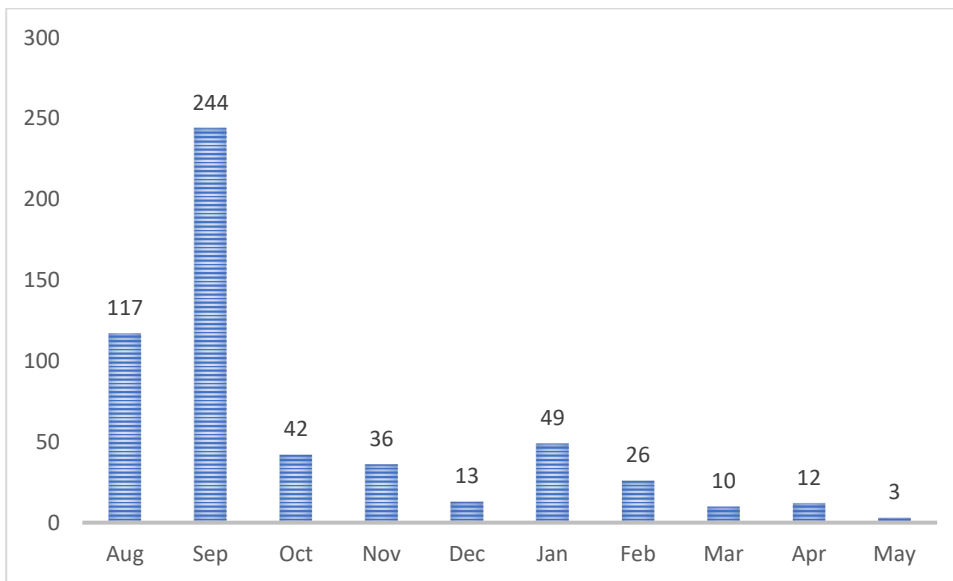


Figure 6: All New DS Registrations by Month August 2019 to May 2020

### New first year undergraduate registrations

Most students registering in any one year are first year students. Between 2010-11 and 2014-15 the number of first year students registering with the DS averaged 193. In the past 5 years, 2015-16 to 2019-20, that average has increased by 53% to 295.

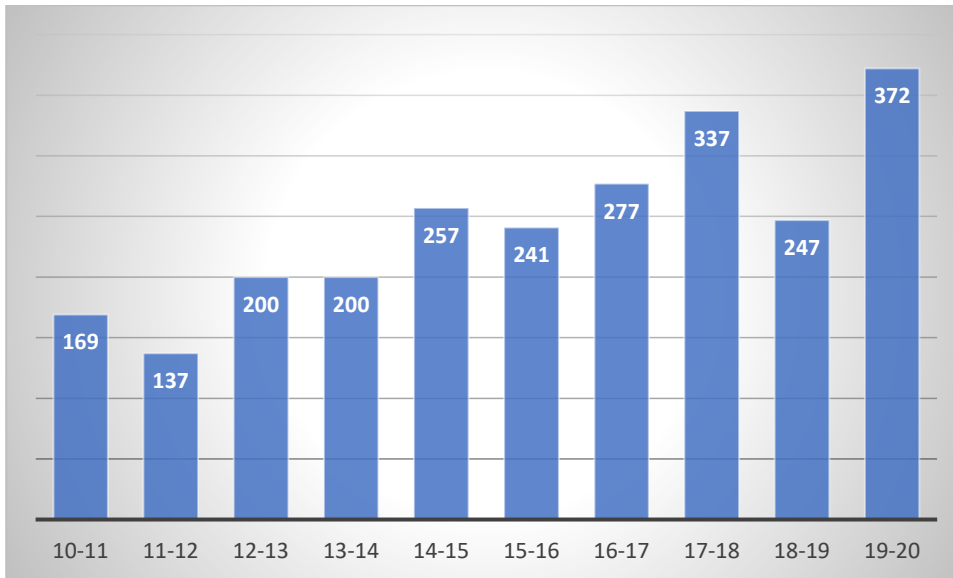


Figure 7: First year (Junior Freshmen) total registrations 200-05 to 2018-19

Figure 16 below illustrates the breakdown of new first year registrants by entry route: Merit or required points (48); DARE, supplemental (167); and Mature Students (16).

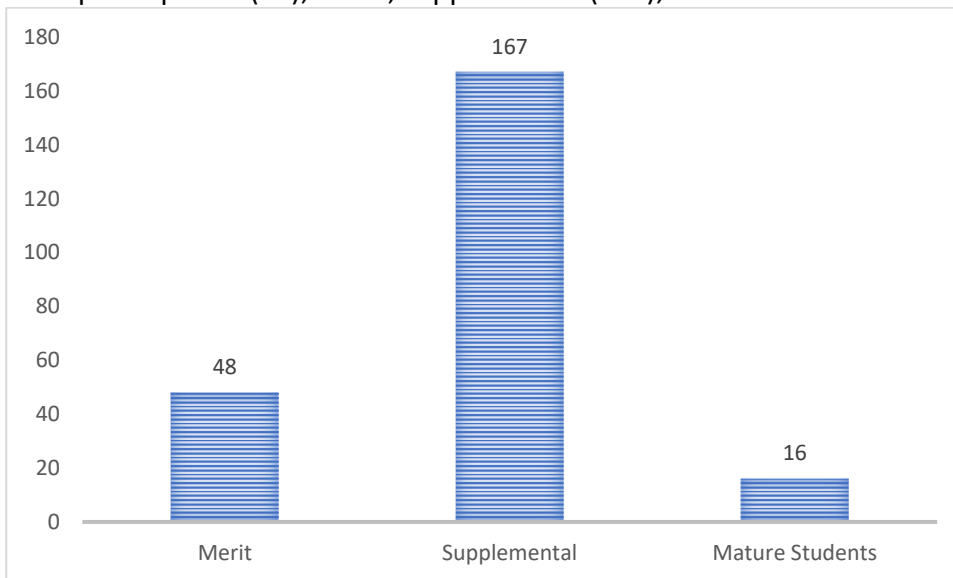
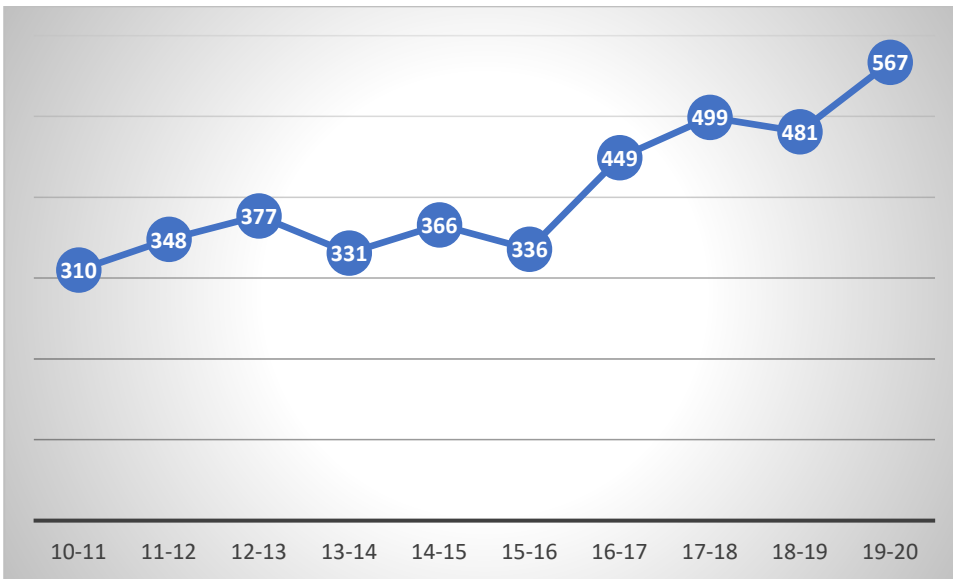


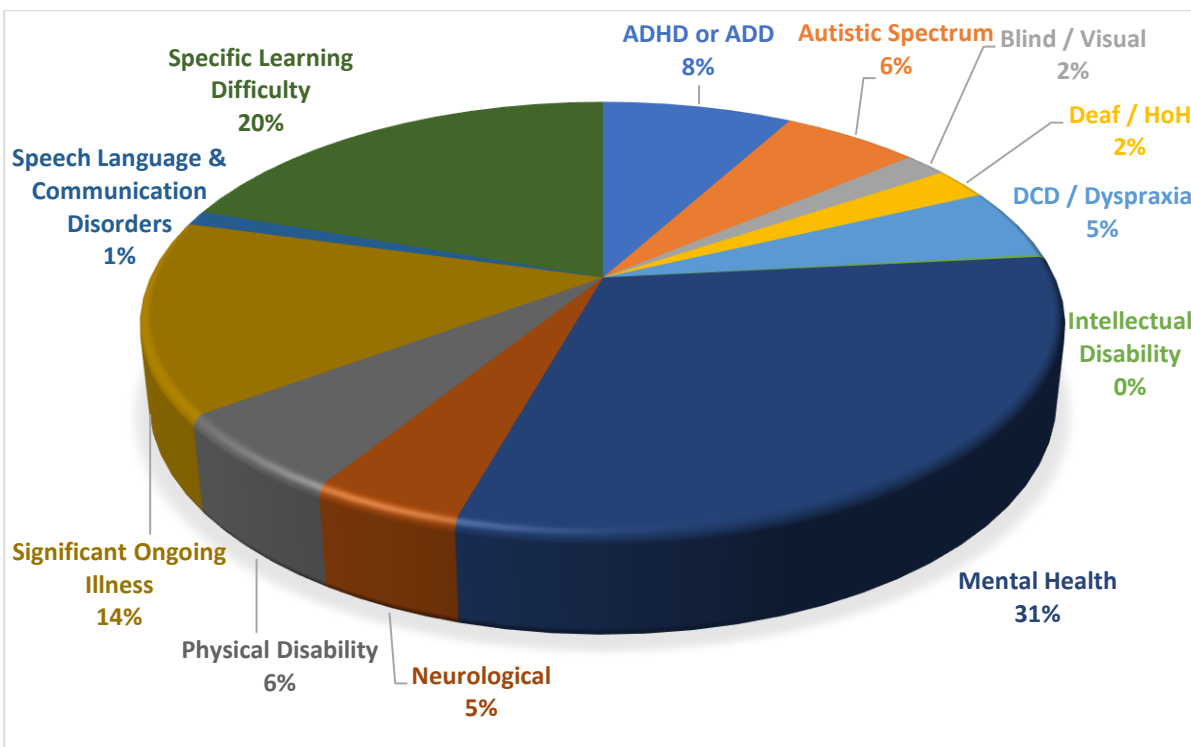
Figure 8: New first year undergraduate registrations by entry route 2019-20

**Figure 17** below illustrates the number and cumulative record of new students registering with the DS by Academic Year 2010-11 to 2019-20. It shows an 18% increase in the number of new student registrations from April 2019 to April 2020.



**Figure 9: Number of new students' registrations from 2010-11 to 2019-20**

The chart below illustrates the breakdown of newly registered students by disability type for the academic year 2019-20.



**Figure 10: Illustrates the Category of Disability for all new student registrations 2019-20**

The chart below illustrates the percentage breakdown of new registrants by Faculty for the academic year 2019-20. Students with disabilities tend to choose Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences courses above the other two Faculties. However, in recent years there has been a relative rise in the number of students with disabilities in Health Sciences.

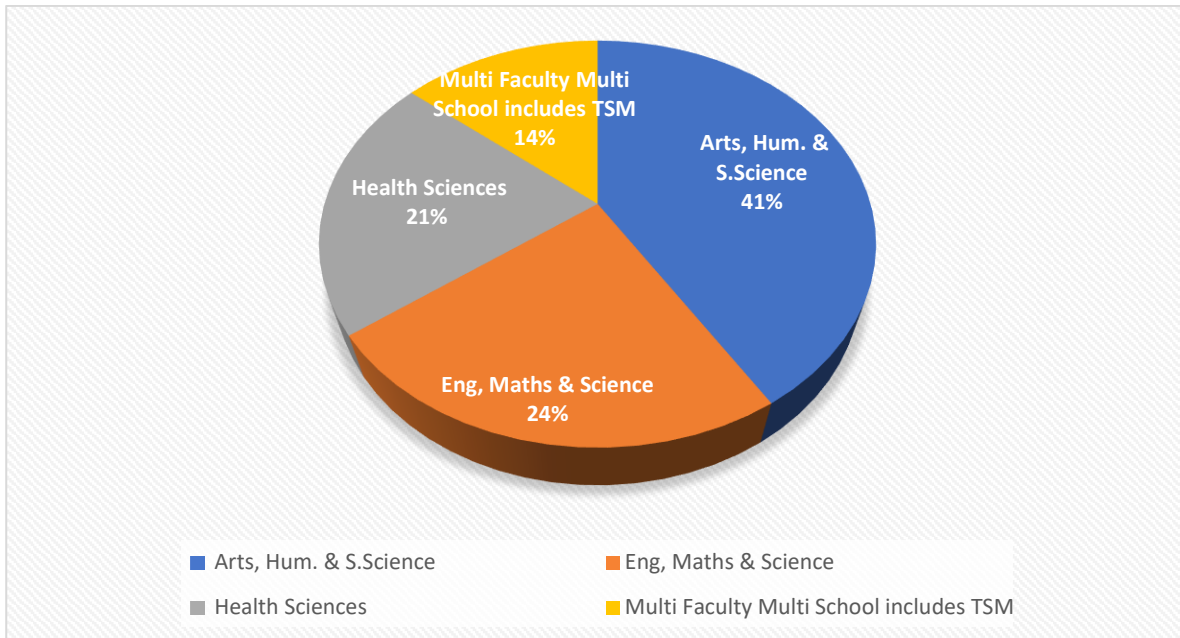


Figure 11: Percentage breakdown of new registered students by Faculty 2019-20

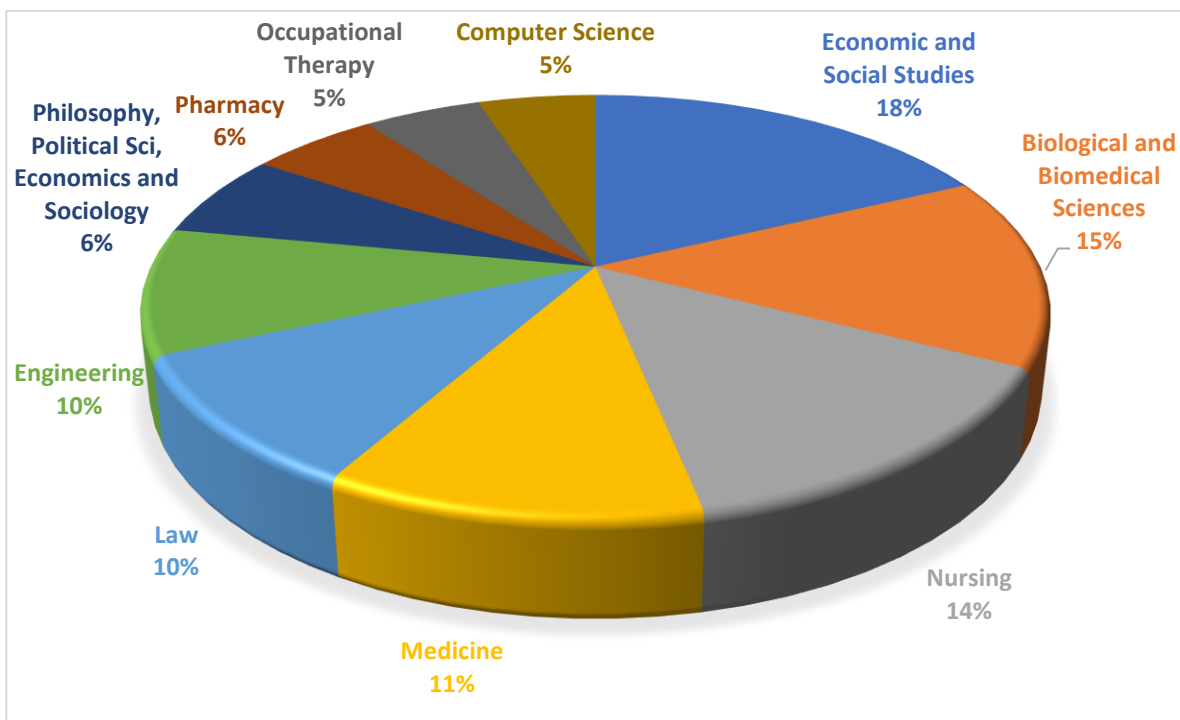


Figure 20: Top 10 Courses chosen by Undergrads registered with DS 2019-20



### Disclosures through LENS reports

The table below shows the number of disclosures through the issuing of LENS reports in the year 2019-20. These are students registered with the Disability Service who agree to disclose their disability and reasonable accommodations to their school or department via their LENS report in SITS.

<b>Faculty of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences</b>			<b>700</b>
Business	29	Linguistics, Speech and Communication Studies	37
Drama, Film and Music	19	Law	66
Education	14	Psychology	53
English	39	Religion	14
Histories and Humanities	51	Social Science and Philosophy	28
Languages, Literatures and Cultural Studies	20	Social Work and Social Policy	37
AHSS Multi School	293		
<b>Faculty of Engineering, Maths and Science</b>			<b>406</b>
Biochemistry and Immunology	3	Genetics and Microbiology	3
Chemistry	8	Mathematics	24
Computer Science and Statistics	63	Natural Sciences	8
Engineering	79	Physics	3
EMS Multi School	215		
<b>Faculty of Health Sciences</b>			<b>365</b>
Dental Science	14	Pharmacy	41
Medicine	95	Occupational Therapy	25
Radiation	13	Physiotherapy	41
Nursing and Midwifery	139	Human Nutrition and Dietetics	1
HS Multi School	17		
<b>Trinity Multi Faculty</b>			<b>244</b>
<b>Total</b>			<b>1715</b>

Figure 21: Disclosures through LENS

## Examination Accommodations

The graph below illustrates the changes in the provision of exam accommodations over a three-year period from 2017-18 to 2019-20. The changes reflect increases in students registering with the Disability Service over the same period.

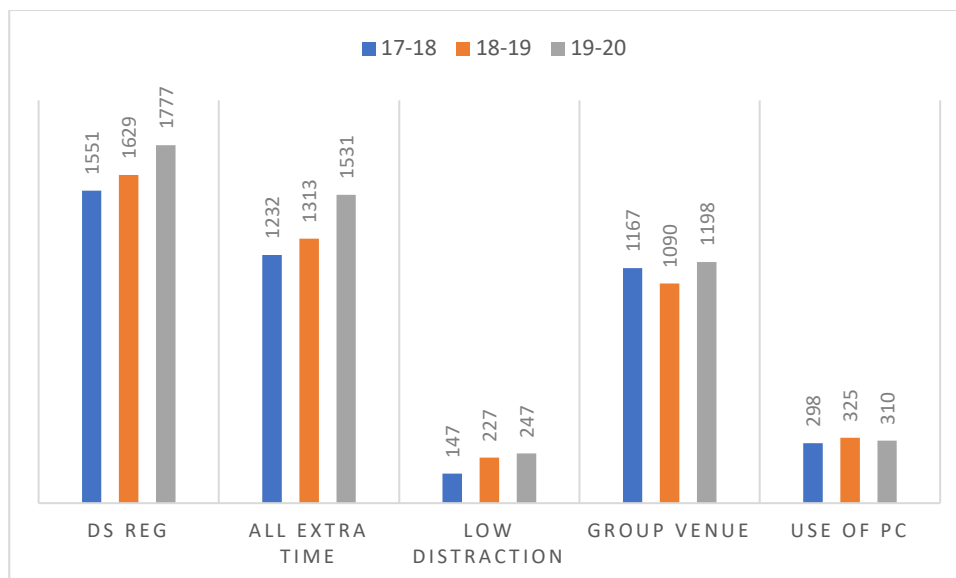


Figure 22: Increases in exam accommodations from 2016-17 to 2018-19

- DS reg: All students registered with the Disability Service
- All extra time: All students with extra exam time including 10, 15 and 20 minutes extra per hour
- Low distraction: All students who attend a low distraction venue
- Group venue: All students who attend a Group Venue (alternative to the main venues)
- Use of PC: All students who use a computer in exams

### Changes in exam accommodations 2015-16 to 2019-20

The table below lists the changes in exam accommodations during the five-year period, 2015-16 to 2019-20. Most students registered are accommodated with extra time of 10 minutes per hour and a group venue. Additional supports beyond this 'baseline' are allocated in relatively small numbers. In semester 2 in 2019-20 most exams moved online and additional supports and services were required to ensure students were adequately supported.

	15-16	16-17	17-18	18-19	19-20
Students registered with DS	1299	1364	1551	1629	1777
Total with exam accommodations	1088	1109	1241	1400	1526
Total with no exam accommodations	211	255	310	229	251
10 mins per hour	855	1023	1192	1253	1443
15 mins per hour	25	28	29	42	38
20 mins per hour	3	6	10	15	23
Low distraction venue	71	122	148	227	247
Individual test centre – general	50	58	68	83	78
Group Test Centre	764	891	1019	1090	1198
Reader	7	2	2	4	0
Scribe	11	10	6	6	0
Use of computer	255	278	298	325	310

**Table 23: Changes in exam accommodations 2015-16 to 2019-20**