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

School of Languages, Literatures and Cultural Studies

Postgraduate Research Student Handbook 2026-27

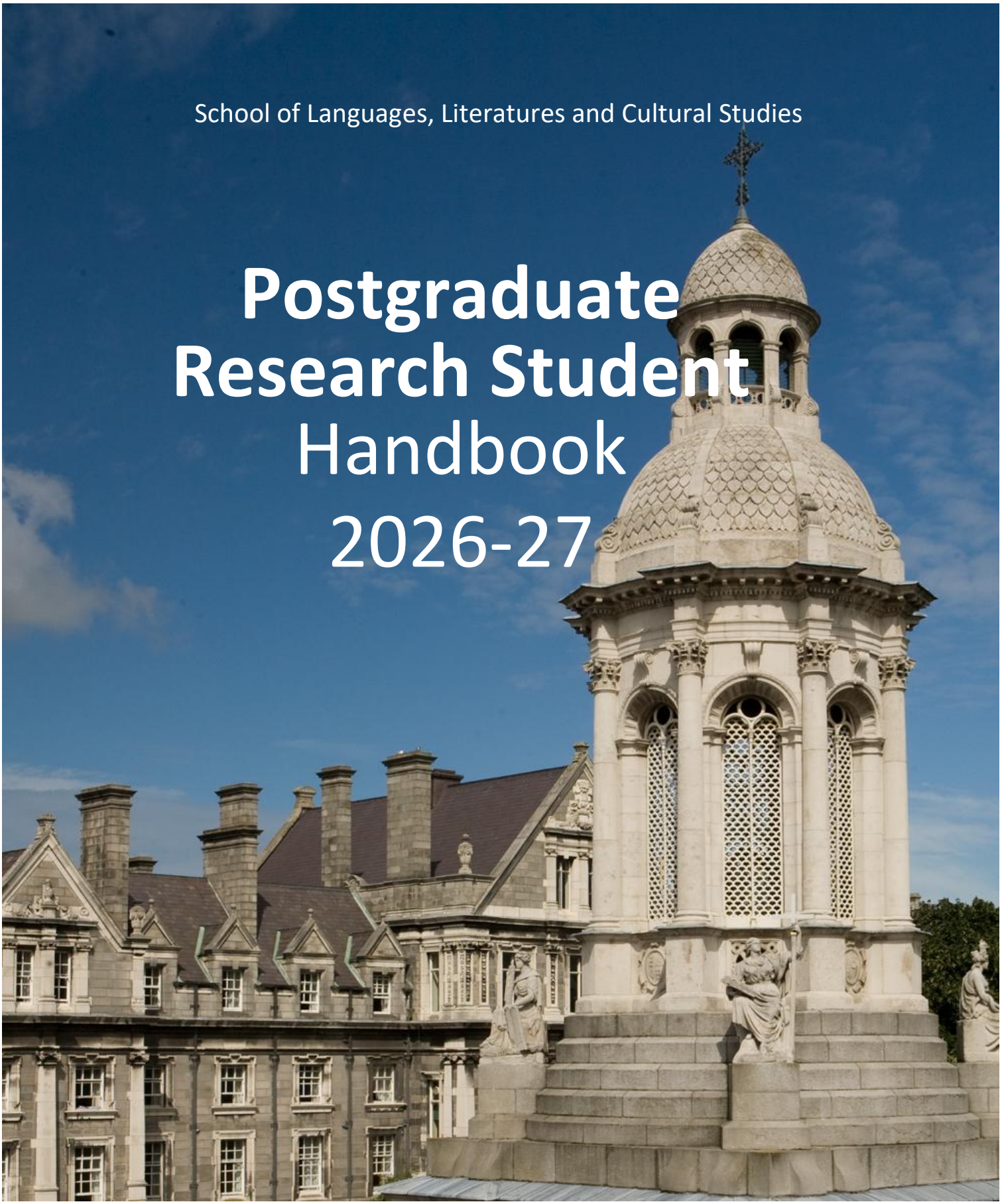


Table of Contents

Message from the Director of Postgraduate Teaching and Learning 4

1. General School Information 5

Diversity and Inclusion 5

Staff Contact Information and Roles 5

Trinity Year Structure 6

Other important links and resources 6

2. Structure of the PhD Programme 7

Taught modules 8

Auditing SLLCS Taught Modules 9

Research and Professional Development Plan 9

Your Thesis Committee 10

Annual Progress Reports and Reviews 10

Progression Deadlines (September registrants only): 11

Progression Deadlines (March registrants only): 12

Non-Resident PhD Programme 12

3. PhD Supervision 13

Joint Supervision 14

Conflicts in the Supervision process 14

4. Writing your thesis 15

Dissertation Word Count and Language 15

Research Ethics and Academic Integrity 16

Formatting Styles 16

Research Ethics Approval 17

Plagiarism 17

5. Completing your PhD 20

Completing and submitting your thesis 20

Examination of Theses 20

The Viva Voce Examination 21

Corrections and Revision 21

Finalising your Thesis and Commencements 22

6. Supporting your PhD 23

Funding Opportunities 23

Teaching in SLLCS 23

Invigilation 25
Travel grants 25
Funded Expenses 26
7. Preparing your Professional Profile 27
Conferences and Publications 27
Academic blogging 27
Contributions to School and Discipline (and beyond) 28
Postdoctoral Opportunities 28
8. Student services 29
Workspaces and Desks 29
Software 30
Trinity Student ID Card 30
Email 30
VLE/Blackboard Ultra 31
Internet 31
Student representation and feedback 31
College Services for Postgraduate Students 32
Students Union 32
General Learning Development 32
Postgraduate Advisory Services 33
Student Counselling 34
Trinity disAbility Service 34
College Health Service 34
Careers Advisory Service 34
Other Essential Contacts 35
Official Letters 35
9. For when things go differently than planned 36
Going Off Books 36
Academic Appeals 37

Message from the Director of Postgraduate Teaching and Learning

Welcome to Trinity College Dublin and to the School of Languages, Literatures and Cultural Studies.

Starting a PhD is a significant step. You are joining the School not simply as a student, but as a researcher and a member of an academic community. Over the course of your degree, you will develop your own research questions, make an original contribution to your field, and become increasingly independent in how you think, work, and participate in the wider life of the School. We look forward to seeing that work develop, and to the new ideas and perspectives you will bring to our community.

A PhD requires sustained effort, and there will inevitably be periods when the work feels difficult or uncertain. That is part of research, rather than a sign that something has gone wrong. You are not expected to navigate those periods alone. Your supervisor, the School's postgraduate team, and colleagues across College are available to offer advice and support, whether the issue is academic, practical or personal. If you encounter difficulties during your degree, please ask for help early.

This handbook provides a School-level guide to the main things you will need to know as you begin, progress through and complete your degree. It is intended to complement, rather than duplicate, the information provided by the College.

The handbook points you towards other useful sources of information throughout. The Graduate Studies website, the College website, and the resources and people within the School are all there to help you find your way through the practicalities of doctoral study.

Most importantly, the School is a community. Talk to your supervisor, get to know other researchers, attend seminars and events, and take an interest in the intellectual life around you. A PhD is an individual piece of research, but it is not something you have to do in isolation.

We are very pleased to welcome you to the School, and I wish you every success with your research.

Dr James Hadley

1. General School Information

Diversity and Inclusion

In the School of Languages Literatures and Cultural Studies (SLLCS) PhD programmes, we welcome students from a wide range of backgrounds and perspectives. We believe that diversity of ideas and knowledge enriches everyone's learning, provided we treat each other with dignity and respect. We strive to incorporate accessibility and inclusivity in our teaching and classrooms to ensure all students, regardless of disability, ethnicity, gender, sexuality, background or socio-economic status, have equitable opportunity to engage fully in their studies and achieve their learning goals. We endorse the Dignity and Respect Policy, Accessible Information Policy and other disability-specific policies and procedures, and the aims and objectives of the Trinity Inclusive Curriculum Project. Suggestions and feedback on how we can improve our accessibility and inclusivity are encouraged and appreciated – please contact the Director of Postgraduate Teaching and Learning (DTLP), Dr James Hadley.

Staff Contact Information and Roles

The School of Languages, Literatures and Cultural Studies is large and broad, and you may find yourself interacting with many different people over the course of your studies as you seek out modules to attend or audit, specific expertise to draw on, or teaching opportunities. In most cases, your primary lines of contact, however, will be your supervisor and the Postgraduate team, as follows:

Staff Name	Role/Title	Contact
Murat R. Siviloglu	Head of School	SIVILOGM@tcd.ie
Lizzie Whitcher	School Manager	BUGGL@tcd.ie
James Hadley	Director of Postgraduate Teaching and Learning	HADLEYJ@tcd.ie
Natalia Resende	Deputy Director of Postgraduate Teaching and Learning	resenden@tcd.ie
James Hanrahan	Director of Research	HANRAHAJ@tcd.ie
Raimonda Elvikyte	Postgraduate Programmes Manager	postgraduate.sllcs@tcd.ie
Ciara Flynn	Postgraduate Administrator	postgraduate.sllcs@tcd.ie

The School of Languages Literatures and Cultural Studies is a part of the Faculty of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences (FAHSS), one of three faculties that structure the academic programmes at Trinity. The general structure is organised into seven disciplines: French, German, Hispanic Studies, Irish and Celtic Languages, Italian, Near and Middle Eastern Studies, and Russian and Slavonic Studies. It also boasts a series of interdisciplinary teaching and research units: the Centre for Applied Intercultural Communication, the Centre for European Studies, Trinity Centre for Forced Migration Studies, Trinity Centre for Literary and Cultural Translation, and the Trinity Centre for Medieval and Renaissance Studies.

All of these activities are supported by professional staff with central portfolios under the oversight of our School Manager, Lizzie Whitcher: the Undergraduate Office, Communications, HR and Finances, and the Postgraduate Office, who will support you throughout your PhD. In addition, issues related to technical aspects of your course, such as registration and fee payment are handled centrally by the College's Trinity's Academic Registry. Full profiles and contact details for all staff in the School can be found on the School's People webpage.

Trinity Year Structure

If you are new to Trinity, you may be struck by some of the archaic terminology that we continue to use to describe what we do. One example of this is the year structure, which we divide into Michaelmas Term (September to December) and Hilary Term (January to April) and Trinity Term (April to May). A week–by-week calendar of the academic year can be accessed here.

Other important links and resources

- Graduate Studies Office
- Trinity College People Finder
- The PhD Survival Guide by Dr Oisín C. Joyce
- Research Postgraduate Student Handbook

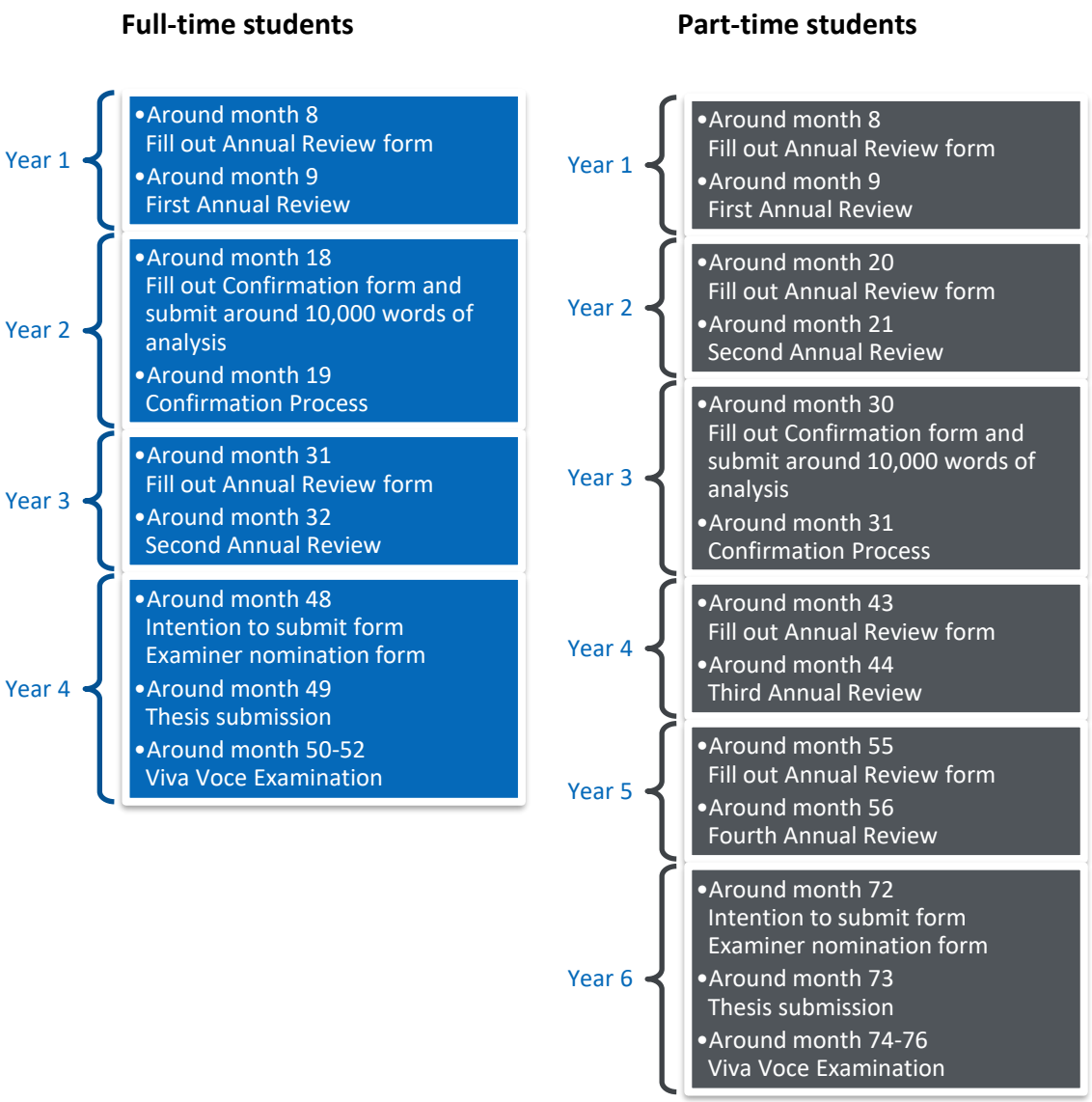
For a full list of Trinity College Services A-Z see this webpage.

2. Structure of the PhD Programme

The most tangible and visible output of your PhD research will be your thesis, but the production of this work will require you to refine or develop a wide range of skills, research, writing, time and project management, general communications, and perhaps also broader career-related skills, such as teaching, oral communications and project management.

The structure of the Trinity PhD incorporates a wide variety of supportive mechanisms to assist you in developing a balanced and flexible skillset that will feed into but also be transferable beyond the writing of your thesis.

There is also a series of milestones which characterise the different stages of your PhD journey:



Taught modules

PhD students in the School of Languages, Literatures and Cultural Studies take a minimum of 10 and maximum of 30 ECTS worth of taught modules for credit. These should be completed by the time of the confirmation, around 18 months into the course, or 30 months for part-time students.

All students take the mandatory 5 ECTS on-line module "Research Integrity and Impacting an Open Scholarship Era". This online module must be taken in the first year of study (at the latest before the confirmation meeting) and will assist you in conducting your research in an ethical manner in line with contemporary norms for scholarly data management and communication. You will automatically be registered for this module on the online learning environment Blackboard when you commence your PhD. If the module does not appear on your Blackboard account after you have registered with College, please email the SLLCS Postgraduate office.

Students who hope to engage in teaching activities during or after their PhD are also required to take the 5 ECTS self-study on-line module "Teaching and Supporting Learning". This module, and any of the others taught in an online format, can be registered for on the Centre for Academic Practice page for Graduate Teaching Assistants.

A non-credit self-study version of the "Teaching and Supporting Learning" module is also available to PhD students, who are engaged in teaching. This module serves as a resource, that is available on Blackboard at any time. The materials include support for session planning and design, mini video-lectures, readings, links to relevant external sites, and downloadable resources for future use. There are no scheduled tutorials or formal peer learning activities in this version, nor is there assessment for credit.

Although these two modules are taken by most students and will fulfil the minimal, 10 ECTS, requirements, there are many modules within the School and beyond it that can be used to enhance your research and profession foundations. A full list of modules available to PhD students from across College is accessible from the Graduate Studies Office, and most of the core and option modules offered in our seven MPhil programmes in the School can also be

taken by PhD students for credit. Registering for these modules takes place via the SLLCS Postgraduate office.

Auditing SLLCS Taught Modules

For many students, participating in taught modules relevant to the thesis can be a meaningful way to support their research without taking on the responsibility of writing assessments for those modules. This is known as "auditing". There are, however, some restrictions on the auditing of modules.

First preference for the allocation of places on postgraduate taught modules goes to postgraduates on one of the taught programmes (PGTs) taking modules for credit. Space allowing, second preference goes to postgraduate research students (PGRs) wanting to take modules for credit, followed by PGT and PGR students wanting to audit on a non-credit bearing basis. Participation in this last category is subject to the module convenor's agreement (based on their assessment of any potential negative pedagogical effect associated with admitting additional participants), as well as the student's willingness to be an active participant (as defined by the module convenor) but not submit written work for assessment.

Students, who are auditing modules and who would like to receive formal confirmation of their participation, are required to ensure the module convenor signs off on their attendance after each module meeting. A pro forma for this can be obtained from the SLLCS Postgraduate office.

Research and Professional Development Plan

Students are encouraged to self-reflect and complete a skills audit to identify research and professional goals before their next annual review meeting. The following skills audit tools are recommended for use: Careers and Employability Skills Audit Tool or Planning and Managing your Research Process tool.

At the review and confirmation meetings, students are asked to detail their progress in developing their research and professional development goals as identified in their Professional Development Plan. For more information, please visit this website.

Your Thesis Committee

In the course of your first year of study, your supervisor will advise the SLLCS Postgraduate office of the composition of your thesis committee, generally after discussion with you regarding what you feel your biggest needs will be. This committee generally consists of at least two experts independent of the supervisor and co-supervisor. One member must be an independent academic member of Trinity staff from within the School, familiar with the student's research area. The second may be an additional academic member of staff from within the university or a recognized external expert in the student's field of study. An internal member of the thesis committee will also act as a chair for your annual review meetings. Although your supervisor (and any co-supervisors) will generally attend the meetings of the thesis committee, they are not formal members of the committee, which is intended to give you periodic, external input into your work.

Although you will generally only see your thesis committee once per year, you should view it as an additional resource to support your progress, and feel free to call on its members for relevant advice and support between these meetings, as well. You may also request an informal meeting with the full thesis committee outside the formal review meetings, and independent of your supervisor. You may find these Thesis Committees guidelines helpful.

Annual Progress Reports and Reviews

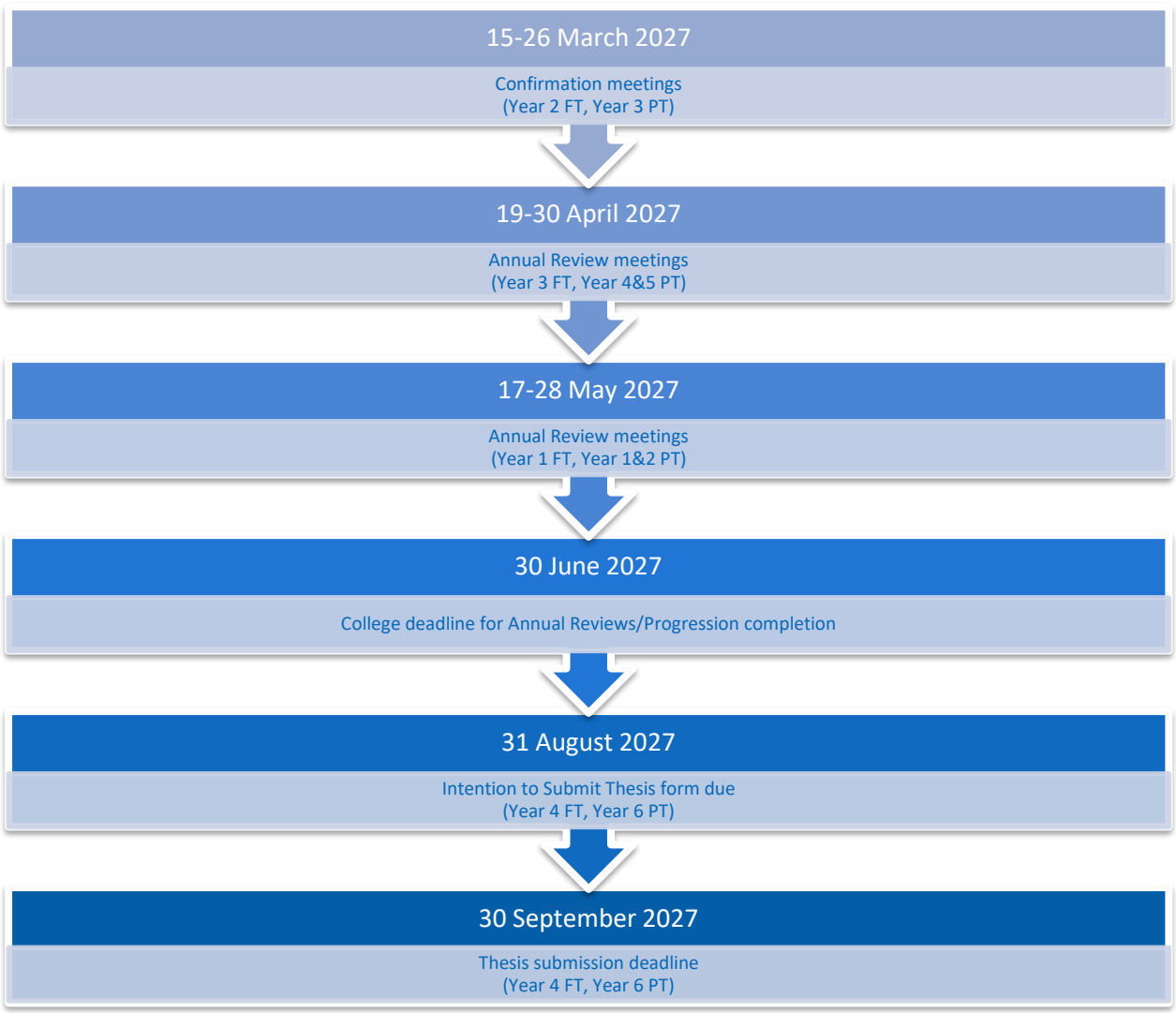
The key role of the thesis committee is to meet annually in years 1-3 (1-5 for PT students) to review and assess your progress. Each of these meetings is framed around a particular set of documents and a particular goal.

The annual review process is managed online via my.tcd.ie the Research Manager tab. You will be invited by the PG administrators to complete your annual progress or confirmation report online in good time before you need to submit them. The report has to be completed and submitted at least a month before your annual review or confirmation meeting. It is then reviewed and approved by your supervisor, who also writes their own report on your progress. The two reports are forwarded to your thesis committee for assessment at least a week before the annual review and at least two weeks before the confirmation meeting.

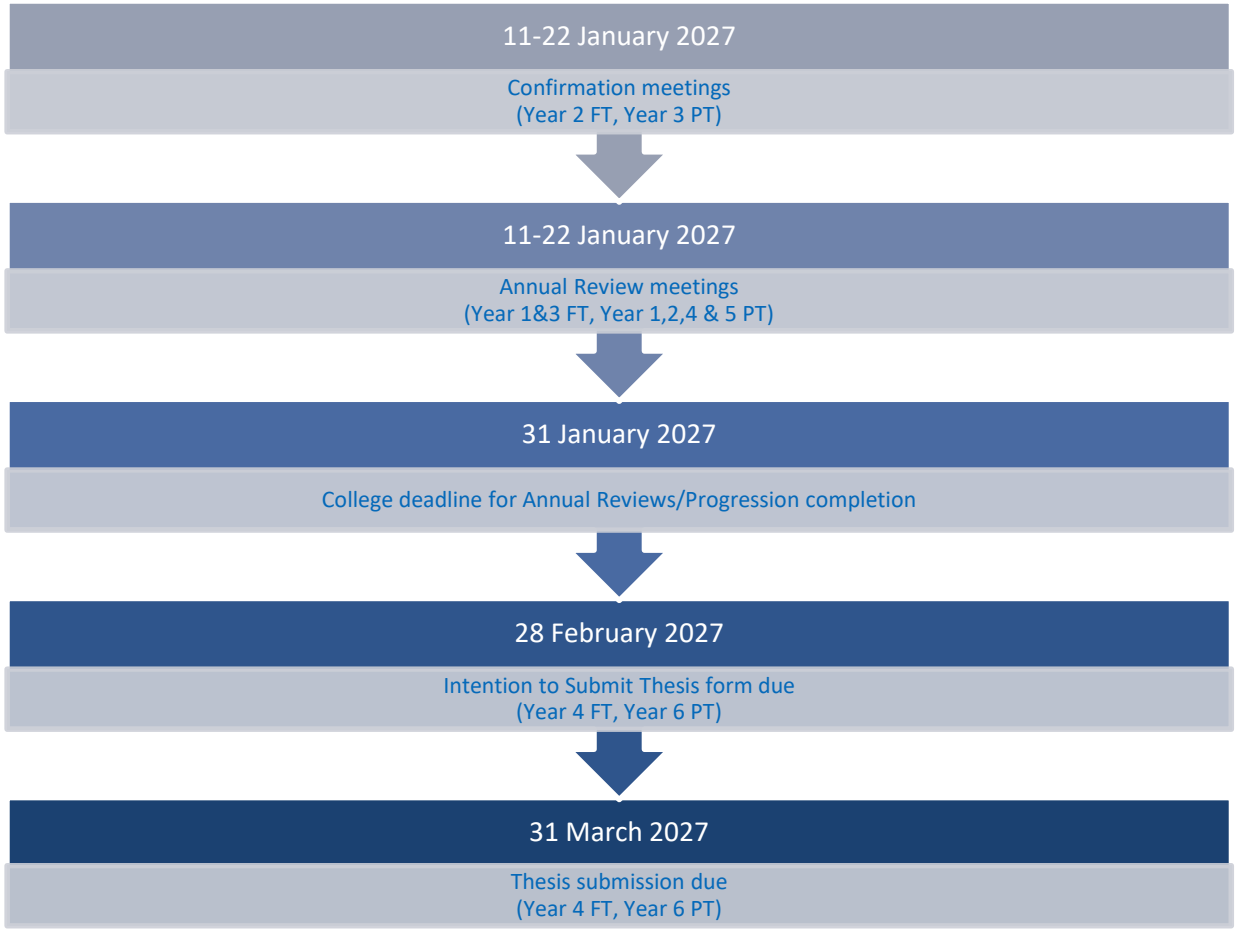
You will receive notifications of any requested changes/updates throughout the process. This guide will help you navigate the system.

Detailed assessment and progression guidelines are available on the Graduate Studies Office website. School and College deadlines for PhD student progression meetings are listed below:

Progression Deadlines (September registrants only):



Progression Deadlines (March registrants only):



Non-Resident PhD Programme

There is a general expectation that PhD students will be resident in or near Dublin, unless they are specifically enrolled on the non-resident PhD programme or undertaking research travel. Unless you are a non-resident student, please be sure to inform your supervisor of any extended travel you will undertake. For more information on the non-resident PhD programme, see Non-Resident PhD Fact Sheet.

3. PhD Supervision

Your relationship with your supervisor will be one of the most formative for your PhD experience, and for your professional life beyond it. That said, every doctoral candidate and their supervisor develop a different personal and professional dynamic, depending on the nature of their personalities, but also the research project, and the field they work in.

Most doctoral candidates schedule regular (often monthly) meetings with their supervisors, particularly in the early phases of the degree. The time scale for these can be agreed in advance, but in general they should be student-driven, as the supervisor will not necessarily be able to tell when the student will be crossing thresholds that make some guidance or new resources most useful. Some supervisors may suggest a format for regular reporting, including items such as:

- Questions for Supervisor;
- Medium term goals (2-6 months)/Short Term Goals (0-2 months);
- Current focus of work/Currently Reading/Recently Read; etc.

Documents like these can be usefully kept as shared resources (e.g. as SharePoint Documents) and can also include notes from supervision meetings or comments from supervisors, creating a running record of the supervisory process, available to both parties for reference at all times.

For your supervision sessions, please remember these basic rules of etiquette:

- arrive punctually,
- be prepared,
- send work to be read well in advance,
- take notes,
- ask the supervisor how they would like to be addressed,
- and remember that the supervisor has many calls on their time.

Most of all, remember that while you do not have to agree with everything that your supervisor advises, you should value the supervisor's perspective and be prepared to benefit from the feedback and guidance they give you.

There is an extensive section on the student-supervisor relationship in the Trinity Postgraduate Research Student Handbook, including a variety of areas in which you will want to ensure clear communications with your supervisor. If you would like some further insight into this relationship, you can find a wealth of perspectives and information in that document.

In some cases, you may find it useful to have an explicit agreement with your supervisor regarding such topics as roles and responsibilities, professional development, health and well-being. If this is something you are interested in, you may find it useful to use the TCD Supervisor - Research Student Agreement to frame a discussion of these issues with your supervisor and capture this discussion in a signed agreement. Research Student Supervision webpage gives you more information about the agreement, as well as links to national and international frameworks for doctoral supervision.

Joint Supervision

Depending on the nature of your thesis, you may find it beneficial to have two or more supervisors overseeing different aspects of your work. Co-supervision can also sometimes be a way to draw from expertise of members of academic staff who may not be eligible to act as primary supervisors for your project. If you are interested in joint supervision, you should discuss this with your supervisor in the first instance to understand how the joint supervision might work practically and explore the benefits it might bring. To request appointment of a co-supervisor, you will need to submit this form.

Conflicts in the Supervision process

Unfortunately, sometimes supervisors and students experience conflict. There are resources available to you should you feel this is happening, such as meeting with the Postgraduate Advisory Service, or bringing your concerns to the Director of Postgraduate Teaching and Learning. Should these more informal measures not bring a resolution, there is a set of guidelines and resources provided by the Graduate Studies Office that you can consult to help move the relationship toward a resolution.

4. Writing your thesis

The skills you acquire through your many integrated activities and interactions all come together in the writing of your thesis. While there are many different challenges you may face, there are also many different forms of assistance available, from your supervisor and your committee through to the workshops on research and writing offered by the Student Learning Development office. There is also a useful web resource hosted by the Student Learning Development Office, an annual Summer School for Postgraduate students, and the Academic Writing Centre's Write Here, Write Now sessions.

You may also find some sessions of the School's Michaelmas Term MPhil Dissertation skills modules of use as a forum to explore in detail some of the components of research and academic writing, from writing convincing paragraphs to the hallmarks of academic register and the requirements for ethical approval. Contact the SLLCS Postgraduate Office for more information on how to register for these.

One helpful tip is to make sure you have a good sense of what milestones for your research and writing you should hit and when they land. Formally, you need to have at least 10,000 words completed by the 18-month point of your course of study (30-month for PT students). But of course, different projects move at different paces overall, depending on whether, for example, you are collecting significant empirical data, or need to travel to archives to access significant collections. There is a very good overview of the kinds of milestones you might use to gate your progress in the TCD Postgraduate Handbook, or, if you are the kind of person who really benefits from this kind of planning, you may find that developing a Gantt chart or formal workflow using a tool like Smartsheet or Trello (both of which have entry level free subscriptions available) could help you stay on track.

Dissertation Word Count and Language

Be aware that there are specific and strict regulations regarding the word count of your thesis, including what is and is not a part of that count. As per the College regulations on dissertation length (found in the College Calendar, p. 37): "Normally a Ph.D. thesis should not exceed 100,000 words of text (exclusive of footnotes, bibliography and appendices). If a thesis is likely to exceed these limits, the Dean of Graduate Studies must be advised of its

estimated length and her/his permission obtained at an early stage in the writing. Additional material, such as numerical appendices, listings of computer programs and textual footnotes, may be bound in a separate volume. Where the combined length of text, footnotes and appendices, etc. exceeds 400 pages the thesis must be bound in two volumes."

There are also regulations regarding the language of the thesis: "Dissertation should be written in English or Irish unless prior permission has been granted for the use of another language by the Dean of Graduate Studies." To avail of this, there must be compelling academic reasons for the dissertation to be written in a language other than English or Irish and you must demonstrate that you have the necessary level of fluency in the relevant language. The full policy and process to apply to write your dissertation in a language other than English or Irish can also be found in the TCD Calendar, Part III.

Research Ethics and Academic Integrity

One thing you will have to be very conscientious about in writing your thesis will be aligning your work with the highest standards of academic integrity, which Trinity takes very seriously. This includes avoiding plagiarism and collusion, responsibly managing research data, protecting human subjects who contribute to your research.

There are many resources to help you become familiar with the foundational principles of academic integrity. What appears here is, therefore, not a comprehensive guide but rather a basic starting point and reference to get you started. General information on Research Ethics and Integrity is available from the Trinity Research office. This complements the official College Policy on Research Good Practice. For more specific policies and resources, related for example, to Intellectual Property, managing research grants, or GDPR, a useful set of links can be found here. You may also want to refer to the SLLCS Research Ethics webpage and the materials from the mandatory module "Research Integrity and Impact in an Open Scholarship Era," described in more detail above.

Formatting Styles

As you are surely already aware, there are many different style sheets and sets of conventions used within academic publishing. Depending on your field and your later

publishing activities, you may find yourself needing to master a number of different ones, a challenge which a good reference manager software package (like Zotero or EndNote) can help you with. The Library provides training and support for EndNote, a widely-used bibliographic reference software tool for publishing and managing bibliographies.

For the purpose of your dissertation, however, you should consult with your supervisor as to what would be most appropriate for your specific field and community of practice, and there can be many variations within our multi-disciplinary School.

Students are reminded of Trinity's Accessible Information Policy. All written material (e.g. theses, essays) should use sans serif font (e.g. Calibri or Source Sans Pro), minimum size 12. More information on accessible materials is available on this website.

Research Ethics Approval

Depending on the nature of your research, you may need formal approval from the SLLCS Research Ethics Committee for your work. Ethical approval is required for any research that involves living human subjects (e.g. interviews, surveys, observations, or focus groups) or their data (including image and likeness), no matter how low risk you may perceive the research to be.

All PhD researchers seeking ethical approval must apply for this consideration via the online Research Ethics Application Management System (REAMS) (log in with your TCD credentials). The system will lead you through a variety of questions about your subjects, recruitment procedures, data management and planning (all of which will be useful for writing your methodology section) and allow you to submit and revise your application on one platform. There is extensive documentation and support for using this system available here and on the SLLCS Research Ethics webpage.

Plagiarism

You should make yourself aware of the definitions and categories of plagiarism relevant to postgraduate work, so as to ensure you do not unintentionally commit any infractions against academic integrity. This is taken very seriously at Trinity at postgraduate level, and it is considered the responsibility of the students to ensure they are aware of what is required

of them. This can be done, for example, by working through the Ready, Steady, Write Tutorial and other guides provided by the Library.

Be very aware of the fact that the norms of academic integrity you have learned as an undergraduate may be different from those expected from postgraduate students at Trinity. Infractions such as plagiarism, but also collusion, falsification, impersonation or contract cheating can result in your needing to rewrite work or a note added to your academic record, but they can also result in expulsion or the inability to complete your degree. **It is ultimately your responsibility to ensure you are fully aware of, and abide by, the local understanding of good academic practice.**

Trinity's standard definition of Academic Integrity is found on the College Calendar, Part III. A more detailed and user-friendly description of the way in which infractions against academic integrity are dealt with at Trinity can be found on the Academic Integrity Webpage, specifically under the section on Academic Misconduct.

You should be wary of the risk of breaching academic integrity when it comes to the use of Generative AI tools, such as ChatGPT. There are issues to bear in mind when using these tools. First, while there are good ways to use these tools, such as improving academic writing, it may not always be clear to you where the line is between improving your writing and replacing your writing. This ambiguity can make it very difficult at times to know where the line between appropriate and inappropriate use may lie. Second, for postgraduate work, these tools may be problematic in themselves. Students may be tempted to use GenAI to produce sections of literature reviews, for example, but these tools are often better at summarising than contextualising previous research in terms of your thesis. They are also prone to generating superficially convincing but factually erroneous statements, especially when it comes to highly specific areas of knowledge. Similarly, the temptation to ask a system projecting a reassuring confidence to, for example, suggest a structure or research question for a thesis can often lead to imprecise or misaligned results.

Should you decide to use GenAI tools, be sure to remember that SLLCS policy requires you to cite them in your resource list, including the text of the prompts you used, and the answers generated. This applies only to the generative tools, i.e. those that create new text, not to those using a rule-based system to improve text (such as Microsoft Word

autocorrect, or Grammarly). If you have any questions about what is required, do not hesitate to ask your supervisor for support. Aligned with the College Statement on Artificial Intelligence and Generative AI in Teaching, Learning, Assessment & Research, the use of GenAI is permitted unless otherwise stated. Where the output of GenAI is used in a document or work output, this usage should be acknowledged and appropriate cited, as per Library guidelines on acknowledging and reference GenAI.

5. Completing your PhD

Completing and submitting your thesis

At the end of your fourth year[1] you will submit an intention-to-submit form declaring your intention to submit your thesis. This submission will be made via the Research Manager on my.tcd.ie portal and will trigger a request to your supervisor and Director of Postgraduate Teaching and Learning to name the internal and external examiners for your thesis. If your degree has been referred for major corrections, you will follow the same process at the end of your corrections period.

Once your form has been processed by the Graduate Studies Thesis office, you will receive a link to a folder where you should submit your thesis document. For this phase of your process, the Graduate Studies Thesis Submission webpage may be helpful, especially the video guides on how to navigate the thesis submission on my.tcd.ie system: Student - Thesis Examination.

Examination of Theses

Your viva voce examination will be carried out by two experts in your field, one is usually a member of Trinity staff (the internal examiner), and one will be nominated by your supervisor as an external expert with a profile specifically relevant to your thesis topic. Once the panel has been agreed, a date and time for your viva will be set.

In most cases, viva voce examinations are carried out in person around eight weeks after the thesis submission. However, virtual or hybrid vivas can be held with the agreement of all parties. There are also many cases when holding the viva within eight weeks of submission is not feasible for one reason or another.

The external examiner plays a very important role in the examination of your thesis, as an international expert whose field of research aligns closely with your own. Normally, the external examiner would be someone you have not had much or any contact within the

[1] Dean's Grace grants you one additional month free of fees to submit a thesis and is automatically applied to all research students' registrations in their expected final year

past, and certainly not someone who has been on the panel or that you have collaborated with (there is more information on this in the College Calendar Part III).

The Viva Voce Examination

Trinity provides a comprehensive guide to the viva voce examination, including what to expect and how to prepare.

Remember that while your viva should be academically challenging and probing, it should also be collegial and, in many if not most cases, actually quite pleasurable. It is a rare occurrence in academic life that you will find yourself in a room with two senior colleagues who have read your work carefully and have prepared themselves to explore your evidence and arguments with you. Enjoy it!

If, however, you feel at any point that one or both of the examiners have overstepped the line between professionally questioning the foundations of your work, and making you feel personally uncomfortable, you can at any point ask the viva chair for a break or other form of support.

Corrections and Revision

Your examiners will be charged to assess your work according to the following standard:

> *A doctoral thesis must show evidence of rigour and discrimination, appreciation of the relationship of the subject to a wider field of knowledge/scholarship, and make an appreciable, original contribution to knowledge; it should show originality in the methods used and/or conclusions drawn, and must be clear, concise, well written and orderly and must be a candidate's own work.*

There are four possible outcomes to any viva voce:

Accepted with no corrections.

This is a rare, high accolade for a thesis, requiring no further input from the student.

Accepted with minor revisions.

This is the most common outcome. You will have 2 months from the time of receipt of the formal decision from Graduate Studies to make the corrections, which will be overseen and ultimately approved by your internal examiner. When they are satisfied, they will inform the Graduate Studies Office, and you may start to finalise your thesis.

Referred for major revisions.

If a thesis shows promise but is felt to have some major flaws at the time of the viva, examiners may refer it for major corrections. This gives the student an additional 6 months to continue to rework and revise their thesis and requires the student to pay a re-registration fee. Unlike minor corrections, major corrections are overseen by the student's supervisor, with the resulting revised thesis being re-read by the original examiners (note that there is no second viva voce in these cases).

Recommended (with or without minor revisions) for an MLitt.

Sometimes a thesis is deemed not able to meet the criteria for being awarded a PhD, either before or after major corrections. In these cases, a lower degree of a Master of Letters may be recommended.

More information on these outcomes is available in the viva voce guide.

Finalising your Thesis and Commencements

After your viva and any corrections phase, there are still a few steps left to the process: you will first be asked to submit your thesis formally to the TARA repository. Guidelines will be sent to you for this once your final approval has been recorded in the Graduate Studies Office. After this point, your conferral must be approved by the University Board and Council, which can take a few weeks. Once that has happened, you will be invited to apply to take part in the next commencement ceremony. Remember that:

- you must apply to schedule your graduation and
- your degree is not formally awarded until the commencement process has taken place.

6. Supporting your PhD

Many students do not have the good fortune to obtain funding for their studies before commencing them, and even the best funded student will often welcome the opportunity to do a bit more relevant paid work. A few ideas for how to build up this kind of financial support network appear below.

Funding Opportunities

Unfortunately, most internal Trinity funding schemes have now been aligned to support only students at the point of their initial entry to College. So by the time you are reading this, you are likely no longer eligible to apply for one of the Trinity Research Doctorate Awards, though some thematically restricted places may be available on PI-led or group based projects.

Other funding options, available to incoming and current students, can be explored on the Trinity's Scholarships & Funding and the School's Funding and Scholarships webpages. Financial assistance provided by Student Universal Support Ireland (SUSI), Trinity Trust Travel Grants, and A.J. Leventhal Scholarship in Modern Languages and Literature might be especially relevant in the absence of full studentship.

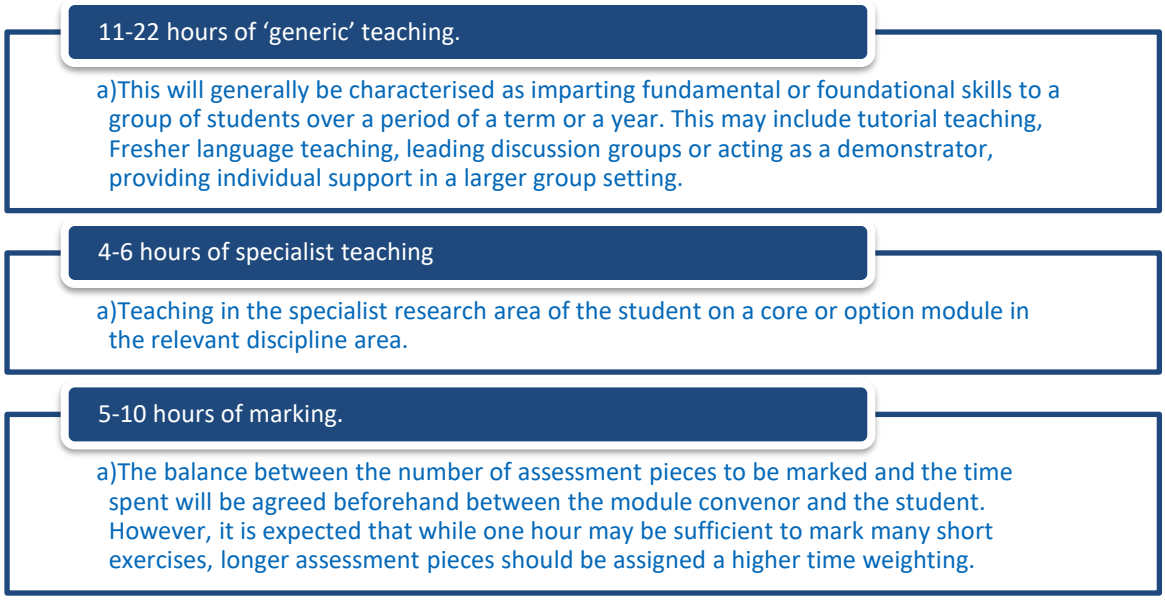
Students should also explore the funding opportunities on the Research Ireland and the Trinity Research Development Office websites. The latter provides training and information sessions for researchers, designed to help them with the grant application process. You can access their past and upcoming events here: Training and events - Trinity Research.

Teaching in SLLCS

The School recognises that the opportunity to gain teaching experience is of vital importance for the majority – though not all – PhD students. Teaching as a PhD student is both a way to enhance your income and a form of professional development, which the School of Languages, Literatures and Cultural Studies is keen to support.

Trinity-wide guidelines to support teaching and learning activities provided by postgraduate research students are outlined on the Graduate Studies website. In line with these

guidelines, the School commits to offering teaching opportunities for PhD students in years 2 and/or 3 of their PhD study if full time, from year 3 if part time, on the following basis:



Students may also be offered the opportunity to co-supervise undergraduate capstones or postgraduate dissertations, with up to a maximum of 3 of the 6 supervision hours to be assigned to them.

Although maximum thresholds for eligible paid work can vary according a student's funding and visa status, no student should be permitted to engage in more than 6 hours per week (150 hours per year) for tax reasons. What maximum level of teaching is acceptable must also be balanced with the student's need to progress their primary goal – their research project. It may, therefore, not be in the interest of the student to engage in teaching at a particular point in their PhD if progress on the research is not deemed to be satisfactory.

Preparation for taking on a teaching role should commence early in the student's first year with a discussion between the student and their supervisor regarding the student's professional goals and what areas and topics they would like to teach in and when. It should not be assumed that every student will want or need to undertake teaching, and choices by students not to engage in these opportunities should be respected.

For those who desire teaching experience as a part of their postgraduate training, a proposal for future teaching should be outlined between the student and the supervisor in

the course of the first year, and discussed by the supervisor with the relevant Head(s) of Discipline(s) or programme/s. The resulting plan should be outlined in the section related to teaching on the form filled out for the student's Year 1 progress review.

Prior to undertaking any teaching in the School, PhD students are strongly recommended to take the 5-ECTS module 'Teaching and Supporting Learning' offered by Centre for Academic Practice as one of their credit-bearing modules. Prospective teachers may also be asked to sit in on or register for modules they may later teach in Year 1 of their studies as observers (particularly at Postgraduate level). This engagement will not be paid.

When PhD students undertake teaching in the School, module coordinators and supervisors are expected to ensure that students are appropriately prepared and supported in their teaching roles. Students will not be expected to set tutorial topics or essay questions, deliver content requiring extensive preparation time that is not separately remunerated, or coordinate, convene or otherwise teach modules independently.

All teaching in the School is paid at an agreed hourly rate, though what rate is used and what is included in the expectations for that rate can vary from module to module. Please confirm with the course convenor at the start of the term the module goals and strategies, review teaching plans, slide decks and other materials, and agree on how much grading (how many essays/exams) you will be expected to take according to the rate you are paid.

Invigilation

PhD students act as the primary invigilators for exams held in Trinity College. This work is not very demanding and is generally well-paid, so is very attractive to full-time PhD students (though part-time students can also apply). For more information and application process see this webpage: Exam Invigilators - Academic Registry.

Travel grants

If research visits or conferences take you out of Dublin, there are specific funding streams you can apply for to support this kind of activity. The Travel Grant requires a bit of planning, and agreement must be obtained ahead of time from the Head of School Dr Murat R. Şiviloğlu to cover the mandatory 20% School contribution. But these can be good ways to

offset the costs of travel to conferences or archives. If your travel takes you to other parts of Europe to further your studies, you may also find that the A.J. Leventhal Scholarship could provide you with welcome additional support (grants up to €2300).

Funded Expenses

If you hold a scholarship that includes funds to support research related activities, such as travel or the purchase of materials, these eligible expenses will need to be claimed via the Trinity system. If this applies to you, please contact the Postgraduate Office for more information on this process, as it may vary depending on the nature of your expenses and the source of your funding.

7. Preparing your Professional Profile

One of the tools that will be made available to you as a part of your structured PhD is a Professional Development Plan that will help you understand the skills you are developing in terms of their broader professional utility. Of course, this is only one of the ways that you can integrate a future-facing focus into your period of postgraduate research.

Conferences and Publications

Over the course of your PhD, you will likely want to begin attending and presenting at conferences and possibly submitting some work for publication. This is in part an important area of activity that you will want to feature on your CV if you are considering an academic career, but participating in wider academic conversations is also a way to enrich your work, inform your perspectives, and build your networks.

Conference attendance is a great way to get feedback on your work to date and will give you an excellent feel for the professional communities and the current trends in scholarship. Many conferences are specifically aimed at postgraduate students, and these are perhaps the least intimidating options, but by no means the only ones you might consider. Irish-based or regional associations are often very welcoming to PhD students. Indeed, many offer prizes or bursaries for early career researchers.

Publishing involves a more difficult (and field varied) decision-making process, as you do not necessarily want to release thesis chapters if you are planning to publish your thesis later as a monograph. It can still be something to pursue, either with pieces of work that don't ultimately make it into the thesis, or tangentially related ideas that arise in the course of your research. This is an issue to discuss with your supervisor, probably from your second year onward, to explore whether there are journals or edited volumes in process that might feature your work.

Academic blogging

Many PhD students with an eye toward the public impact of their work may find it interesting to consider writing one or more pieces for an academic blogging site such as RTÉ Brainstorm or the Conversation. These outlets will give you a chance to learn to write about

your work for a different kind of reader, but also to explore your ideas in a shorter and less densely evidenced format.

Contributions to School and Discipline (and beyond)

One of the common categories used to assess the contribution of academic researchers is the contribution they make to their institution or discipline, which can take many forms. You might organise a postgraduate conference, sit on School executive bodies as a class representative, review submissions to conferences, or join a working or special interest group under the umbrella of any number of organisations. These activities will give you a much more informed sense of the broader context of academic work, beyond research, and may also help you to identify the kinds of activities or organisations you might want to work for later in a non-or para-academic role. Having these kinds of opportunities to build not just your CV, but your professional networks, will prove an invaluable resource for you as you decide what to do after your PhD.

Postdoctoral Opportunities

In particular in your fourth year working on your PhD, you may want to think about applying for funding to continue your research work. If a period of research abroad would be of interest, you might also consider the Marie Skłodowska-Curie Programme, which is open to all fields and places a strong emphasis on research training and development as an early career scholar.

There are many schemes in many countries, which you should discuss with your supervisor. Other opportunities may be available depending on where you want to study, and there are also many opportunities with funded research projects. Be sure to follow the newsletters and other communications used in your field to be aware of these opportunities or speak to your supervisor(s) about your plans so they might make you aware of any opportunities they might see.

8. Student services

Workspaces and Desks

The School makes every effort to accommodate as many students as possible with a dedicated workspace on campus.

Full-time students are invited to apply in May/June of each year for a desk in the Trinity Long Room Hub. Spaces in this lovely building and vibrant interdisciplinary community are highly sought-after. Students generally become eligible to hold one of these desks in their second year of study, and tenure is limited to a maximum of 2 years.

Other dedicated workspaces are available at 7-9 North Leinster Street (Phoenix House). These are offered in September each year and are available to all PhD students in the School. Two types of desks are available in Phoenix house:

- full-time (also offered as part-time/shared) 'permanent' desks allocated for 1 year, and
- bookable hot desks.

Full-time desks can only be offered to students who can commit to using the desk for around 8 hours a day, 5 days a week. The School is offered a certain number of desks each year by the Faculty. Full-time desks will be offered as part-time/shared desks if the School received more applications than desks. If a 'permanent' desk cannot be offered, students will be offered use of bookable hot desks through the Faculty booking system.

Note that spaces for postgraduates in all these venues are limited. You will not be allowed to hold more than one desk space at a time and should remember to hand back any desk space that you are not using, otherwise you may be asked to vacate it.

Students may also prefer to work in one of the Trinity Library spaces, which are varied, and include group and individual carrels alongside the research collections. Although many spaces may be used on an ad hoc basis, there are also annually assigned postgraduate carrels that can be applied for in the main libraries, and spaces in the 1937 Postgraduate Reading Room.

Whatever your requirements for a study space, you are sure to find suitable options across campus. The Interactive College Map can give you some further ideas regarding spaces and places available to you on campus.

Software

As a Trinity student, you are or can be included in a number of software site licenses for packages that range from the essential (e.g. Microsoft Word, Excel and PowerPoint, not to mention data storage and sharing facilities) to the specialised (NVivo, ArcGIS, etc.). Sometimes this inclusion is automatic and free, in other cases you will need to use particular computers and labs or pay a discounted rate for a license. The list of software packages included in this can be found on the IT Services website. For more information, contact the IT Services Helpdesk.

In particular, we would recommend that you familiarise yourself with the operations of the Microsoft file storage (OneDrive) and sharing (SharePoint) facilities, as these are freely available to you, and are more secure, legally compliant, and efficient for purposes like sharing document revisions with your supervisor, than other options you might have access to, such as Google services or your own laptop.

You may also want to familiarise yourself with EndNote reference manager, which is available for free to all Trinity students and is supported by the Library. For more information and support please visit the Library website.

Trinity Student ID Card

As a Trinity student, you will be issued with a multi-purpose identity card. It serves as a membership ID card for the Library and will also grant you access to most Trinity buildings.

Email

You will be provided with a Trinity email account. This is the main way that members of staff will communicate with you during the course. For that reason, you should check your Trinity email account regularly (at least once per weekday).

VLE/Blackboard Ultra

Trinity makes use of a Virtual Learning Environment (VLE) called Blackboard Ultra. Most of the modules make extensive use of this VLE, posting reading lists, schedules, messages, and exercises. Most also require assignments to be submitted via Blackboard.

You can access Blackboard here. You will be prompted for your login details which are the same as those issued to you at registration to access your Trinity email account.

Once you have gained access to Blackboard, you will see a list of the modules on which you are registered. If you click on the individual modules, you will be taken to the content for that module.

Internet

While on campus, you can also access the Trinity Wi-Fi. The login details are the same as those you use to access your Trinity email account. For further information, see this page.

If you have any issues with your Trinity email account or Wi-Fi connection, or if you require any other technical assistance, please contact the IT Service Desk.

Student representation and feedback

The Postgraduate Research students are represented within the central School administrative structure by a PGR student representative who sits on the School Executive, Postgraduate and Research & Ethics Committees. Student concerns are a standing item on the agenda of these committees and issues raised by the postgraduate representatives in these meetings are taken seriously and followed up as needed.

Your representative for 2026-27 will be chosen at the start of the Academic Year. If you are interested in becoming a student representative, please liaise with the Trinity Student Union. Student Representatives can help their fellow students with issues such as leap cards, accommodation, finance, TCD merchandise, study tips and many more. More information on the Student's Union and Class Representation can be found on the SU website.

College Services for Postgraduate Students

As well as the supports offered at School level, you may find these central offices and resources of use during your time as a PhD student.

Students Union

The Students' Union (SU) is the only representative body for all students in Trinity College, Dublin. Its aims are to represent and defend the interests of the students of Trinity College both within College and externally; to provide supports and services to the student community in particular pastoral and academic advocacy supports, and a Graduate Common Room; and to maintain a sense of community and collegiality among the students of Trinity College, through the provision of large and small recreational and social activities. All postgraduate students at TCD are automatically members of the Students' Union upon registration. You may also choose to become a member of the national Postgraduate Workers' Organisation. Please note that this is not an office or part of Trinity College Dublin, but rather an independent organisation.

You can connect with the SU via email frontoffice@tcdsu.org or phone (01) 6468 431.

General Learning Development

Very often, postgraduate students discover that they do not have certain skills that they require to flourish on their course. There is no shame in this. A postgraduate research programme is intense and demanding. Also, what is expected in a postgraduate research course at Trinity is almost certainly very different from what you have learned at your previous university and in your previous course. For international students especially, it is highly recommended that you study this webpage, which gives a brief introduction to key aspects of the Trinity academic culture.

If you find that you are struggling with some aspect of the course, such as managing your study time and meeting deadlines, writing in the way that is expected of you, planning your essays, or taking notes, it is highly recommended that you undertake one of the workshops that is organized to target these issues as soon as possible. Do not wait and expect the problem to get better by itself. You can find details of the services available to help you through such situations here.

The Academic Writing Centre, which offers a variety of writing services for all students to help them develop their academic writing skills. Students of all levels and abilities, even the very high achievers, often need support and/or advice to achieve their best. Student Learning Development office can give that support. The PG Workshops and Development events series offers everything from a 'Writing Cafe' to more structured sessions on time management, notetaking, literature reviews, and much more.

Postgraduate Advisory Services

The Postgraduate Advisory Service (PAS) is a free and confidential service available to all registered postgraduate students in Trinity College. PAS offers a comprehensive range of academic, pastoral and professional supports, including one-to-one appointments, workshops and trainings, and emergency financial assistance.

PAS exists to ensure that all postgraduates students have a dedicated, specialist service independent of the School-system to whom they can turn for support and advice during their time at Trinity. Common concerns students present to PAS include stress; financial worries; queries about regulations or services available at Trinity; supervisor-relationship concerns; academic progression issues; academic appeals.

The PAS is led by the Postgraduate Student Support Officers who provide frontline support for all Postgraduate students in Trinity. These Support Officers will act as a source of support and guidance; they can also put you in touch with or recommend other services, depending on your needs.

For an appointment, please email postgrad.support@tcd.ie. Please be sure to include your name, School, course and a brief outline of your query/concern. They aim to return all student queries within one working day, though at busy times a reply may take a little longer.

Bear in mind that if you are struggling, there is also a section on the Graduate Studies pointing toward resources available for different types of difficulty (academic, financial, professional development, etc.).

Student Counselling

Student Counselling Service offers free, confidential and non-judgemental support to registered students of Trinity College Dublin who are experiencing personal and/or academic concerns. The Trinity Counselling Service operates a hybrid service model. This involves a blend of in-person, video and telephone formats. Please email student-counselling@tcd.ie to request an appointment.

Trinity disAbility Service

The mission at Trinity disAbility Service is to create an accessible, transformational, educational environment in an interdependent University community and provide a platform for innovation and inclusion. They can provide supports or organise for reasonable accommodations as needed, including:

- Academic Support
- Assistive Technology
- Occupational Therapy
- Support on Placements and Internships

Additional information is available in a step-by-step How to apply for Reasonable Accommodations guide, and an application can be made through my.tcd.ie via the 'My Disability Service' tab. Any postgraduate student in Trinity is welcome to contact the disAbility Service to informally discuss their needs prior to making a formal application. You can contact them at askds@tcd.ie or (1) 8963 111.

College Health Service

The College Health Service which provides a full-service GP and clinic on campus. This is likely a cheaper option than going to a local doctor or hospital for many non-emergency issues. There is no charge for student consultations, which must be made by appointment. However, if tests are required, fees may apply.

Careers Advisory Service

Trinity Careers Advisory Service helps students and recent graduates of the College make and implement informed decisions about their future. Useful information and advice are available at www.tcd.ie/Careers and in the Careers Library, 2nd Floor, 7-9 South Leinster Street.

Trinity Careers Service offers two accredited modules as part of the Trinity Structured PhD. These modules support PhD students with career planning, critical reflection and career decision-making, and offer opportunities to explore and prepare for careers in academia or industry. For more information, please visit this webpage.

Other Essential Contacts

Campus Security: On-Campus Security can be contacted in case of emergency on campus. Tel: (01) 8961999 or (01) 8961317

SafeZone: SafeZone is a voluntary app that increases the security and safety of students and staff while in a Trinity location. It provides immediate access to Trinity resources to aid in cases of emergencies or when an alert is raised. Download the SafeZone App.

Official Letters

Students can self-generate the following letters from my.tcd.ie portal:

- Registration letter;
- Proof of fees paid;
- Visa Letter.

The Academic Registry Service Desk can provide letters confirming your course registration as well as letters detailing registration history for graduates of the University. Students and graduates can request letters by contacting the Academic Registry, or by submitting an online letter request form.

Further resources are listed in the Trinity Postgraduate Research Student Handbook.

9. For when things go differently than planned

Obviously, we hope that every postgraduate research student in the School will progress easily and without impediment through their PhD. In reality, this is not always the case, and you should expect that at some point to become ill, have a family emergency, or otherwise want or need to interrupt your studies.

If you feel you may not make one of your annual progression milestones, you should speak to your supervisor about the difficulties you have been facing. The sooner you reach out, the sooner we can help you, and your supervisor may take your concerns to the Director of Postgraduate Teaching in Learning, who can advocate that you receive a milestone extension or be considered for a period off books.

Going Off Books

A student considering going off books should liaise with their supervisor and/or the Postgraduate Advisory Services and seek their advice on how to manage their situation. If the student then decides they want to go off books, this Off Books Form will need to be filled out by the student for the approval of the Director of Postgraduate Studies (DTLP) and the Graduate Studies Office.

The period Off Books for PGR students can be either 6 or 12 months, which must commence in either March or September.

During the period of interruption, graduate students are not required to pay fees. Consequently, they will not have a student card during this period and will not have access rights to the College Library or other College facilities.

Students who are off books on medical grounds must submit a completed Fitness to Study Letter of Certification one month prior to their return date to be reviewed by the Medical Group.
Special conditions apply to students taking time off books for the purpose of maternal, parental or adoptive leave, please see the College Calendar if this applies to you.

Academic Appeals

Where a viva voce of a thesis has been held and the thesis referred back for the award of a lower degree, or outright failure is recommended, a student may appeal the decision of the examiners. Appeals will be entertained only in cases amounting to a reasonable claim that the examination was unfair.

All decisions on appeals are made by the Dean of Graduate Studies Office, and requests to make an appeal should be referred there. The Academic Appeals webpage gives further detail regarding the grounds and processes for appeals.