

S2S

Student2Student

# **S2S Advanced Mentor Handbook**

2025/26



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

**S2S**   
Student 2 Student

## Welcome Message

### Breda Walls



Breda Walls

**Director of Student Services**

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A very warm welcome and sincere thank you to each of you joining the S2S Peer Support team this year. Over 800 students have once again stepped up to guide and support incoming students – a testament to the generosity, leadership, and community spirit that defines Trinity.

Starting college is a transformative moment – filled with opportunity, but also uncertainty. Many students are navigating a new city, new systems, and new expectations. Your presence, your listening ear, and your practical guidance make an enormous difference. You are often the first friendly face they encounter, and the impact of that cannot be overstated.

Your work in campus tours, group meet-ups, and everyday check-ins plays a vital role in helping new students feel seen, connected, and confident. These early moments lay the foundation for a meaningful university experience, building a sense of belonging from the very beginning and you are at the heart of that.

As the semester unfolds, I want to remind you to take care of yourselves too. Balancing your own academic and personal commitments with the support you offer others takes effort and energy. Please remember that self-care is not a luxury – it's essential. The S2S community is here for you, just as you are here for others.

This programme is not only about what you give – it's also about what you gain. The friendships you form, the leadership skills you develop, and the difference you make will stay with you long after the year ends.

Thank you for being part of something so important. Your commitment strengthens our community, and your contribution helps shape a welcoming, inclusive Trinity for all. Here's to a rewarding and inspiring year ahead. We're proud to have you on the team.

## Welcome Message

### Trish Murphy



Trish Murphy

**Student Counselling Service Director**

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The student counselling services welcomes you wholeheartedly to the S2S programme. S2S volunteers are an essential part of our outreach and prevention programme, where new students benefit from the connection, energy and guidance of their more experienced peers. We know from research that S2S mentors fulfil an essential part of student success in that they create belonging for incoming students and this allows for academic achievement, emotional stability, and robust mental health.

Seeing Red hoodies around campus is a signpost to fun, engagement and genuine care. This is at the heart of volunteering, and it rewards the practitioner as well as the recipient.

We want to thank you for your commitment, for your generosity and your good humour and we'd like you to know that you are creating a positive experience for new entrants that may be the cornerstone of their whole college experience.

We salute you!

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# Introducing S2S

Trinity College’s Student 2 Student (S2S) Mentoring and Peer Support Programme is part of our Student Counselling Service, and specifically designed to ensure every student in Trinity knows that they belong here. Through S2S, students can get information and support from another student, find a friendly face to have a chat, talk things through or just ask a few questions when they’re not sure who to approach. S2S recognises that student success is founded on belonging and connection, and strives to create a social and supportive environment where everyone can be their authentic self, and is welcomed and accepted as they are.



**Adele Kenna**  
2024/25 Mentor

‘S2S is a community full of amazing people, full of so much love and kindness, willing to help anyone and everyone who wants support.’

**Mission of the Trinity Counselling, Learning Development and Student 2 Student Services:**  
Support through collaboration, connection and compassion.

**Vision of the Trinity Counselling, Learning Development and Student 2 Student Services:**  
To be an internationally accredited service, delivering accessible social, academic, mental health and emotional wellbeing services across the Trinity community, keeping students at the centre of everything we do.

## S2S Staff



**Ralph Armstrong-Astley**

S2S Coordinator  
Pronouns: She/Her

Ralph leads the S2S team and is responsible for the strategic development of the service. As part of the Student Counselling Service Management team, she represents S2S volunteers and the students they support in steering and advisory groups across Trinity College, and within the National Consortium for Peer-led Transition.



**Alanna Lawlor**

S2S Programme Officer  
Pronouns: She/Her

Alanna manages the daily function of the S2S volunteer programmes and volunteer engagement. She provides students support and debriefing to S2S volunteers. She also assists in the strategic development and representation of the service.



**Chloe Staunton**

S2S Executive Officer  
Pronouns: She/Her

Chloe assists with the administrative work of the programme and the daily function of the S2S Student Space in House 47. She manages student and volunteer queries, volunteer reimbursement and assists with the orientation process.

**Email:** [student2student@tcd.ie](mailto:student2student@tcd.ie)

**Phone:** 01 896 5033

**Ralph's mobile:** 085 7833 548

**Address:** House 47, Trinity College Dublin

- [TCD Sense Map](#)
- [Google Maps](#)

Book a **drop-in session** with an S2S Staff Member.

In an emergency, please use the **after hours services information**.

**Here to Support You**

## Peer Supporters



Peer Supporters are student volunteers who receive high-level training in active listening, confidentiality, and emotional support.

They're available to all students in Trinity, so you can reach out to them yourself and refer mentees who could benefit from the support. You don't need to be in distress or crisis to talk to a Peer Supporter, but they can help with problems big and small.



**Joanna Jarmolowicz** - 2023/24 Peer Supporter

'Peer supporters don't pass any judgement and being in a similar age group can make it easier to understand certain situations you might be struggling with'

**You can request a meeting with a Peer Supporter by:**

- emailing [student2student@tcd.ie](mailto:student2student@tcd.ie).
- using our **online form**.

You can also view **Peer Supporter profiles** to find out more about the team, and you can specify any Peer Supporter you'd prefer to talk to (or not talk to) when you request a meeting.

It may not always be possible, but the aim is for you to receive a response from a Peer Supporter within 48 hours of making your application (excluding weekends). They will email you with some suggested times and venues for a meetup, and all you will need to do is reply with the one that most suits you.

# Head Mentors

Think of a Head Mentor as your Mentor. They are there to support you and guide you in this role. If you have any questions about mentoring, organising events or signposting, you can approach your Head Mentor. They will organise events for you, your fellow Mentors, and your mentees.

Head Mentors meet with the S2S office once a month to share any updates, upcoming plans or concerns. They are also there to encourage you in your role and nominate Mentors for awards when the S2S Award season comes around! Keep in touch with your Head Mentor and lean on them when you need to!



## How do I know who my Head Mentors are?

Head Mentors are grouped by your mentee group's course, not your own!

Once you receive your Mentor Group code on Odyssey (e.g. '2526-3SET'), you can find your Head Mentors listed in the Handbook or on the **S2S website**.

## When should I contact my Head Mentors?

You will need to CC your Head Mentors in all your weekly emails to your mentees.

## Why might I reach out to them during the year?

Direct questions about meetups, working with your buddy, or mentee queries to your Head Mentors. They have all mentored before, bring lots of expertise to the role, and are more than happy to help.

# Head Mentors

## Meet Your Head Mentors

This year, you will have 4 head Mentors. 3 of them will be looking after the Business and Philosophy courses, and one will have specific oversight of the 3Set/Advanced Mentor groups.

As a former Advanced Mentor himself, Raghav will be able to support the specific elements of the 3Set programme, but will join forces with Alannah, Siofra and Tuleh for social events and wider activities.

### Business and Philosophy



Alannah Markham



Siofra Delaney



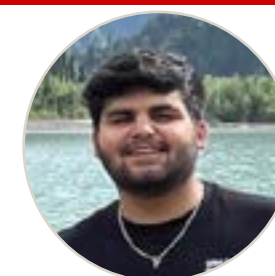
Tuleh Jennings

**s2shead.bussocsci@gmail.com**

Head Mentors for Mentors with the following group codes:

- 2526-BBST
- 2526-BESS
- 2526-BULG
- 2526-PPES
- 2526-PHIL

### 3Set



Raghav Goyal

**s2shead.3set@gmail.com**

Head Mentors for Mentors with the following group codes:

- 2526-3SET

## Advanced Mentor Role Description



The Advanced Mentor programme is designed to provide a friendly environment for first year students. Advanced Mentors collaboratively identify barriers to successful transition, supporting first year students' emotional, social and academic wellbeing.

The advanced Mentor programme works only in the School of Social Work and Social Policy

### What is involved?



As an advanced mentor you will help not only with orientation, but throughout the year! You will help:

#### Orientation

- Run an Ice Breaker and Q&A session
- Give a guided campus tour (including the library)
- Answer any questions students might have



#### During the year

- Run fortnightly timetabled sessions with your group
- Send fortnightly emails
- Attend meetings with your Head Mentors
- 1:1 meetings if requested by members of your group
- Log all your activity online

### What do you get?



#### You will receive:

- A full suite of resources to build sessions and email content
- Excellent experience in team work, leadership and initiative
- Guaranteed references based on your logged activity
- Support from Head Mentors and S2S staff
- The chance to do something really positive and rewarding

### What is expected?



#### You will be expected to

- To attend Mentor training and Advanced mentor training
- To facilitate an orientation session in September
- To contribute 1-3 hours per week for the rest of the year
- To regularly check and respond to your TCD emails
- Apply for garda vetting clearance (if requested to)

## House 47 Student Space

You can find us here: House 47, Trinity College Dublin

- [TCD Sense Map](#)
- [Google Maps](#)

S2S is based in House 47, where there is a dedicated student space for you to enjoy! It is equipped with a microwave, cutlery and tea and coffee facilities. You can use this space to host a meetup, have lunch, or just hang out. We also have an interactive screen so you can practice presentations or stream movies too. Something you'd like to see in the space? Let us know!



Along with the communal space, there is a bookable Zoom Room and a Private 1:1 space. If you have an online appointment, need to study or want to have a private convo with someone, you can book these spaces!



#### Booking Links:

**The Zoom Room** (Room 7)

**The 1:1 Room** (Room 8)

**Student Space** (for group meet-ups)

Please see the **S2S Room Booking Policy**.

# Policies Overview

As a member of S2S, there are certain policies that you must be aware of to ensure your safety and the safety of the mentees.

We value you, our volunteers, and want you to get involved at all levels of the organisation. We aim to train, support and supervise to the best of our abilities, and to act quickly and fairly if difficulties arise, and we are proud to uphold the **TCD Volunteer Charter** and the **Volunteering Ireland Charter**.

By volunteering with S2S, you agree to uphold our data protection and confidentiality agreements. You will also be required to sign an accountable space agreement.

You must familiarise yourself with the **S2S Volunteer Policy Document**, including some key policies such as:

- **S2S Diversity and Accountability Policy**
- **S2S Event Funding Policy**
- **S2S Room Booking Policy**

As a student of Trinity, you are also expected to uphold **college policies**, of note:

- **Dignity and Respect Policy**
- **Equality Policy**
- **Accessible Information Policy**

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## INCLUSIVITY FOR ALL

S2S is a friendly and welcoming space, in which we respect all background and walks of life.

At S2S we want everyone to feel safe and accepted while being their authentic selves.

We ensure everyone has the opportunity to contribute, and advocate for equity-deserving communities, and will stand up against discrimination when we encounter it.



## RESPECTFUL ENGAGEMENT

We maintain a person-centred approach in all interactions.

We practice active listening, avoiding assumptions and ensuring we are non-judgemental, attentive and confidential.

We respect the autonomy of each individual.



## OPEN COMMUNICATION

We facilitate calm, considerate discussion where everyone can express their thoughts freely.

We encourage 'I' statements to promote accountability and foster kindness and empathy in conversations.

We value every question and everyone is welcome to ask for help without fear of judgement.

## BOUNDARIES AND GROWTH

We pay attention to our personal limitations and observe the boundaries outlined in our roles.

We take time to recharge and practice self-care and self-compassion and to reflect on our experiences and learnings.

We will take credit as well as responsibility, and check-in with each other and value our unique contributions, as well as our collaborative, group-based efforts.



## Data Protection

As S2S Mentors, you are required to adhere to the **Student Counselling Service's Privacy Notice** and to be mindful of how and why you process personal data.

Personal data you are likely to encounter as an S2S Mentor includes:

- Students' contact details (TCD email addresses).
- Emails written to you by other students.
- Video footage or photos of other students (e.g., recordings of online meetings, or photos taken at meetups).

To ensure that everyone's data and their privacy is respected, you must:

- Use live data from [s2svolunteer.tcd.ie](http://s2svolunteer.tcd.ie) to create mentee mailing lists (don't download or save these contact details anywhere else).
- Adhere to the S2S email protocol. BCC your group members (don't paste their email addresses into the "To" or "CC" field).
- Delete emails (received and sent) once you have dealt with them. If emails contain personal/ sensitive data that may be needed in the future, please consult with the S2S office about secure storage on the SCS Titanium system.
- Get permission from all parties before sharing or storing any videos or photographs taken in your capacity as an S2S Mentor, including explicit written consent for any dissemination on social media, or in emails, etc.

Please refer to **Trinity College's Data Protection Handbook** for more detailed information.

# Confidentiality

As part of volunteering with S2S, it is important that you follow the **S2S confidentiality policy**.

The relationship between a mentee and an S2S Mentor is confidential to the service. This means that nothing a mentee tells you can be disclosed to anyone outside the Counselling Services. There are exceptions to this, including:

- 1. If you are concerned about the **risk of harm to a student or to a third party**. In these circumstances, you must raise your concerns with staff in the S2S office as a priority (following the referral process wherever possible). S2S will make every effort to discuss the situation directly with the student(s) concerned and to involve them in the disclosure process.
- 2. S2S staff form part of the Student Counselling Service (SCS), who are mandated reporters under The Children First Act 2015. Information regarding **past or current abuse of children (aged under 18)** given to SCS must be reported to the Irish Child and Family Agency (TUSLA) if there is a reasonable suspicion that there is a child (aged under 18) at risk at the time of reporting. Records relating to such matters will be kept indefinitely, in accordance with current legal guidelines.
- 3. Case notes kept by S2S staff relating to student engagement with an S2S volunteer may be **subpoenaed by court order**. This, along with GDPR, is a good reason not to keep notes unless absolutely necessary for the student’s wellbeing.

## Orientation

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# What to Expect

As an S2S Mentor, your first interaction with your mentees will be orientation, where you will give a guided tour of the campus, key locations, and run a group session.

Orientation takes place from **Monday, 15 September to Friday, 19 September**. Your orientation session will take place after 5 pm on one of these days.

**Attendance at your assigned orientation session is mandatory.**

**Failure to attend will result in your immediate withdrawal from the Mentor team.**



1. Collect your hoodie!
2. Connect with your buddy/buddies in advance and plan out your sessions.
3. Attend your session and check in with S2S. Make sure you get the materials you need.
4. Write your group number on your balloon.
5. Spread out! Remember that students will be gathering around you, and you don't want them to get mixed up with the next group.
6. Introduce yourselves. Your group might not know what S2S is or what your role as Mentors will be.
7. Keep an eye out for shy students who aren't talking to anyone or are hiding away in the back.
8. Give your tour and run your icebreaker session. You've got this!

## Orientation checklist



- **Hoodie**
- **Balloon**
- **Running order**
- **Icebreaker materials**  
(including room number for Ice Breaker/FAQ)
- **Group list**  
(on Odyssey)



# Icebreakers

Ice Breakers are great! They get everyone warmed up and speaking to each other. They help break the “embarrassment barrier” when no one wants to be the first to speak or to ask a question. They also give your group members the means to start a conversation with a fellow mentee next time they see them.



When you’re thinking about Icebreakers, remember:

**I**nclusive

Get everyone involved, and make sure everyone speaks!

**C**onstraints

Have a backup plan in case the room doesn’t allow for the icebreaker or a member of your group can’t participate.

**E**quipment

Make sure you bring what you need, and it’s agreed in advance who does what.

**Y**ou

If you join in, group members will feel more comfortable participating!

**Raj Aryan Upadhyaya** - 2024/25 Mentor

‘Basically tossing a ball (USE A TENNIS BALL OR SOMETHING LIGHT (I used a very worn out cricket ball indoors and I was still kinda concerned about accidentally breaking glass), brownie points if it’s something from your favourite sport (CRICKETERS, USE A TENNIS BALL)) around and getting each mentee to answer the format of “what is your name, what course do you study, and a cool fact about yourself” is a really simple one as it helps give everyone in the room a fundamental idea of who you are and what your personality is like.’



# Icebreakers Suggestions

## Two Truths and a Lie

10 - 15 mins

Participants are asked to think of three statements. Two must be true statements, and one must be false.

Participants take it in turn to share the three statements (in any order) with the group. The group then have 3 minutes to ask them questions and to decide which statement is the lie.

## Our Vision for the Future

10 mins

Divide participants into groups of about 3-4 people. Tell them it is four/ five years from now and they are about to graduate. What do they want to say about their Trinity experience when they look back at it? Give groups 5 minutes to discuss this and then bring them back in for feedback.

## I Bet You Didn’t Know

10 - 20 mins

Participants are put into pairs. They are asked to interview each other. Participants are given a link to an online poll/interactive whiteboard and asked to enter, using their own devices, two unrelated facts about themselves that nobody in the group would know, but that they don’t mind sharing.

These statements are projected onto the screen or whiteboard, and participants are asked to work out who each one belongs to by asking questions to other group members. However, they are not allowed to use any of the words written in the statement when asking the question, and they’re not allowed to ask outright what their fellow participants wrote.

**Getting to Know You**

10 mins + 1 additional minute per participant

Participants are put into pairs. They are asked to interview each other using the following questions:

1. What is your name?
2. What are your pronouns? (he/she/they etc.) Only if they are comfortable sharing.
3. Reason they picked their course.
4. Last song/piece of music/podcast, etc., they listened to.

After 5 mins, the group reconvenes, and each participant introduces their partner to the group using their answers to the questions posed.

**Make a Web**

10 - 15 mins

One participant is given a roll of string and asked to pick a number. The facilitator will ask the question associated with that number.

When the participant has answered the question, they should hold on to the end of the piece of string and throw the roll to another participant.

That participant then picks a number, and so on. When everyone is holding on to the string at some point, examine the web and point out that it would not be the same if any one member of the group were elsewhere.

**Sample Questions:**

- |                                                                      |                                                                     |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1. If you could date any cartoon character, who or what would it be? | 7. What's your favourite season and why?                            |
| 2. You have to sing karaoke, what song do you pick?                  | 8. What's the worst chat-up line you've ever heard?                 |
| 3. Who would play you in a movie about your life?                    | 9. What's the weirdest present anyone has ever given you?           |
| 4. What's your favourite procrastination technique?                  | 10. What was the last fancy dress costume you wore?                 |
| 5. What's the weirdest food you've ever eaten?                       | 11. If you were famous, what would you be famous for?               |
| 6. What was your favourite toy as a child?                           | 12. If you were a wrestler, what would be your entrance theme song? |

## Frequently Asked Questions

Starting college is a big transition, and incoming first-year students often have lots of questions. Here's a list of the ones you submitted during training, the same questions you had when you were starting out. These will be particularly useful for you to be aware of for your Q&A session at Orientation, and throughout the year when mentees approach you with questions.

**Academics****How do exams work?**

Exams and results work differently for different courses. However, the Academic Registry's **student guide for examinations** is a great way to familiarise yourself with how exams and results work for Trinity students.

Trinity uses a percentage-based system. Each course has different rules for weighting continuous assessment and exams. Check out:

- **Academic Registry – Understanding your results**
- **General Grade Descriptors PDF**

**What's the difference between a lecture, tutorial, and lab?**

**Lectures:** Large-group presentations of course content.

**Tutorials:** Small-group sessions for discussion and questions.

**Labs:** Hands-on, practical sessions, usually for science or tech students.

Ask your module coordinator or refer to your course handbook for details.

**What academic skills do I need at college?**

Most Trinity students need time to adjust to independent study and research. If you're used to being told what to read and when, having to use your own judgement and motivation can be a lot trickier than it sounds. **Student Learning Development** offer a host of online resources, workshops, the Academic Writing Centre, and one-to-one support to help you work it out.

### What is referencing?

Referencing means acknowledging the source of the information you have used (referred to) in your work. It helps clarify to the reader how you have used the work of others to develop your own ideas and arguments. Your course handbook normally contains guidelines for essay writing, including which style of referencing to use and example references to follow. Trinity takes referencing and Academic Integrity seriously, and you can get into trouble if you've plagiarised someone else's work, which includes citing the work and not referencing the citation. If you're not sure you're referencing correctly or need help referencing, you can ask the **duty librarian** for assistance.

### What should I know about AI?

For an overview of Generative AI – what it is, how it works, its limitations and risks, please see **Trinity's Generative Artificial Intelligence (GenAI) Hub**.

Please note, **the use of Generative AI is permitted unless otherwise stated in course handbooks**.

However, you must (at a minimum) acknowledge its use, using the guidance given in this **LibGuide**.

### What should I do if I'm struggling with my course or thinking of leaving?

Feeling unsure is normal. Speak to your tutor first. They're there to support you.

You can also contact:

- **Academic Registry**
- **Senior Tutor's Office**
- **Student Counselling Service**



### Who is my tutor?

All registered undergraduate students are allocated a Tutor when starting in college. Your Tutor is a member of the academic staff who is appointed to look after the general welfare and development of all students in their care. Details of your tutor can be found on your **TCD Portal**. You should ensure that you meet with your Tutor at the beginning of the year to introduce yourself.

### AskTCD

**AskTCD** is a platform for students, staff, applicants or external enquirers to contact both the Academic Registry and the disAbility Service. It offers a streamlined way to:

- Submit enquiries to the Academic Registry and disAbility Service, and track their progress
- Access and complete student forms online
- Book appointments with the Academic Registry
- Find answers quickly through the FAQ hub

### Campus Life

#### How to find things on campus?

**Printable and interactive maps** of the campus are available, along with **directions to and from** the college from various transport hubs and locations around the city. The **TCD Sense Map** provides information about the sensory environments in different areas of Trinity, as well as physical access information for buildings across campus.

### Student spaces on campus?

Sometimes you just need a spot to relax in between classes! There are relaxed student spaces, including designated Zón Mac Léinn (student zones) at the following locations:

- **Global Room, Watts Building**
- **JCR Hamilton Zón Mac Léinn**
- **Old stone building, St James's Hospital**
- **Oldham House, Trinity Halls**
- **S2S Student Space (House 47)**
- **Seomra na Gaeilge**
- **SU Café, Goldsmith**
- **SU Kitchen, House 6**
- **TBSI Zón Mac Léinn**
- **The Buttery vaults Zón Mac Léinn**



## Cheapest places to eat on campus?

Finding a bite between lectures can be tricky. **Trinity in 12 Weeks** has a handy guide to dining on campus. The most reasonably priced options include:

- **The Buttery** – Hot meals, soups, and sandwiches at student-friendly prices.
- **SU Café (Goldsmith Hall)** – Affordable snacks, coffee, and lunch options.
- **Perch Café (Arts Block)** – Quick grab-and-go items.
- **The Forum (Trinity Business School)** – Hot breakfast, coffee, tea, and pastries.

For cheap eats in the surrounding areas, check out the fantastic suggestions mentioned in this **Trinity College blog post**.

- **Boojum** – inexpensive and student-friendly.
- **KC Peaches** – student discounts and close to campus.
- **Tang** – sustainable and budget-friendly.
- **Chopped** – healthy and affordable.
- **Dunnes Food Hall** – the salad counter.

If you bring your own lunch, you can also try out the student spaces with microwaves.



## Where are microwaves on campus?

Microwaves for public use are available at the following locations:

- Arts Bloc, lower level near the Perch café
- Hamilton Café Student Space (by Panoz labs)
- Institute of Population Health, Tallaght
- JCR Hamilton student space
- Old Stone Building, St. James's Hospital
- S2S Student Space (House 47)
- School of Nursing and Midwifery, D'Olier Street
- SU Café, Goldsmith
- SU kitchen, first floor of House 6
- The Atrium, Room 50
- School of Nursing and Midwifery, D'Olier Street
- SU Café, Goldsmith
- SU kitchen, first floor of House 6
- The Atrium, Room 50

## IT & Facilities

### What apps or tools do I need as a Trinity student?

You'll regularly use:

- **Blackboard Learn** – lectures, assignments, grades
- **MyTCD portal** – registration, fees, results
- **Student email** – official communication

More support:

**IT Services Help Page**

### How do I use Blackboard?

Depending on the module, lecture notes, online assignments and other resources are available on **Blackboard**. Help content is now located within the 'Student Help' sections when you log in. These include guides and video tutorials to help you get started, along with answers to the most common questions. If you can't find what you need there, please contact **IT Services**.

### How do I connect to WiFi?

The **TCD WiFi guidelines** provide a user-friendly, step-by-step guide on how to connect to the TCD WiFi network.

## How do I use the printers?

The central printing, scanning and photocopying facilities are provided by Datapac and managed by IT Services and the College Library. There are multi-function devices in the IT Services Computer Rooms, Libraries, and in some off-campus locations. Full instructions on how to use the service are available on the **Datapac website**.

## How to get a locker and when?

Locker locations and information about how and when to rent them are **available here**. You will need your TCard login details to access all the information.



## Transition to College

### How do I make friends at college?

The transition to college can be overwhelming, especially for international students and students living away from home for the first time. Let your mentees know there are lots of ways to meet new people, from **societies and clubs** to classes and courses at the **Sports Centre**. And of course, they might meet some of their closest college friends through their S2S Mentor group!

### Societies?

There are more than 170 clubs and societies, and involvement in student organisations is not seen as just a hobby, but an integral part of Trinity education. **Find out more about clubs and societies.**

### What supports are there?

For a full list of support services, from general queries to careers, financial, and IT, see the **support services webpage**.



### Accommodation

Moving to Dublin and finding accommodation for the first time can be a difficult task. We recommend you check out **TCDSU's Accommodation Advisory Service**, which offers information on the different types of accommodation, where to look for it, and your rights as a tenant.

### How do I get around Dublin, and what transport should I use?

Most students use Dublin Bus, Luas, or DART.

- To get a student fare, apply for a: **Student Leap Card**
- Use this app for route planning: **TFI Live App**
- For more: **Trinity transport and commuting advice**

## Information for International students

All new incoming international students receive the **International Student Welcome Guide**. This is a very useful source of information for S2S Mentors as it covers the types of information that international students need to know.

The Global Room is a welcoming student support hub and event space for all Trinity students, with a focus on support to international students to navigate Trinity, but also to help everyone find community and belonging. It is managed by the Global Experience Manager and Global Room officers, including an Immigration Support Officer, and supported by a team of Student Ambassadors. **Further information here.**



The Student Ambassadors provide peer-to-peer advice on all aspects of student life in Trinity and Dublin, and can be a great place to start for signposting to advice and information across Trinity. The Global Room staff are available to support students with a range of issues, from health insurance and bank accounts to visa and immigration enquiries. Any crisis cases involving international students can also be brought to the attention of the Global Experience Manager.

The space regularly hosts international-themed events, such as national holidays and cultural celebrations, seminars, movie screenings and information sessions. Additionally, the Global Room holds the Pathway to Belonging pre-arrival programme, and New2Dublin – a Student Ambassador-led programme supporting incoming students adjust to life in Dublin and get to know other students. A Pathway to Belonging webinar playlist can be found **here**. International students also get access to the 'Goin' to Trinity' app, where they can connect with other new international students.

# Campus Tour

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During orientation, you will be giving a campus tour, showing your mentees all the important spots any first-year would need to know. When giving your tour, along with showing the main spots, make sure to show your mentees important areas specific to your course, like essay drop-off points and department buildings.

## CAMPUS TOUR

- 1 Academic Registry
- 2 Global Room
- 3 The PAV
- 4 Student Counselling
- 5 Senior Tutor's Office
- 6 Dining Hall/Buttery
- 7 House 6 / Mandella House

Not forgetting lecture theatres, Labs, course offices and TOILETS!



Don't forget to include the information you know best, like which toilets to use, what TCD websites are the most useful, how to book the best spots in the library, where the microwaves are, etc.

Walk out your route in advance and make sure you're familiar with diversions, and areas where there may be accessibility issues - the **TCD Sense Map** can be a useful asset for planning.

'A tip I found really helpful was having one Mentor near the front of the group and one near the end. This made sure all mentees were engaged and had the opportunity to interact with us..'

**Rachel Ranjith**  
2024/25 Mentor



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Plan your route once you have all the orientation information.



Be helpful and informative, but don't overstretch to be entertaining (e.g. inappropriate stories, rumours, etc.)



Always show where the toilets are!



Have one Mentor leading the group and the other at the back to ensure that no one is left behind.



Allow informal chats/ questions.



Offer group members chances to pause/rest if they need them or take strategic breaks near benches.



Stop walking and face your group before saying important information so everyone can hear you.



Learn the location of accessibility features (accessible entrances, ramps, lifts, etc.) and point them out on your tour.



If necessary, have one Mentor stay outside with students if you're visiting inaccessible buildings to ensure no one is left alone.

# Library Tour

Along with your campus tour, you will be giving a tour of the Library, letting your mentees know about important library supports and services. Your tour should be of the library most relevant to the course (i.e., Hamilton for Science students, BLU for Arts students).



When giving the tour, the library staff will allow you and your group of mentees in (even if they do not have their TCards yet). When delivering the tour, remember to be respectful of the space and those using it, especially quiet areas.

Library staff are here to support your studies and continued academic learning, providing you with the skills and tools to make the most of your time.

The Library’s **Welcome page** has all the information that students require in the first few weeks, including top tips and getting started with your information journey.

Every student has access to a dedicated **Subject Librarian** to help them get the best from the Library during their time in Trinity, from support with breaking down a research question, to expert advice on how to search for quality information, Subject Librarians can make the information landscape feel less daunting. They are available for one-to-one consultations throughout the year.



The libraries’ opening times are available on the **Library website**.

With several library spaces to choose from, it is handy to know which ones contain books for certain subjects, as well as the general feel and vibe of the space. You can explore these spaces virtually in advance of your visit by using the **Library 360 tours**.

Here’s what your S2S peers had to say about the different spaces:

## Library Complex

The Eavan Boland, Lecky and Ussher are interconnected libraries that form the Library Complex. Kinsella Hall is a dedicated study area that is a subsection of the Ussher. Kinsella Hall has 24hr access via a separate door.

### Boland

Find out more about the de-naming and renaming of the Boland Library to address Trinity’s colonial legacies **here**.

- ‘Good for concentrated work in a building with nice architecture.’
- ‘The study rooms are excellent!’

### Lecky

- ‘I find the Lecky the easiest to access and very handy for shorter study sessions. Can be slightly distracting with people coming and going though.’
- ‘Lecky has a more casual vibe which I would go to if I want to get a bit done but don’t have immediate deadlines.’

### Ussher & Kinsella Hall

- ‘For long study periods or exam time, though the window seats are nice for relaxed work.’
- ‘Ussher is a real rise and grind place. Most people are quiet and concentrated on their work. If you need external pressure to feel motivated to work then this is the place for you.’

## Hamilton

- ‘Good for short study sessions in breaks between classes, especially if you have classes at this end of campus.’
- ‘Seating area is very nice and all seats have charging points.’

**John Stearne** - Trinity Centre for the Health Sciences, St James’s Hospital

- ‘Very quiet, studious and serious, but the lighting is nice and bright.’
- ‘Small but cosy.’

## Old Library

The Old Library, or the Long Room, contains some of Trinity’s oldest books as well as marble busts. It also famously houses the Book of Kells. The Old Library is currently undergoing a **redevelopment project**, and the Book of Kells has been decanted to facilitate this. Trinity students can still visit the old Library and the new Book of Kells Experience, by **pre-booking**, free of charge and can bring up to 2 guests.

# Library Tour

## Facilities



When giving the library tour, make sure to point out some key facilities, including the nearest bathrooms, water fountains, printers and desks with plug sockets.

There are several PCs available for online research in most Library reading rooms. There are also **IT Services Computer rooms** across campus. The Library also provides a **self-service laptop loan unit** in the Boland Library Basement. These laptops can be borrowed for short periods of time and used in the Library Complex.



**Group study rooms** can be booked by students in groups of two or more for project work in the Boland, Hamilton, and John Stearne libraries.

There are supports available to students registered with the disAbility Service within the Library. New students can contact the **disAbility Service** directly to discuss their needs assessment and accessing supports in the Library.



The **TCD Sense Project** developed a variety of learning environments within the Library to cater for different sensory preferences in terms of room size, noise, light, seating and visual stimuli. These include sensory rooms, small study rooms, study pods, transition spaces, flexible seating, and respite rooms.

The **TCD Sense Map** shows where these spaces are.

## Mentor Activities

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# Full Schedule of Activities

The full framework for your activities and all resources can be found [here](#).

In 2025, the weekly breakdown is as follows:

| Week Number | Dates             | Activity type | Theme                                |
|-------------|-------------------|---------------|--------------------------------------|
| 4           | 15th-19th Sept    | Session 1     | Orientation Meetup                   |
| 6           | 29th Sept-3rd Oct | Email 1       | Campus Life & Contacts               |
| 7           | 6th-10th Oct      | Session 2     | Settling In                          |
| 8           | 13th-17th Oct     | Email 2       | Budgeting & Money                    |
| 9           | 20th-24th Oct     | Session 3     | Basic Study Strategies               |
| 10          | 27th-31st Oct     | Email 3       | Getting the Best out of Reading Week |
| 11          | 3rd-7th Nov       | Session 4     | Overcoming Barriers                  |
| 12          | 10th-14th Nov     | Email 4       | Being Your Best Champion             |
| 13          | 17th-21st Nov     | Session 5     | Stress Busters                       |
| 14          | 24th-28th Nov     | Email 5       | Preparing for Exams / Assessments    |
| 15          | 1st-5th Dec       | Sesson 6      | Assessment Strategies                |
| 16          | 8th-12th Dec      | Email 6       | Good Luck!                           |

# Emails

Emails should be sent at least fortnightly, and all the suggested content for the advanced Mentor programme can be [accessed online here](#).

You can, of course, send emails more frequently, and/or include content from the weekly emails circulated by the S2S office as well. You can design your own content too. We’re just giving frameworks to create from!



When sending your emails, always remember to send them putting the following people in these fields:

To

Your Buddy

Cc

Your Head Mentors

Bcc

Your Mentees

- Please don’t create/save group lists in Gmail to email your mentees. Always copy your group list from Odyssey.
- Include information from the Trinity in 12 Weeks programme as well where relevant.
- Keep your communication clear and accessible. Avoid long paragraphs. Give a helpful overview and link to further information.
- Be mindful of Trinity-specific terms that might need explaining (Pav, Schols, AR, SITS... you get the idea!). Refer to the **Trinity Jargon Buster** to help clarify the Trinity lingo to your mentees. Remember how much information overload you experienced in first year? Don’t be afraid to space things out, and to say things more than once!

Hanna Molnar - 2024/25 Mentor

‘I feel like the importance of the weekly emails needs to be emphasised!! Many of my mentees replied to my emails thanking me for my food/weekly events/hot chocolate recommendations. They also used the emails for references they can look back on whether it be about exams, study abroad, 2nd year modules or assignments. So I’d suggest everyone to bring out their creativity and go ham with the emails because mentees do read them!! ’



Special Awards are available at the end of the year for creative email titles, good use of memes and innovative content, so don’t hold back!

To give you an idea of what you can make, here is a snippet of a weekly email sent out by Mentor Miriam Onwuedgbusi.

You can also check out our S2S Award Winners on our [website](#).



# Emails

## Trinity in 12 Weeks

**Trinity in 12 Weeks** is a programme is designed to equip incoming students to become successful Trinity students – both inside and outside the classroom! Each week of the programme has a theme – from study skills to looking after your mental health – and provides lots of useful information to help students adjust to college. It also has more details about what student services are available while you are a Trinity student, as well as outlining several events and activities that could help students get more involved in college life.

|                                                             |                                                                |                                                                   |
|-------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Week 1 - Your Trinity Toolkit<br><a href="#">Click here</a> | Week 2 - Finding Your Feet<br><a href="#">Click here</a>       | Week 3 - Making the Most of College<br><a href="#">Click here</a> |
| Week 4 - Study Skills<br><a href="#">Click here</a>         | Week 5 - Looking After Your Body<br><a href="#">Click here</a> | Week 6 - Looking After Your Mind<br><a href="#">Click here</a>    |
| Week 7 - Checkpoint<br><a href="#">Click here</a>           | Week 8 - Healthy Relationships<br><a href="#">Click here</a>   | Week 9 - Managing Your Money<br><a href="#">Click here</a>        |
| Week 10 - Exam Skills<br><a href="#">Click here</a>         | Week 11 - Looking Ahead<br><a href="#">Click here</a>          | Week 12 - End of Semester<br><a href="#">Click here</a>           |

New content will be uploaded to the Trinity in 12 Weeks website during each week of Semester 1. The S2S Office will share the weekly content with you in the weekly S2S email. You can then incorporate the information into your weekly email to your mentees.

## Timetabled Meetups



Mentoring doesn't end with Orientation. Mentors are asked to facilitate fortnightly timetabled meetups in the first semester, and informal, social meetups in the second.

The School of Social Work and Social Policy will schedule fortnightly sessions for you, based on your and your mentee's timetables. You will not see your hosted sessions on your timetables, but they will appear on first year schedules.

S2S have designed a **fortnightly schedule of contents**, cocreated by students and staff, based on previous years' activities and feedback. This guide, and all the **associated resources** are available for you to try out with your group.

Don't feel under any pressure to use all the resources, or to use them in the suggested order. The main thing is to keep the conversation going with your group, and to act with the information that's right for them at the time.

If you need additional resources, you can request them directly from the S2S Office, or pop the request into the **feedback form** when you're completing it at the end of your session.

## Facilitation Skills



Here are some top tips to help you get the most out of running a session with your group:

- **Don't launch straight into it.** Give an opening preamble - it gives people time to transition from the last space they were in to this one, and they're more likely to focus.
- **Start with a warm up / ice breaker.** You need people to be talkative during the session, so get them talking!
- **Encourage group participation.** Instead of answering a question, get the group to answer it together.
- **Allow for silence** - if you leap in to fill it, that person who was almost ready to contribute will withdraw again.
- **It's OK not to know** - you can always check with the S2S office and come back with information. Encourage your group to reflect and find things out for themselves by leading by example!

## Sharing Your Story

Sometimes it helps to share a personal story or anecdote to connect with your group, or to clarify a point someone is making. These are just a few things to consider:



- **It's not confidential.** There's no comeback if your group members retell the story outside of the group, so don't share anything you want to keep confidential.
- **Are you willing to hear it back?** Trinity is a close community - if you wouldn't want to over hear the story in the Buttery, don't tell it in your S2S session.
- **Keep 3rd parties out of it.** You can tell your group a story is about "a friend" if you don't want them to know it was you, but don't actually talk about your friends or others without their explicit consent to share.
- **Is it a "teach" or a "trigger"?** Are you clear on why you're telling the story? Are you providing proof/proof of change, or are you relating an event just because it came to mind?
- **Is it relatable?** Are you talking about something the group will understand and connect with? Use your stories to break down any sense of difference between you and them, not to distinguish yourself from the group.

## Feedback Sandwich



The sandwich is a really useful model for giving constructive feedback.

Think of the bread on either side as positive reinforcement, and the middle, the substance, as the constructive feedback itself.

For example, if someone is dominating the group conversation, and you need them to make space for more reserved members of the group, you could take them to one side and say some thing like:

**Positive reinforcement:** I'm really impressed with the contributions you're making, It's wonderful to have someone who is prepared to speak up like this.

**Constructive feedback:** I'm just a little concerned that there are group members who don't have the same confidence, and who will sit back and not say anything if they think you'll do it all for them. So, would you mind allowing a bit more silence before you come in, and we'll see if anyone else is prepared to rise to the occassion?

**Positive reinforcement:** I don't want you to feel you have to be silent though. I really value you're input - especially waht you're saying about (topic). That's a really interesting perspective. I'd love to know if other people here htink the same thing.

# Social Events

## Top Tips

1. **Alternate Times and Days:** Offer events at different times and on various days to accommodate diverse schedules.
2. **Mix Alcohol and Non-Alcohol Events:** Provide a balance of events with and without alcohol to cater to all religions, age groups and preferences.
3. **Include Free Events:** Ensure some events are free to increase accessibility for everyone.
4. **Host Academic Events:** Not every meetup in semester 2 needs to be recreational. Study sessions can still be a great way to engage your group members.
5. **Avoid Empty Events:** Focus on promoting and organising events that are likely to attract participants. If you're using social media or anything that advertises how many people have said they are going, ask a couple of friends to boost your numbers before you circulate the link. No one wants to be the first to say "yes".
6. **Start Smaller, Aim Bigger:** Begin with smaller events to build interest and scale up as needed.
7. **Collaborate with Other Groups:** Combine efforts with other S2S groups and integrate with larger society, school, and S2S events.



8. **Give Notice and Send Reminders:** Provide ample notice for events and send reminders to keep participants informed.
9. **On-Campus Meet-Up Points:** For off-campus events, arrange a meet-up point on campus so everyone can arrive together.
10. **Choose Accessible Locations:** Ensure locations are physically accessible (e.g., no stairs or with lifts). We can help book accessible rooms on campus if notified in advance.
11. **Use Accessibility Event Generator:** Plan events inclusively using the **Accessibility Event Generator**.
12. **Collaborate and Share Responsibilities:** Don't feel pressured to do everything yourself. Work with other Mentor groups, use college and society events, and share the organisational load with Mentor buddies.
13. **Encourage Informal Chats and Questions:** Allow time for informal conversations and questions to create a more relaxed and engaging environment.
14. **Have a Plan for No-Shows:** Some students will sign up but won't show up. It isn't personal. Keep things low-key so anyone who does come feels comfortable. If no one shows up and you're with other Mentors or a combined group, use the time to get to know each other better.

## Social Events and Meetups

Remember that you can book the communal space in House 47 for your group meetups, taking advantage of the interactive screen, board games, and the tea/coffee facilities.

Although there is a small fund for the S2S social calendar, we recommend varying your events to keep things interesting. Pizza is a big attraction, yes, but we encourage you to think outside the (pizza) box. Low-cost, creative, and inclusive events (see examples below) often have the biggest impact.

If you do need to spend some money, make sure to speak with S2S Staff in advance; more on the event funding process is on the next page.

- **Tea, coffee pastry morning** – have a quick catch-up before the day gets going in the S2S Student Space with your free tea and coffee facilities.
- **Games night** – Use the board games available in House 47 or bring your own favourites.
- **Study session** – When assignments or exams are coming up, mentees might have a lot of questions, a chill study session in a shared space might help relieve some nerves.
- **Group workshop** – Share tips on exam prep, placements, time management, etc, see what they would find useful!
- **Movie screening** – Make use of the interactive screen in House 47, pick a movie with your mentees to watch (you'll need your own Netflix/streaming access, etc, to do this as we don't have an S2S streaming account).
- **Pizza and chats** – Pizza is a college classic, right?! Don't forget the funding for events procedure, though.

Check out the S2S [Awards Ceremony website page](#) to see some example events from last year!

## Events Funding



S2S has a small budget that can be used by volunteers to fund activities and meet-ups. We are committed to covering all reasonable expenses which volunteers incur wholly, necessarily and exclusively in the course of their volunteering role.

Volunteers must read the **Events Funding Policy** and fill out and receive a response to the **online request form prior to spending any money**. The policy covers food items such as pizza or pastries for Mentor meet-ups.

Requests must be made at least **one week in advance (7 days)** via the **Events Funding Request Form**. A member of S2S Staff will review the request and discuss next steps with the volunteer.

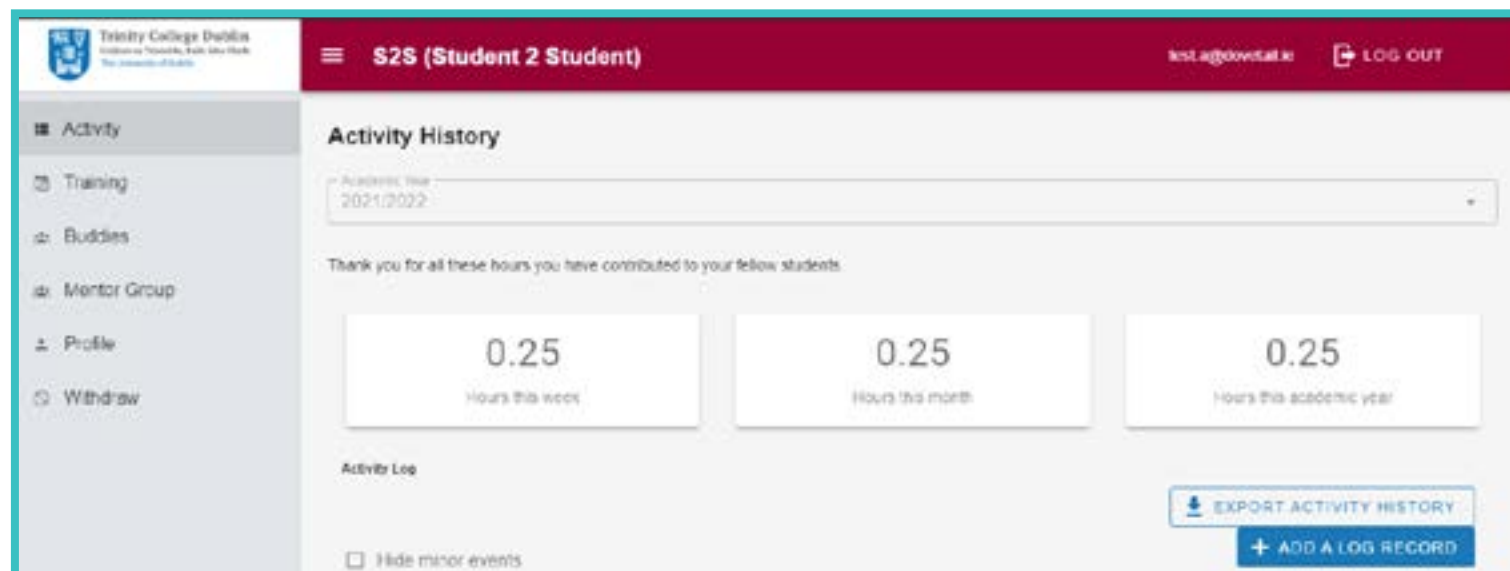
**Never spend money or buy something without following the policy's procedure first!**

We will not be able to facilitate reimbursements.

If you are unsure about the process, speak with one of the S2S Staff who can help you!

# Logging Activity on Odyssey

It is important that you log your activity regularly on Odyssey so that we can write quality references for you and so you can apply for other awards and opportunities. Logged activity also helps the S2S programme advocate for funding.



## To log your hours:

1. Log onto <https://s2svolunteer.tcd.ie/> with your TCD credentials.
2. On the side menu, click on the “**Activity**” page. This will open your activity log.
3. To add a new activity, click the blue “**+ ADD A LOG RECORD**” button. This will open a pop-up menu.
4. Enter the details of your meetup, including the date, time, event type and duration. Make sure the duration is in minutes (without any text characters), or it won’t be added properly.

5. Under details, write a short description of your meetup/email.

There are several “**Event Types**” in the dropdown menu - here are some guidelines for when to use each type:

- **Group meetup:** Any time you facilitate or arrange a meetup for your whole mentee group. The duration should be for as long as you stayed with them.
- **One-to-one:** Use this if you meet up with a mentee one-to-one.
- **Orientation:** To log your orientation meetup.
- **Email by Volunteer:** Log any emails to your mentees under this category, both your weekly email and any direct emails you may send. We ask that you log all emails as 30 mins - some might take you a little longer, some a little less, but it will balance out in the end.
- **Training:** Use this category to log any S2S training you take. This includes your 4-hour in-person training sessions and the time it took you to complete the Blackboard module, if you chose to do this.
- **Planning:** If you spend extra time planning a meetup with your Mentor buddy, you can log that time in this category.

6. When you are done, make sure to click the blue “**SAVE UPDATES**” button to add it.

# Social Media

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Social media can be a great addition to your emails to encourage engagement within your group! When creating an engaging social media space, it is also important to protect your privacy, which can be done by setting up a new profile specifically for your group.



**Aviva Rynne Browne** - 2023/34 Mentor

‘Social media can be good to remind mentees of special events and meet-ups.

Make the accounts before campus tour and get mentees to follow the account during the ice breaker.’

- Emails are the primary communication for you and your mentees – social media can be a fun, optional space to use in addition to your emails.
- Only relevant content should be shared, related to Trinity, academics, personal growth and any Mentor group updates like your emails
- Make your posts are accessible, so everyone can enjoy them. Check out **AHEAD’s accessible communication guidelines** for top tips:

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1. Use **CamelCase hashtags** - for example #S2SMentorMeetUp, not #s2smentormeetup.
2. Always offer **captions**, where applicable, for video-type materials. If screening a movie, put the subtitles on.
3. Ensure all images include **alternative (alt.)** text to provide extra context for screen readers.
4. Use **high contrast colours** to accommodate colour blindness and make reading the information easier.
5. Provide a **variety of formats** (text, video, audio) - different people learn and access information in different ways.
6. Clarify **specialised terms and phrases** - explain the many Trinity abbreviations when using them.
7. Use **emojis** sparingly - too many can make the message lose meaning.
8. Use **accessible fonts** (sans serif and equal to or greater than 12pt) - where possible, avoid italics, underlining and all capital letters, which can be more challenging to read.
9. Be mindful of **language use** - make sure your tone and vocabulary are suitable for your mentees.
10. Don’t assume you don’t have a **disabled audience** - many students have disabilities, including invisible ones including invisible ones.

# Social Media

## Instagram

**If you don't already have an Instagram account:**

- Download the Instagram app from the App Store (iPhone) or Google Play Store (Android).
- Once the app is installed, tap Instagram to open it.
- Tap Create New Account and enter your email address or mobile number, then tap Next.
- Enter the confirmation code sent to your email address or mobile number, then tap Next.
- Create a password, then tap Next.
- Enter your birthday, then tap Next.
- Create a username, then tap Next.
- Read Instagram’s terms and policies, then tap I agree to create your account.
- Add a profile picture, then tap Next. If you’d like to add a profile picture later, tap Skip.

**If you already have an Instagram account:**

- Go to your profile page and select the down arrow next to your username.
- Select “Add Instagram account”.
- Select “Create new account” and follow the instructions.
- If you opt to “share login in your Accounts Center”, you will be able to switch between profiles without logging out and logging in. Consider getting into the habit of switching back to your profile every time you leave Instagram, so you don’t post/share personal things to your group by accident.

### Communication Essentials

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# Boundaries

Please pay attention to these - we've drawn them up to make sure you're never in a difficult position, and that you and your mentees are safe!



- Only give your TCD email address as contact information for your group.
- Don't talk to anyone outside of S2S without explicit consent.



- When one-to-one meetups are requested, only hold them in public places, or book the 1:1 Room in House 47.
- Keep one-to-one meetups between the hours of 9 am-4 pm, Monday-Friday, in case you need to make a referral.



- Be clear about your role. You're not a PA and you can't be available all day, every day. When possible, hide your online status between meetups to avoid unexpected messages.
- Trust your instincts. If anything doesn't feel right, or worries you in any way, or if you just feel like you have too much going on, debrief with an S2S staff member or Head Mentor.

- Refer anyone under 18 seeking support to S2S Peer Support unless you are specifically Garda vetted as an S2S Mentor.
- Remember that anything you say about your group or S2S could be overheard by someone who uses or is thinking about using the service.



- If you're someone's Mentor, that's the only relationship you should have with them!

# Time Management

Being an S2S Mentor can be a fun and rewarding experience, but it's also a significant commitment. Effective time management can help you give your best to the role without neglecting your wellbeing, studies, and personal responsibilities.



## What is Time Management?

Time management is about using your time wisely so you can complete tasks without feeling overwhelmed. It means planning ahead, setting priorities, and knowing how much time to assign to commitments, self-care, and rest.

## Why Time Management Matters

- It helps you balance your role as a Mentor with your academic and life commitments.
- It ensures you're reliable and available to your mentees, without becoming overwhelmed.
- It supports healthy boundaries and prevents burnout.

## Support is Available

Remember, you are part of a team. If you ever feel overwhelmed or are struggling to manage your time, you can always reach out to your Head Mentors or the S2S office for support.

## Top Tips for Effective Time Management:

- **Keep mentoring within working hours:**  
Aim to schedule messages and 1:1 meetings between Monday to Friday, 9.00 am to 4.00 pm, to maintain healthy boundaries.
- **Use your calendar:**  
Block out time for classes, study, work, mentoring, and downtime to keep a manageable weekly schedule.
- **Set reminders:**  
Use calendar alerts or phone notifications to keep track of upcoming commitments, but don't go overboard, or you might start stressing yourself out.
- **Plan ahead:**  
If your week looks busy, keep your sessions basic, or just facilitate a conversation amongst the group. If you can't plan an elaborate session, your presence is enough.
- **Don't overcommit:**  
You're not expected to be available all the time. A quick check-in or short message is often enough to show your support.
- **Be honest about your availability:**  
If things get hectic, it's okay to let your mentee(s) know you'll be in touch a little later.
- **Let people know if plans change:**  
If you need to reschedule a meet-up at short notice, let your mentee(s), Mentor buddy(s), or S2S staff know as soon as possible. No need to share personal info, just a quick heads-up is appreciated.
- **Protect your downtime:**  
Rest matters. You're at your best as a Mentor when you are taking good care of yourself.



# Empathy

Empathy is the ability to hold off on assuming that we know how someone else feels, and to engage with what they are saying in a way that helps us to understand their experience of something. It's not about knowing how you would feel in someone else's shoes, but what it's really like for them.

Dr Brené Brown outlines four key elements of empathy for a deeper understanding:

- Taking someone else's perspective (putting yourself in their shoes).
- Staying out of judgement and listening.
- Recognising emotion in another person that you have maybe felt before.
- Communicating that you recognise that emotion.

'Empathy fuels connection. Sympathy drives disconnection'

'Rarely can a response make something better. What makes something better is connection'

'Empathy is a choice, and it's a vulnerable one'

To learn more, watch this really helpful video from Brené Brown:



# Active Listening

Active listening is the practice of listening that reflects understanding back to the speaker. It is a fantastic way to demonstrate empathy and understanding and ultimately creates a more enriching conversation.

**Carmen Garcia Barajas** - 2024/25 Mentor

'Especially in the first few weeks, when they asked us a lot of questions, I tried to make eye contact, to make them feel that we were listening to them and paying attention to their doubts. Not only answering directly the questions but also talking about their experiences.'



- **Stop talking:** you can't listen while you are talking.
- **Don't interrupt:** give them time to say what they have to say.
- **Smile:** respond appropriately, don't overdo it.
- **Look at them:** their face, mouth, eyes, hands, it will all help them to communicate with you. It will also help you to concentrate. Make them feel that you are listening.
- **Work with them:** only part of the responsibility rests with the speaker; you, as the listener, have an important part. Try to understand and, if you don't, ask for clarification.
- **Pause your emotion:** try to push your worries, your fears, your problems, outside the meeting room. They may prevent you from listening well.
- **Avoid distraction:** find a quiet place where you can sit with your back towards most of what is going on.

- **Concentrate:** actively focus your attention on their words, ideas, and feelings related to the subject.
- **How is it said:** we frequently concentrate so hard on what is said that we miss the importance of the emotional reactions and attitudes related to what is said. A person’s attitudes and emotional reactions may be more important than what they say.
- **Allow space to think:** the temptation is to fill silence with questions or comments, which may not be helpful. Try to be comfortable with silence and allow time for people to think about what they are going to say.
- **Don’t judge:** wait until all the facts are in before making any decisions.
- **Don’t solve:** you are there to listen. If you are focused on finding answers, you are not listening completely.
- **Avoid assumptions:** assumptions can get you into trouble in trying to understand other people. Don’t assume that they:
  - Use words in the same way that you do.
  - Feel the same way that you’d feel.
  - Are distorting the truth because what they say doesn’t agree with what you think.
  - Are lying because they have interpreted the facts differently from you.
  - Are unethical because they are trying to win you over to their point of view.
  - Are angry because they are enthusiastic about presenting their views.



# Active Listening

## Question Types

**Open questions** cannot be answered with a “yes” or “no” response, or with a binary response. This type of question encourages exploration.

“How are you?”  
“What happened next?”

**Closed questions** are questions to which an answer must be selected from a limited set, such as “yes” or “no”, or to which the answer is finite. This type of question is useful to check-in or clarify.

“Do you want to take a break?”  
“What month did you move to Dublin?”

**Hypothetical questions** ask someone to imagine how a possible plan of action could work out. This type of question is a great way to introduce suggestions/ideas.

“What do you think would happen if you told your dad about the debt?”

**Leading questions** assume that the questioner knows the answer and puts it in the other person’s mouth. This type of question tells someone what you want them to think/say.

“That’s hard for you, isn’t it?”  
“When will you tell your parents?”

**Judgmental questions** are coloured by your personal opinion on the situation. This type of question tells someone how you feel. To maintain a non-judgemental, non-directive space:

- Ask to explore, not to persuade.
- Be mindful of context, and tone of voice.
- Don’t put pressure on them to answer.

“You would never do something like that, would you?”

**Reflect:**

I've got so much on, I hate my course, I can't afford to eat, and I'm an alien!

You're an alien...

**Paraphrase:**

I've got so much on, I hate my course, I can't afford to eat, and I'm an alien!

So, you're from another planet...

**Summarise:**

I've got so much on, I hate my course, I can't afford to eat, and I'm an alien!

So, you're overwhelmed, you don't like your course, and you have concerns about your visa. Where would you like to start?

## Conflict Resolution

When we are not confident in asserting our needs or boundaries, we start to blame the person who is “making” us speak up. They should have known not to have done this, or said that, without us having to tell them.

We also tend to respond to criticism defensively, which means that we listen to someone to correct them (e.g., fact-checking) rather than with empathy.

There are two simple things you can practice doing in arguments that will help to keep things calm and to strengthen a bond with the person you're talking to:

1. Use “I” statements. Talk about how you feel without the “because you...”
2. Employ as much empathy as you can. Someone might be using very blaming language or making inaccurate accusations. Instead of making your case in response, try reflecting, paraphrasing, summarising, and helping them to feel heard and understood. Go back to the “I” statements to share your perspective, respectfully, with them.



**Instead of saying:**

‘You’re not pulling your weight, and it’s not fair. You’ve left me holding everything.’

**Try:**

‘I feel like the workload isn’t evenly distributed. I get angry when I think I have to do the lion’s share.’

**Instead of saying:**

‘It’s not my fault if you decide to take everything on. You’re making it all about you when you have no idea what’s going on for me.’

**Try:**

‘I hear you saying that I’ve let you down, is that how you feel?’

‘I am genuinely sorry that you’ve been left with all the responsibility. Can I take a minute to explain to you what’s been going on for me, and then hopefully we can work out a better way to manage the workload together?’

Adapted from Harriet Lerner, ‘The Dance of Anger’

## Suicidality / Risk of Harm

**Signs to look out for:**

- Change in appearance
- Social withdrawal
- Concern from classmates
- Direct disclosure of suicide ideation
- Distressing social media posts
- Low mood
- Tearfulness

**What do I need to do next?**

- Most signs could just as easily reflect exam stress, but you can’t know that for certain without direct disclosure.
- That’s why it’s important to ask directly about suicide if you’re concerned someone is having suicidal thoughts. You won’t put the idea in their head, but you might give them the chance to open up.

**If you are concerned but can’t ask, or if they try to reassure you and you’re not convinced, or if they disclose something:**

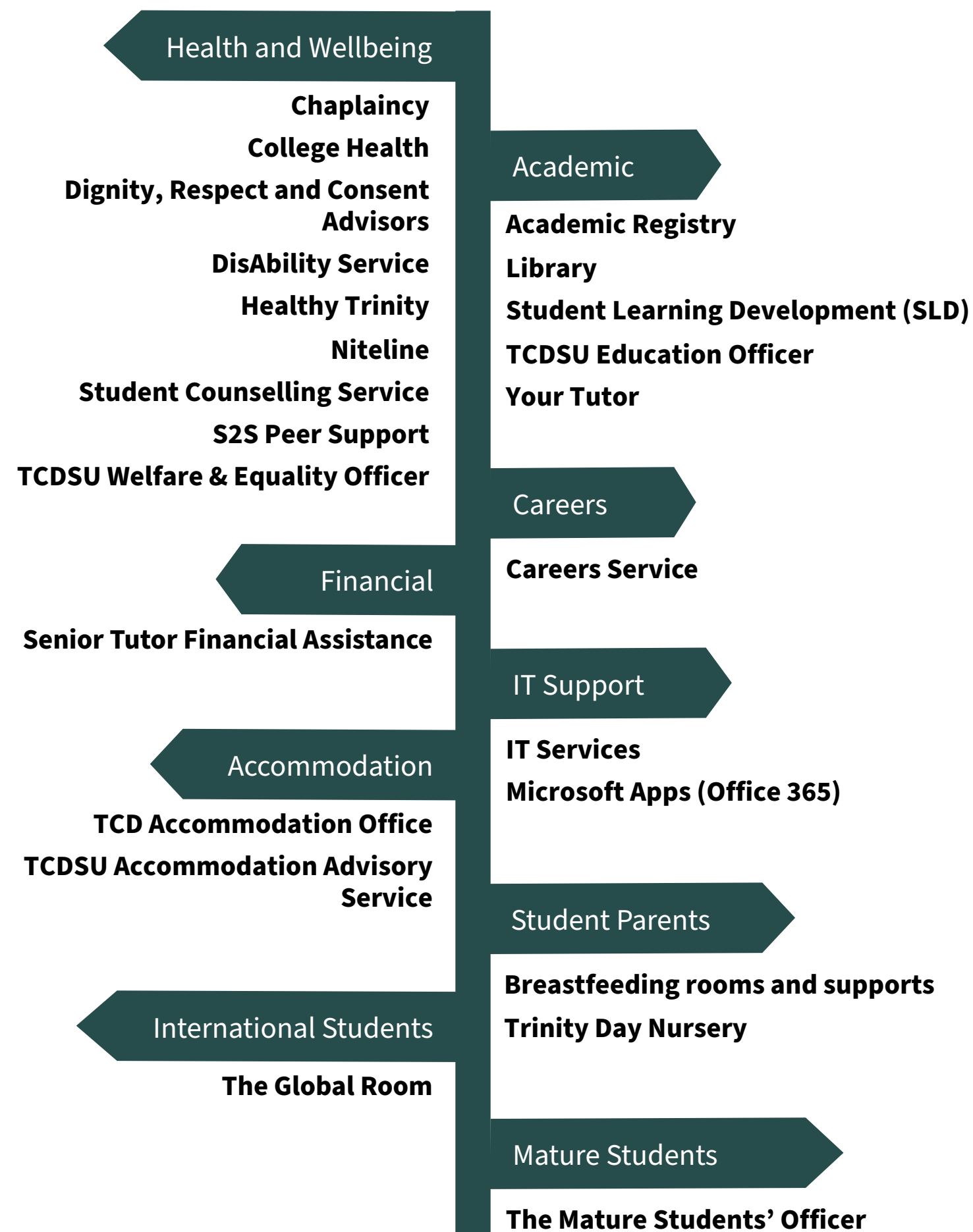
- Bring them to Student Counselling Service (SCS) if possible.
- If not, tell someone in S2S or SCS who you’re concerned about and why.
- Always let S2S know, even if you’ve already brought them to SCS.
- Book a debrief with an S2S staff member as soon as you can.

# Signposting

- As we discussed in training, if support goes beyond practical information giving and becomes emotional support, we are asking you to signpost your mentee to another service.
- Use your active listening tools to make sure your mentee feels heard and to figure out what service might be best suited to their needs.
- If you need more information or support around where to signpost someone, please reach out to the S2S Office - we're here to help.
- Remember - hearing your mentee out and helping them access the right support is helping them! You don't have to provide all the support yourself.
- If and when the time is right to signpost, there are plenty of useful resources. Please check these resources regularly for access and service updates, and ask an S2S staff member if you're not sure where to look.
- If your mentee requires more direct support, then it's time to make a referral.



Check out all of Trinity's supports and services on this [webpage](#).



# Referrals

You may occasionally come across situations when it is inappropriate for you to get involved, when the case is too close to your own experience, or when the issues require professional involvement and support.

Referrals can often be confused with signposts, but here's the key difference:

A **signpost** involves informing a student about a service or services, and making sure they know how to get there.

A **referral** means making sure a service is aware that a student may need their help and asking the service to offer support.

It can be much harder to make the distinction in practice, but you can always come and talk to someone in the S2S office if you are unsure of whether and/or how to make a referral. Don't wait to talk to us if a referral is urgent though!

If you have any concerns for the student's safety or the safety of others, please bring the student directly to the Student Counselling Service or the College Health Centre. If the student won't come with you, it's important that you come to the service directly and let them know who you are concerned about, and why. Our services are safety-first, so they will take any measure necessary to ensure the student's wellbeing and/or the wellbeing of others. Remember that this includes your wellbeing!



## Referral to SLD

If you meet a student who is struggling with study skills, self/time management, exam and assessment skills or academic writing, you are very welcome to refer them directly to the SLD team by emailing Student.Learning@tcd.ie. Please make sure you have the student's consent to email SLD, and include their student number, availability and a brief description of what they might need support with. Alternatively, students can book themselves into the SLD service by using the self-booking link, available on their **website**.

If you must make a referral of any kind, please come and debrief with an S2S staff member as soon as possible, even if you feel as though it has had no direct impact on you.

### Reasons to make a referral include:

- Concern that a student may be at risk of significant harm, and/or may harm others (remember that in this case referral is mandatory - see confidentiality agreement).
- Recognising that the student's needs require expertise/ experience outside of your training.
- Not feeling personally comfortable with the students' support needs (e.g. their issue is outside of your experience, or is uncomfortably close to your own experience).
- Not having personal capacity - regardless of your ability to support someone, you will not always be in a place where this is feasible or good for you to offer this support.

It is always ok to make a referral if you are in any way uncomfortable or unsure of your capacity to support someone directly. It is better to ensure someone has appropriate and sustainable support than to take everything on yourself.

**If you are making a referral:**

- Use your **active listening skills** wherever possible. If you know that the subject or issue is going to negatively impact you, be honest about this and politely redirect the student. Otherwise, you can stay listening and make the referral calmly at the appropriate point in the conversation. You don't need to cut someone off or end a conversation unless it's better for you not to continue with it.
- Be **honest** about why (e.g. "I hear you saying you're not sure if you can go on, and it makes me very concerned for your safety").
- **Let them choose** who, if you can (e.g., "we can go to the Counselling Service, or the College Health Centre. It depends on who you'd feel most comfortable talking to, but you do need to talk to someone").
- Stay **supportive** if it is appropriate (go with them, meet them after or check in with them online before/after if you can't meet face-to-face).
- **Name your concerns** - it's better to ask and be wrong than not ask and be right. If you say the word suicide, you will not be putting ideas into people's heads, but you might be giving them an opening to say something they didn't know how to express out loud.
- Acknowledge the **strength and courage** the student has shown by talking to you. Asking for help is one of the bravest things a person can do.
- Talk to an **S2S staff member** as soon as possible. If you are concerned about someone's safety, then it's important that you go to S2S, Student Counselling and/or College Health with that information straight away. Encourage the person you're worried about to join the meeting if you can. Tell them you are going to tell S2S, Student Counselling and/or College Health, even if they will not join the meeting with you.

**Emergency contacts:**

Student Counselling Service: 01 896 1407

Trinity College Health Services: 01 896 1591 / 8555 / 1556

Ralph Armstrong-Astley: 085 7833 548

SCS **out of hours support information.**

## Critical Protocols

**GDPR**

Always respect confidentiality. Do not share anyone's personal information, such as their name, ID number, contact details, or anything they've told you, unless there is a safeguarding concern or you are referring them to a professional service. Do not, under any circumstances, take notes, as any information stored digitally or otherwise may be subject to a Freedom of Information (FOI) request.

**Safety First**

Your safety and the mentee's safety come first. If someone is in immediate danger and emergency services are needed, contact Campus Security at 01 896 1999. They will liaise with emergency services, as ambulances and others cannot access the campus unless called through security.

If the situation requires urgent support from the Student Counselling Service, contact the Counselling Team on 01 896 1407 directly. If they are unavailable, come to S2S and speak to a staff member. Trust your instincts and always follow up with S2S staff for support after responding to any safety concern.

**Child/Vulnerable Adult**

If the student is under 18 or considered a vulnerable adult, you must escalate any concerns immediately to S2S staff. Safeguarding protocols apply and take priority over confidentiality. Don't try to handle the situation alone; let a trained staff member take over.

**After Hours Supports**

As volunteers, we recommend that for your own safety, to never meet a student 1:1 outside of standard working hours and always meet in a public space.

If out-of-hours urgent support is required, please do not handle the situation on your own and immediately refer.

If the situation requires urgent support from the Student Counselling Service, contact the Counselling Team on 01 896 1407 directly. If they are unavailable, come to S2S and speak to a staff member. Trust your instincts and always follow up with S2S staff for support after responding to any safety concern.

- Campus Security: 01 896 1999
- Emergency Services: 999 or 112 (if off campus)
- **Student Counselling Service After Hours Supports**
- Ralph: 085 7833 548 (leave a message if there is no answer)

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## Award Ceremony

Every year, there is a dedicated award ceremony for all our fantastic volunteers. This is a time to reflect on the incredible work done, and to give each other a well-earned pat on the back!

So, how do we know what you're up to, and who the future award winners will be?

- **Logging your activity:** logged activity on Odyssey allows S2S Staff to know how many hours you have put into your volunteer role behind the scenes. We also use this to help write references for you if needed.
- **Head Mentor communication:** Your Head Mentors will be our eyes and ears! Since you'll be CC-ing them in your emails, they'll be noting anything wonderful or wonderfully wacky, and flagging it with us. At the end of term, they can also nominate standout mentors for awards.
- **Weekly submission form:** throughout the year, we will share a weekly form where you can let us know what you are up to. This is another way for us to identify future award winners. We also love seeing your creative emails and unique event ideas, so don't hesitate to share the joy with us.

Take a look at previous award categories and winners on the [S2S Website](#).



# Trinity Graduate Attributes



Trinity College Dublin has identified specific Graduate Attributes that students should be able to demonstrate upon graduation. They are important because they will:

- Enhance your learning. Working on them will help you become a better and more successful student.
- Help to prepare you for your future and lifelong learning given the changing nature of society.
- Enhance your employability as they are highly desired skills by employers.

During your time as an undergraduate in Trinity you will have the opportunity through your coursework and assessments as well as cocurricular and extra-curricular activities to develop and improve these attributes - being an S2S mentor allows you to develop these attributes.

# Employability

Your learning and involvement during your time as a Trinity student gives you the opportunity to develop key attributes and skills that will allow you to succeed in your future as an individual and as a member of society.

The Trinity Careers Service offers advice and resources to help current students and graduates prepare for the future, including:

- MyCareer portal:** Jobs, employer events, 1-1 career appointments, CV clinics
- Trinity Career Skills Award:** Stand out in your job interview!
- Applications and interviews:** Helping you to get the job
- More Career Service resources**



Trinity students can avail of the Trinity Careers Service for advice and resources relating to interviewing, searching for jobs, career planning and more.



**James Carey** 2023/24 Mentor

‘It has gave me a great sense of accomplishment and pride over the past year. I never thought I would have the confidence to take up a role like a mentor but the feeling you get from knowing you are making a difference is unmatched.’

Good interview preparation can improve your performance on the day and help reduce interview nerves. When the day of the interview comes, you should feel that you have a good understanding of the role and the company from your research and have prepared evidence to demonstrate how you meet the role requirements. Anticipating and preparing for the types of questions they are likely to ask will help you to make a strong impression.

Interview Questions

In advance of an interview, it’s advisable to review the job description, highlight the key requirements, and come up with a list of questions that you think they could ask, alongside a list of your evidence to support the reasons why you are a suitable candidate. You can then practice answering these before the interview itself.

STAR

When asked to give examples, structure your answers using the STAR framework, which can help you to communicate your competencies clearly and simply. When you outline your example, make sure to cover each of the following elements:

S

ituation:

Describe the context of the example

T

ask:

Explain what you had to do

A

ction:

Describe the actions you took, give details about what you did.

R

esult:

What was the outcome? What made it successful or unsuccessful? What would you do differently another time?

Adapted from the **TCD Careers Website**



**Thank you for being a  
Mentor - S2S couldn't do it  
without you!**

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