The Student Experience

The Trinity Student Experience encompasses all the activities that students undertake in college, including those linked directly to their academic programme and those associated with the co-curricular and extracurricular – sports clubs, societies, students’ union, volunteering, activism and internships.

Through the sum of its student activities, Trinity supports the development of the Graduate Attributes – to think independently, communicate effectively, develop continuously and act responsibly.

A key initiative of the Student Life Committee and Students’ Union was to grow the Zón Mac Léinn network of student spaces, to turn spaces into places – places where students meet, recharge, relax, socialize, and share their stories. This year saw two new spaces come into the network: the Buttery after hours and a generous space in the Trinity Biomedical Sciences Institute (TBSI). Three other spaces were identified and are in development. An App has been developed to locate the nearest Zón Mac Léinn so students can find a place to relax, wherever they are on campus.

Further collaborative opportunities were identified in the annual Student Partnership Agreement, where the College and the Students’ Union jointly identify initiatives that enhance the student experience. This year that included a focus on the implementation of the Trinity Education Project, including workload and assessment methods, co-curricular reflection, and staff-student liaison committees.
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Orientation and transition

The Postgraduate Student experience was a strong focus of the Student Life Committee this year. Working with the Transition to Trinity Officer, the Working Group is developing a more comprehensive orientation modeled on the undergraduate ‘Trinity in Twelve Weeks’ initiative. This model runs themed weeks of activities and information sessions in small groups to ensure a successful transition to all aspects of college life.

The Counselling Service, in cooperation with the Students’ Union, ran consent workshops for over 800 first year students as part of a healthy relationships initiative. The workshops are being rolled out to students in accommodation and those involved in clubs and societies and student representation. The programme is being expanded to include bystander and first responder workshops. The model, developed by Trinity, has become a national benchmark for consent education and is being adopted by external organisations.

Dean of Students Roll of Honour for Volunteering

The current strategic plan sets the mission ‘to fearlessly engage in actions that advance the cause of a pluralistic, just and sustainable society’. Trinity seeks to educate graduates to act: to have the awareness to see things, the empathy to care, and the confidence to engage with local, national, or international communities. For many students, action starts with volunteering.

The range of activities that students engage in outside their academic lives is best captured by the Dean of Students Roll of Honour for Volunteering, the Dean’s List, and the Dean’s Leadership Awards. This year the highest award, the Trinity Legacy Award for Volunteering, was presented to three students, James Cotter of the Voluntary Tuition Programme, Rachel Skelly for the Trinity Consent Education programme, and Phoebe O’Leary from the Ardclough Drama Group. The awards were presented by Sam McGuiness, CEO of the Dublin Simon Community.

Clubs and societies

Societies and sports clubs are essential to the Trinity education. They develop skills in leadership, communication, event management, and financial control, and they instill and maintain the values that define the Trinity community in all of its activities: freedom of thought, responsibility in action, promotion of equality, dignity and respect.

Notable achievements and anniversaries this year include:

— The Central Societies Committee welcomed alumni from all around the world for a celebration marking the 50th anniversary of the CSC and its contribution to maintaining Trinity’s student community as one of the most vibrant in the world.
— Enactus TCD were crowned the winners of the Enactus Ireland National Competition and went on to represent Ireland at the Enactus World Cup in Silicon Valley, finishing in the top 16.
— The Biological Association raised €56,000 via Trinity Med Day for St James’s Hospital, Tallaght Hospital and the National Rehabilitation Centre.
— The EU Commissioner for Competition, Margrethe Vestager took part in a Citizens’ Dialogue with the Historical Society and was presented with the Society’s Gold Medal.
— The Gold Medal of the University Philosophical Society was awarded to renowned British food writer Mary Berry, Mayor of London Sadiq Khan and the President of Microsoft Brad Smith among others.
— DU Photographic Association celebrated 70 years with their highly successful exhibition entitled ‘Celebrating Age’. Ninety photographs from 45 staff and student photographers were showcased on the night.
— Trinity Orchestra - Ireland’s only entirely student-run orchestra performed across a number of Ireland’s top festivals including Electric Picnic and the Metropolis festival.
— At the 2019 Student Achievement Awards Ireland, Trinity organisations and individuals were nominated in 12 of the 17 categories - three of the six nominees in the Student Media Award and 13 of the 17 nominees for Outstanding Contribution to Student Media were from Trinity.

To help students capture the benefits from all their activities, the Trinity Education Project has developed a reflective tool to guide students in embedding the Trinity Graduate Attributes through their participation in academic and co- and extracurricular activities.
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