



**Trinity College Dublin**

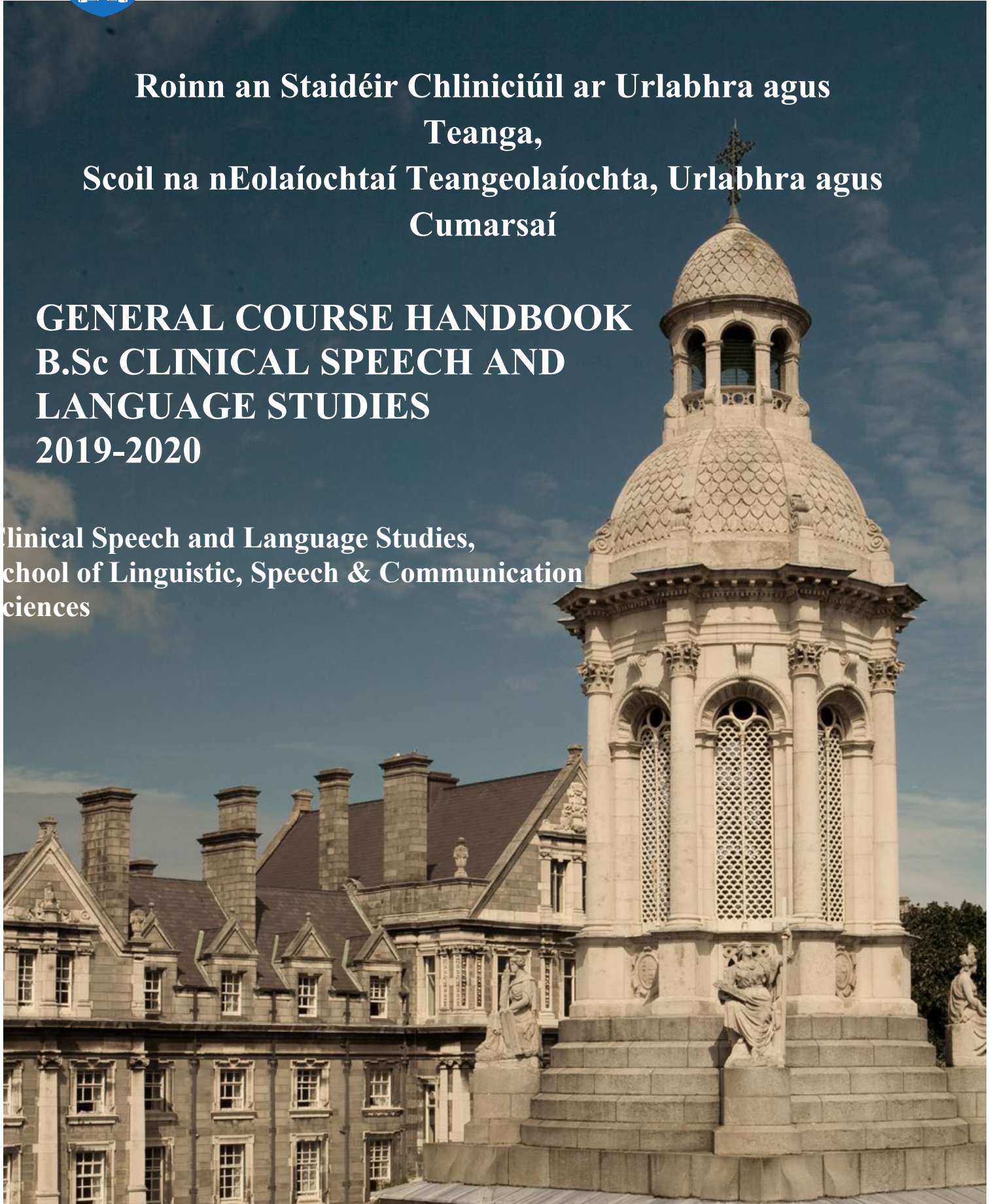
Coláiste na Tríonóide, Baile Átha Cliath

The University of Dublin

**Roinn an Staidéir Chliniciúil ar Urlabhra agus  
Teanga,  
Scoil na nEolaíochtaí Teangeolaíochta, Urlabhra agus  
Cumarsaí**

**GENERAL COURSE HANDBOOK  
B.Sc CLINICAL SPEECH AND  
LANGUAGE STUDIES  
2019-2020**

**Clinical Speech and Language Studies,  
School of Linguistic, Speech & Communication  
Sciences**



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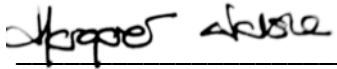
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## Introduction

This General Course Handbook provides an overview of the B.Sc. Clinical Speech and Language Studies Course, providing a useful resource for students, staff and external stakeholders.

Signed

Date: September 2019



Margaret Walshe PhD, M.Sc

Associate Professor and Head of Discipline

## 1. Admission onto the Programme

### 1.1 Academic Award

The level of qualification for entry to the register is Bachelor degree at National Framework for Qualifications (NFQ; [https://www.qqi.ie/Articles/Pages/National-Framework-of-Qualifications-\(NFQ\).aspx](https://www.qqi.ie/Articles/Pages/National-Framework-of-Qualifications-(NFQ).aspx)) Level 8 in Speech and Language Therapy). Trinity Qualifications and Awards are quality assured by their admission to the NFQ framework and can be compared with the European Qualifications Framework (EQF; <http://www.nfq-qqi.com/qualifications-frameworks.html>) and the Qualifications Framework for the European Higher Education Area (QF-EHEA; [http://ecahe.eu/w/index.php/Framework\\_for\\_Qualifications\\_of\\_the\\_European\\_Higher\\_Education\\_Area](http://ecahe.eu/w/index.php/Framework_for_Qualifications_of_the_European_Higher_Education_Area)).

## 2. Programme Management and Resources

### 2.1 Overview Department of Clinical Speech and Language Studies

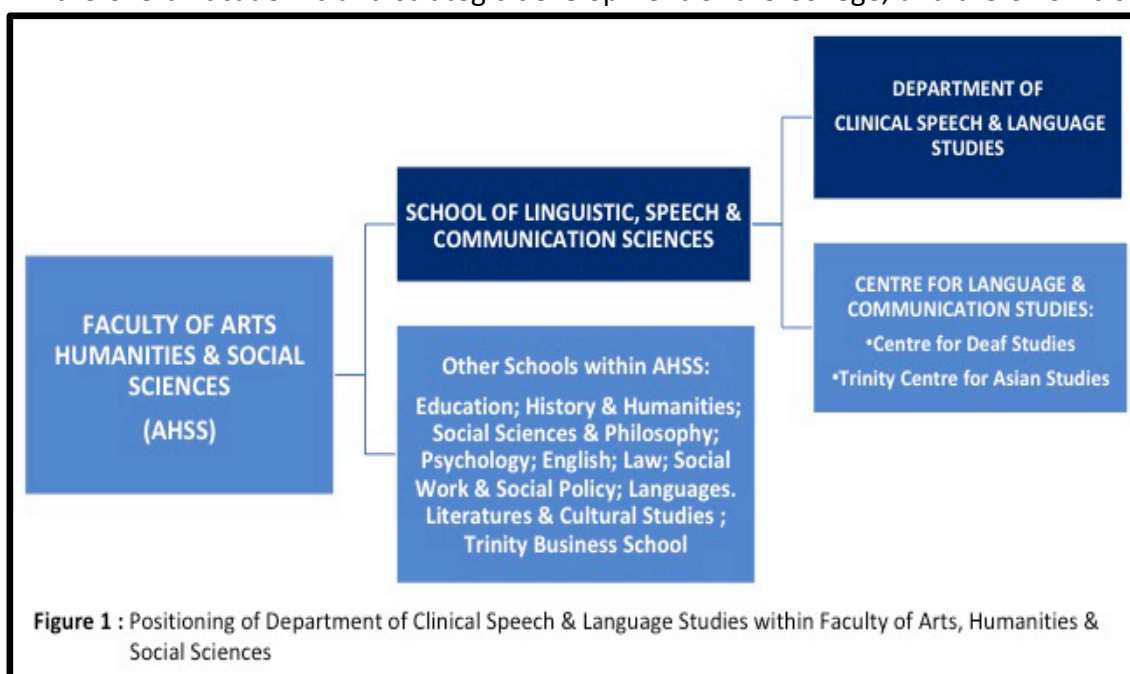
The programme leading to the award of a B.Sc. in Clinical Speech and Language Studies has been running successfully in TCD since 1979. It is included as a core part of the School of Linguistic, Speech and Communication Sciences ([www.tcd.ie/slscs/](http://www.tcd.ie/slscs/)) where it resides within the Faculty of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences (FAHSS). The School of Linguistic, Speech and Communication Sciences was formed in 2005 by the merger of the School of Clinical Speech and Language Studies ([www.tcd.ie/slscs/clinical-speech-language/index.php](http://www.tcd.ie/slscs/clinical-speech-language/index.php)), the Centre for Language and Communication Studies (CLCS; [www.tcd.ie/slscs/clcs/index.php](http://www.tcd.ie/slscs/clcs/index.php)), and the Centre for Deaf Studies (CDS) ([www.tcd.ie/slscs/cds/index.php](http://www.tcd.ie/slscs/cds/index.php)). These complementary disciplines within the School are unified to a common goal: the scientific investigation of language, communication, voice, speech, and swallowing. The main aim of the current School Strategic Plan is to continue and strengthen the process of integration of the disciplines across teaching and research.

The School (and Department's) Mission Statement is to promote scientific understanding of language, communication, speech and swallowing (see <https://www.tcd.ie/slscs/>). Through our research, teaching and learning, we promote inclusive diversity as a powerful social and biological resource, and positively impact personal and societal wellbeing across the lifespan.

## 2.2. Organizational and Staffing Structure

### 2.2.1 Faculty structure

There are three Faculties within College: Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences (AHSS, [www.tcd.ie/structure/#ahss](http://www.tcd.ie/structure/#ahss)); Engineering, Mathematics and Science ([www.tcd.ie/structure/#ems](http://www.tcd.ie/structure/#ems)) ; and Health Sciences ([www.tcd.ie/structure/#hs](http://www.tcd.ie/structure/#hs)). The School of Linguistic, Speech, and Communication Sciences is in the Faculty of AHSS. Each Faculty is led by a Faculty Dean (See Figure 1). There are 12 component Schools within AHSS. Each Head of School is a member of the Faculty Executive. Faculty Deans provide academic and strategic leadership within their Faculty. They play a pivotal role in the overall academic and strategic development of the College, and are ex officio



members of the Executive Officers Group.

### 2.2.2 Organisational and staffing structure to support the programme

**Heads of School** are appointed by, and are formally accountable to, the Board. The current Head of School is Prof. Lorna Carson ([www.tcd.ie/slscs/staff/carsonle](http://www.tcd.ie/slscs/staff/carsonle)). The Head of School is responsible for the effective general management of the School, for ensuring the provision of academic leadership and strategic vision, and for the quality of the student experience. The Head of School is the budget holder, following devolved authority, and is financially accountable to the Faculty Dean (in the first instance) for the School.

The **Director of Teaching and Learning (Undergraduate) (DUTL)** has delegated responsibility for the undergraduate affairs of the School and plays a central strategic role with regard to both existing and new teaching programmes and provides a crucial link to the central Teaching and Learning Committee of the university. The current DUTL is Prof. Breffni O'Rourke ([www.tcd.ie/slscs/staff/orourkeb](http://www.tcd.ie/slscs/staff/orourkeb)). Broadly, three main areas of responsibility are identified for the Director of Teaching and Learning (Undergraduate): general management of the undergraduate teaching programmes; promotion of best practice and innovation; and development of overall policy with regard to both existing teaching programmes and proposed new programmes.

The responsibilities of **Head of Discipline** include providing academic leadership in the discipline, having responsibility for the oversight of standards pertaining to the discipline, and briefing the Head of School on any matters relating to the welfare of the discipline in College, contributing to policy formation and strategic planning, advising on examiners and all discipline-specific research administration. The current Head of Discipline is Prof Margaret Walshe (<https://www.tcd.ie/slscs/staff/walshema>)

### ***2.2.3. School Executive and department meetings***

The School Executive comprises the Head of School (Prof Lorna Carson), the Director of Postgraduate Teaching and Learning (Prof John Saeed), Director of Undergraduate Teaching and Learning (Prof. Breffni O' Rourke), Director of Research (Prof Irene Walsh), Head of Discipline - Clinical Speech and Language Studies (Prof Margaret Walshe), Head of Discipline - Centre for Language and Communication Studies (Prof Christer Gobl), School Administrative Manager (Dara O'Siochain), representative from

administrative staff, UG and PG student representatives, and School Director of Global Relations (Prof Caroline Jagoe). This Committee meets 6 times over the academic year. There are also 2 School Committee meetings (one each term) with all staff across the School, and with student representatives.

Departmental staff meetings are held within the Department twice each term. Structures are in place to facilitate the participation of staff and students in relevant deliberation and decision-making processes. Each year group elects 2 students to represent them at departmental staff meetings. Students attend the General Meeting that follows the Confidential Staff Meeting. Additionally students attend a Clinical Forum meeting once a term, which addresses issues specific to student clinical placement and are invited to nominate one representative to the School Committee.

Outside the School and Department meetings, there are also Curriculum meetings held once a term. These are discussed further in the Curriculum and Assessment Handbook .

#### **2.2.4 Core members of the teaching team** (see <https://www.tcd.ie/slscs/staff/>)

The Head of Discipline, Prof. Margaret Walshe is a CORU registered speech and language therapist (SLU018159) and is an experienced clinician. The staff comprises 10 speech and language therapists and one psychologist. The undergraduate programme is led by the Head of Discipline and supported and delivered by the core course team including the Practice Education Coordinator. The Department has one full time Executive Officer and one full time Receptionist/Executive Officer.

### **2.3. Development of the Programme**

The continuing development of the programme at undergraduate and postgraduate level is a core component of the School Strategic Plan. The Department is also currently developing a Vision Statement and 3-year Action Plan for 2019- 2022 that builds on current success and aims to improve the current programme. This plan incorporates feedback from internal and external stakeholders (practice educators, tutors, staff, service users, students and alumni). An external agency facilitated group



discussions with staff within the Department and the HR department in TCD and the School funded this external facilitation. This plan, when finalized, is in conjunction with the School's Strategic Plan (2015-2020)

### **3. Learning Resources and Student Support Mechanisms**

#### **3.1. Buildings and Facilities**

Within the Department and across the TCD campus, students have access to a range of learning resources and supports. Wi-Fi access is available throughout the building and across the campus. There are small group rooms and seminar rooms within the building – most of the lectures take place in central pool lecture rooms within the Arts Building and in Aras an Phiarsaigh (see <https://www.tcd.ie/Maps/> for downloadable maps). Access to copying and printing facilities is in place across the campus, as well as computer rooms with a range of specialist software (SPSS, NVIVO, etc.) to support research (see <https://www.tcd.ie/Maps/> for specific location of labs).

##### ***3.1.1. Clinical preparation facilities and resources***

There is a dedicated clinical preparation area within the department with computer facilities. There are dedicated clinical facilities and small group rooms, with recording equipment allowing both recording and transmitting of clinical sessions within a closed system. A wide range of reference and clinical assessment materials is available in the Reception area.

#### **3.2. Library Facilities**

All registered students have access to the TCD library, which is the largest library in Ireland and have a dedicated subject librarian for Clinical Speech and Language Studies (see <https://www.tcd.ie/library/> for full guidance on using the library). The Library is legally entitled to receive a copy of every book and journal title published in Ireland and the UK. As of 2018, the collection includes 6.5 million printed items, 650,000 e-books and 125,000 e-journals (academic magazines). Group study rooms are available to students during Library opening hours to registered students in groups of two or more who wish to work together on projects and assignments (see

<https://www.tcd.ie/library/using-library/study-rooms.php> for details on how to book these rooms). The dedicated subject librarian for Clinical Speech and Language Studies is Ms Isolde Harpur.

### 3.3 Blackboard

Blackboard is the virtual learning environment (VLE) used to support teaching and learning as well as assessment. Links to Blackboard modules and information is available through the mytcd portal. TCD supports the development of technology-enhanced learning across both online and face-to-face teaching environments that will assist in enhancing the student experience. (The TCD VLE policy is accessible at [https://www.tcd.ie/teaching-learning/assets/pdf/academicpolicies/VLE\\_Policy.pdf](https://www.tcd.ie/teaching-learning/assets/pdf/academicpolicies/VLE_Policy.pdf).)

### 3.4 Support Mechanisms in Place for Students

Students also have access to additional learning, medical and psychological supports across the university. For full information on the range of services and supports available to registered students, see [https://www.tcd.ie/dean\\_students/student-services/](https://www.tcd.ie/dean_students/student-services/) and <https://www.tcd.ie/students/supports-services/> and the downloadable Student Services booklet, available at [www.tcd.ie/student-services](http://www.tcd.ie/student-services)

#### 3.4.1 Student learning development (See <https://student-learning.tcd.ie/>)

The Student Learning Development office provides learning support to help Trinity students reach their academic potential. They support students who are struggling with their studies as well as high achieving students who want to improve their performance (e.g., see <https://student-learning.tcd.ie/assessments/>).

They provide workshops and events, throughout the year, on a range of academic and learning skills e.g. self-management skills, study and exam skills, presentation skills, writing and critical thinking skills. Additionally, they run a series of online workshops for off-campus students. Students can avail of one-to-one appointments, for individual queries and students can also come along to drop-in clinics, which operate

on a first-come basis (see <https://student-learning.tcd.ie/services/one-to-one/> for details on how to make a booking).

Student learning development has also created a Blackboard module 'Academic Skills for Successful Learning', available to all students which incorporates an extensive range of learning resources, in a variety of formats. (See <https://student-learning.tcd.ie/blackboard/>)

#### **3.4.2 Trinity Access Programme (TAP)** ( [www.tcd.ie/trinityaccess/students/current/](http://www.tcd.ie/trinityaccess/students/current/))

TAP offers a range of supports for foundation course and HEAR students registered in Trinity in addition to other student support services that Trinity College provides. They provide support in the area of extra tuition. Students can also borrow a laptop for up to three days at no charge. There is a learning centre (The Studio) for foundation course and HEAR students located in Goldsmith Hall with access to networked computers and printers. There is also a Writing Resource Centre that provides advice on researching, drafting and developing college assignments and reports. There is also a Maths Help Room that provides support in this area.

#### **3.4.3 Senior Tutor** (See full details at <https://www.tcd.ie/seniortutor/> )

The Tutorial System in Trinity is the oldest student support service in College, dating from its very foundation. Students on entry to undergraduate programmes are placed in the care of a member of academic staff who assists with matters of academic progress, provides advice on personal issues, directs to relevant professional services and, in special circumstances, acts as advocate. The Undergraduate Student Support Officer in the Tutorial Service administers student financial aid and provides financial advice in this context. The Senior Tutor's Office is responsible for the Tutorial Service including the Tutorial Service Support Fund, the various student hardship/financial assistance schemes of the College and is also involved in the co-ordination of Student Services in College (for details on financial supports, see <https://www.tcd.ie/seniortutor/students/undergraduate/financial-assistance>).

#### **3.4.4 Student Health Service** (see <https://www.tcd.ie/collegehealth>)

The Student Health Service provides on campus, primary health care for all full-time students. It focuses on the medical, psychological and occupational aspects of Student Health and Health Education. Student consultations are free of charge (see <https://www.tcd.ie/collegehealth/service/student-clinics.php> for details on how to make an appointment).

**3.4.5 Student Counselling** (see [https://www.tcd.ie/Student\\_Counselling](https://www.tcd.ie/Student_Counselling))

This service offers free, confidential and non-judgemental support to registered students of Trinity College Dublin who are experiencing personal and/or academic concerns (see [https://www.tcd.ie/Student\\_Counselling/faqs/student-faq/](https://www.tcd.ie/Student_Counselling/faqs/student-faq/) for student questions). The team of qualified counsellors and learning strategists are committed to promoting and protecting wellbeing and success throughout a diverse student body, in cooperation with students. The service offers a wide range of supports to all students. Individual appointments can be booked directly (see [https://www.tcd.ie/Student\\_Counselling/contact/appointments/](https://www.tcd.ie/Student_Counselling/contact/appointments/)). In addition, family members can access information on the supports provided to students at [https://www.tcd.ie/Student\\_Counselling/faqs/family-faq/](https://www.tcd.ie/Student_Counselling/faqs/family-faq/).

**3.4.6. Student 2 Student**

The Student 2 Student (S2S) service is part of Student Counselling. Many students find it useful to talk about their experiences with their peers. The Student 2 Student (S2S) service is a strictly confidential and non-judgmental way to discuss problems and/or to receive general guidance and support to undergraduate students. S2S peer supporters and mentors are specially trained to listen and to inform. See <http://student2student.tcd.ie/>

**3.4.7. Disability Service** (see <https://www.tcd.ie/disability/>)

Registered students who desire specialist disability supports are invited to meet with a member of the Disability Service team (Disability Officer/Occupational Therapist) on a one-to-one basis to discuss specialist disability supports (see <https://www.tcd.ie/disability/current/index.php> for information on how to register with the Disability Service). Students decide on the level of support that they require.

All students in this category will have a full needs assessment leading to a Learning Educational Needs Assessment (LENS) report. With the student's permission, the report is sent to the Head of Discipline, who has responsibility for ensuring that it is communicated confidentially to relevant staff in order to put necessary supports in place. Most students who have applied for reasonable accommodation with the Disability Service request access to a range of supports that help the student reach their full potential while studying. These include academic supports, assistive technology, dyslexia consultation, exam accommodations, library supports and deaf supports. There are also specific disability support services. These include Asperger's Syndrome support, Autism support, as well as providing a respite space. The Disability Service also assist with Professional Placement Planning (See PEH, Figure 9.2 and 9.3, p. 47/48.) See <https://www.tcd.ie/disability/services/>

**3.4.8 Student accommodation** (see <https://www.tcd.ie/accommodation/on-campus/> for information for current registered students)

There are currently four locations for accommodation available to Trinity students, all of which are either in close proximity to the campus or are on campus itself. Students with disabilities applying as new entrants can have their application considered under special consideration due to the impact of a disability. Students must have applied for reasonable accommodation with the Trinity Disability Service to avail of this support (see <https://www.tcd.ie/disability/services/App-for-rooms.php> for further details on how to request special consideration accommodation)

**3.4.9 Accessible information** (see <https://www.tcd.ie/about/policies/accessible-info-policy.php> for the full policy)

The College Accessible Information Policy sets out a formal commitment by the College that all information should be available in an accessible format, without discrimination against those with print disabilities. This includes printed information, web pages and presentation materials such as PowerPoint and information technology.

**3.4.10 Careers Office** (see <https://www.tcd.ie/Careers/students/> for full information)

All undergraduate and postgraduate students have access to a comprehensive Careers Service. Clinical Speech and Language Studies Students have a dedicated staff member in the Careers Office. In Hilary term each year, the Department organizes a two day Career Planning Event for final year students where staff from the Careers Office provide lectures and workshops on writing CVs and cover letters and Speech and Language Therapy Managers across a range of service delivery sites complete workshops and mock competency-based interviews with students.

**3.4.11 Mature Students Office** (see <https://www.tcd.ie/maturestudents/> for full information on how to access these supports)

The Mature Student Office in Trinity College is part of the Trinity Access Programmes (TAP) and provides advice and support to both prospective and current undergraduate mature students.

**3.4.12 Societies and clubs** (see <https://www.tcd.ie/students/clubs-societies/> for full information)

Trinity has over 120 societies and 50 sports clubs for staff and students and students are encouraged to participate in all aspects of the College experience, as part of the Healthy Trinity initiative ([www.tcd.ie/collegehealth/promotion/](http://www.tcd.ie/collegehealth/promotion/))

**3.4.13. Chaplaincy service** (see <https://www.tcd.ie/Chaplaincy/>)

The Chaplains are representatives of the main Christian Churches in Ireland who work together as a team. In addition to religious services, they also offer a bereavement support service in association with the Counselling Service (see [https://www.tcd.ie/Student\\_Counselling/counselling/groups-workshops/](https://www.tcd.ie/Student_Counselling/counselling/groups-workshops/) for details on how to join)

**3.4.14 Financial assistance**

There are a range of bursaries and scholarships available to students via the Senior Tutor's Office (<https://www.tcd.ie/seniortutor/students/undergraduate/financial-assistance/>). All registered undergraduate students can apply for financial assistance, although funds are limited. Students who enter through HEAR/TAP, should apply

directly to the Trinity Access Programmes (for further details, see [www.tcd.ie/trinityaccess/students/current/](http://www.tcd.ie/trinityaccess/students/current/))

#### **3.4.15 IT services** (see <https://www.tcd.ie/itservices/>)

IT Services is responsible for the planning, delivery and support of the University's main computing facilities. This includes the University's network systems, web infrastructure, email and calendaring, management services, research IT and student computing facilities, through the myzone portal (see <http://myzone.tcd.ie/> for students and <https://www.tcd.ie/students/> for further information). IT Services also provides support for teaching and learning in a number of lecture theatres and seminar rooms on and off campus, and also provides a video capture/production service and a photographic service.

Staff and students are provided with full IT support via the IT Service Desk (see <https://www.tcd.ie/itservices/network/kb/tcdconnect-process.php> for information on how to apply to connect a laptop to the IT support services) and a wide range of IT training is also available either online or face to face. The department also runs a Projects Office to help manage IT service change and delivery initiatives.

### **3.5. Complaints Procedures**

As a department, we strive to ensure that a positive and supportive student experience for all students. However, we recognize that at times across many aspects of their college life, the student experience may fall short of this standard. A formal feedback procedure and a complaints procedure is in place for students ([https://www.tcd.ie/about/policies/160722\\_Student%20Complaints%20Procedure\\_PUB.pdf](https://www.tcd.ie/about/policies/160722_Student%20Complaints%20Procedure_PUB.pdf)). The purpose of the formal Student Complaints Procedure is to ensure that legitimate student complaints are investigated in a transparent, fair and timely manner with a view to reaching a resolution in a clear, fair and timely manner. The guiding principles are: (i) To provide students with a clear framework in which to raise complaints; (ii) To respect all the individuals involved in a complaint; (iii) To comply with legal and statutory frameworks; (iv) To support improvements through regular

reporting and review of issues raised. (See [https://www.tcd.ie/about/policies/160722\\_Student%20Complaints%20Procedure\\_PUB.pdf](https://www.tcd.ie/about/policies/160722_Student%20Complaints%20Procedure_PUB.pdf))

### 3.6 Monitoring and Review of Support Systems

The Quality Office (<https://www.tcd.ie/teaching-learning/quality/>) has designated responsibility in relation to promoting and facilitating continuous quality improvement activities, in collaboration with students (see <https://www.tcd.ie/teaching-learning/quality/quality-assurance/reviews/information/students.php> for details on how to participate). In line with College Quality Assurance policies and procedures ( see [www.tcd.ie/teaching-learning/assets/pdf/academicpolicies/Quality%20%20Policy%20Statement%20Dec%202018.pdf](http://www.tcd.ie/teaching-learning/assets/pdf/academicpolicies/Quality%20%20Policy%20Statement%20Dec%202018.pdf) ), all College services are subject to formal review with external members participating in such reviews (e.g., [www.tcd.ie/teaching-learning/quality/quality-assurance/accreditation.php](http://www.tcd.ie/teaching-learning/quality/quality-assurance/accreditation.php) )

TCD has published a Student Partnership Policy (<https://www.tcd.ie/teaching-learning/assets/pdf/academicpolicies/StudentPartnershipPolicy.pdf>.)

It is designed to promote the engagement of students during their time at the University, and seeks feedback on the student experience across all contexts in order to maintain and enhance the quality of the student experience (Appendix 3.5).

Within the Department, staff operate an Open-Door practice where students are encouraged to access staff as needed for advice or consultation. We have at least one staff member who acts as College Tutor (see section 3.2.3), but tutors may also be drawn from other areas of College. Student representatives from each year group are invited to attend the General Staff Meetings twice each term, (see Section 2.2.3) to bring issues of concern or note from the student body.

Additionally, the Department organizes specific support workshops to address issues of student concern (e.g. stress, anxiety) and is open to specific requests from students



for additional supports. These requests can be brought directly to staff meetings or can be made to any staff member. Students also complete an Exit survey annually. This information is also used to inform support systems that are available to students.

## 4. Policy Procedures for Quality Assurance

### 4.1 Programme Review

There is a culture that recognizes the importance of quality assurance and quality improvement within the Department and TCD. The Quality Office in TCD aims to ensure that Trinity is aligned to national and international standards and regulations for quality, and supports the engagement of staff, students and stakeholders in quality assurance and quality enhancement activity. There are policies and procedures in place for periodic internal and external review (see <https://www.tcd.ie/teaching-learning/quality/quality-assurance/reviews/information/school.php> and <https://www.tcd.ie/teaching-learning/academic-policies/>)

### 4.2 Internal Quality Assurance Policy and Procedures

#### 4.2.1 TCD quality assurance policies

In December 2018, TCD published a Quality Policy Statement (<https://www.tcd.ie/teaching-learning/assets/pdf/academicpolicies/Quality%20%20Policy%20Statement%20Dec%202018.pdf>) in response to Standard 1.1 of the Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area (ESG) which states that Institutions should have a policy for quality assurance that is made public and forms part of their strategic management. A Framework for Quality at TCD ([www.tcd.ie/teaching-learning/quality/assets/pdf/Framework.pdf](http://www.tcd.ie/teaching-learning/quality/assets/pdf/Framework.pdf)) was approved in January 2016 and brings together the elements that form the current focus of quality assurance and enhancement.

#### 4.2.2 TCD quality assurance procedures

There is a seven-year cycle of quality reviews of academic and administrative/support areas, along with strategic or thematic reviews, which are undertaken as required.

The **Annual Faculty Quality Report** is available publicly on the TCD Quality website (<https://www.tcd.ie/teaching-learning/quality/quality-enhancement/faculty.php>).

The outcomes of local quality assurance procedures, including annual student module evaluations are captured in this, which serves as a vehicle for sharing of good practice across Faculties and the escalation of College-level issues impacting on quality. It also assists in monitoring the implementation of College Policies at School and Faculty level.

*4.2.2.1: Student Evaluation:* In line with the university policy, teaching and learning is evaluated annually by students through mandatory undergraduate module evaluations, and by participation in the [Irish Survey of Student Engagement \(ISSE\)](#) and the International Student Barometer (ISB). Within the department, module evaluations are captured via Qualtrics/Survey Monkey at the end of each semester. The information for each module is compiled by the module coordinator and discussed with the Head of Discipline. Feedback is provided to students either verbally or via email with actions proposed if applicable for the following teaching term. At the end of each term, feedback is discussed at the Curriculum meetings and all feedback is collated for the annual Faculty Quality Report, published on the Quality Office website (<https://www.tcd.ie/teaching-learning/quality/quality-enhancement/faculty.php>).

The Quality Office in TCD has also developed a procedure for the conduct of focus groups for student evaluation of modules and programmes. The Quality Office facilitates this and maintains a panel of trained focus group facilitators and note takers. Schools and Disciplines can access the panel via the Quality Officer (see <https://www.tcd.ie/teaching-learning/quality/quality-assurance/evaluation.php>).

Within the Department, students are surveyed at the start of the programme to explore expectations of the course and any information needs at the outset of Year 1 (Junior Freshman). Students are also surveyed at the end of the programme before they graduate. The information provided in this feedback helps inform the future development of the programme.

*4.2.2.2: Staff Evaluation:* Staff surveys and focus groups are administered during internal Programme Reviews as a method of obtaining feedback within the university. Within the Programme, staff jointly evaluate the organization, delivery and outcomes of each module taught annually at the Department Curriculum meetings, the Clinical Curriculum meetings with the Practice Tutors (See PEH, Section 10) and at the end of each semester on completion of a module. Student and other stakeholder feedback on modules is considered across all these discussions.

*4.2.2.3: Stakeholder Evaluation:* Stakeholders are involved in feedback and evaluation of the curriculum through curriculum meetings as well as clinical curriculum meetings. In addition, the Connect Conversation Partner Programme, which forms the service-learning component of SLU11001 (Foundation Clinical Skills), is annually reviewed by the Connect Steering Committee. This Committee is chaired by an academic member of staff and comprises speech and language therapists and at least one service user. There has been a recent decision to undertake biennial multi-party reviews of the Conversation Partner Programme (a joint meeting with the Connect Steering Committee, service users, referring therapists and students).

### **4.2.3 Ensuring quality through transparency**

The programme is committed to openness and transparency as part of its commitment to quality. The department aims to respond to all student feedback, whether positive or negative, either verbally or via email in order to close the feedback loop – *you said, we did* .

Students can access previous exams papers on the Academic Registry website (<https://www.tcd.ie/academicregistry/exams/past-papers/annual/>) and within the department through Blackboard (through the myzone portal). Where an exam paper format is changed, students are provided with sample papers on Blackboard and given the opportunity to ask questions regarding the format in advance of the examination.

Students are provided with marking rubrics for assignments within the Blackboard platform. In keeping with Calendar regulations (<https://www.tcd.ie/calendar/undergraduate-studies/general-regulations-and-information.pdf>) students are provided with an opportunity to review examination scripts and marking schedules after exams (<https://www.tcd.ie/academicregistry/exams/student-guide>).

#### ***4.2.4 Ensuring quality with protection of the public and safeguarding students at the core***

While the Department is committed to the principle that students receive the highest quality education both academically and clinically, with high standards of professional conduct, education, training and competencies, safeguarding the public and patients remain central to our policy and procedure mechanisms. This is covered also in the Practice Education Handbook (PEH) (Sections 7, 8 and 9) and College Calendar (<https://www.tcd.ie/calendar/undergraduate-studies/general-regulations-and-information.pdf>). Ensuring that there are quality safeguards and supports in place for students is central within our Department

### **4.3 External Programme Review**

The quality of the university and the programme are also subject to external review (see <https://www.tcd.ie/teaching-learning/quality/quality-assurance/reviews/>) ([www.tcd.ie/teaching-learning/quality/quality-enhancement/institutional.php](http://www.tcd.ie/teaching-learning/quality/quality-enhancement/institutional.php)).

Students also participate in external national surveys such as the Irish Survey of Student Engagement (ISSE) (<http://studentsurvey.ie/>)

#### ***4.3.1 Accreditation and programme approval***

The programme was approved by the Speech and Language Therapists Registration Board (CORU) on **12 January 2016**. Monitoring is a requirement of all approved programmes, and preparation for monitoring commences three years after the previous approval /monitoring.

Our Accreditation cycle with the Irish Association of Speech and Language Therapists (IASLT) is 4-5 years. The programme was last accredited in 2017. Recommendations from this report have been integrated where possible into the Academic Curriculum and Practice Education.

#### **4.3.2 External examination process**

TCD's External Examiners Policy (see <https://www.tcd.ie/teaching-learning/Education/Ext.Examiners/index.php>) ensures a transparent, consistent, and effective external examining system. External Examiners provide a valuable and objective perspective that contributes to the quality assurance of our programme. The External examiners provide direction on the quality of the content, organisation, and assessment processes to ensure that the quality and professional standards are maintained and enhanced. The external examining process also allows us to be benchmarked against comparable university speech and language therapy programmes. An overview on the nomination, examination, and reporting process at undergraduate and postgraduate level is available at <https://www.tcd.ie/teaching-learning/Education/Ext.Examiners/index.php>.

Three external examiners, who each complete a 3-year term, review the programme. The current external examiners are Dr. Wendy Cohen, University of Strathclyde, Scotland (Speech–Language Pathology), Dr. Gary Morgan The City University, London, UK (Psychology) and Dr. Zoe Butterfint, University of East Anglia, UK (Linguistics). External examiners must submit a report each year to the Senior Lecturer's Office and the Department is required to indicate how it has responded to any issues raised.

#### **4.4 Grievance and Appeals Procedures for Students**

There is a grievance and examination appeals procedure in place for students arising from any concerns related to the examination process (see paragraphs 67 and 68 of the College calendar: <https://www.tcd.ie/calendar/undergraduate-studies/general-regulations-and-information.pdf>). A student may appeal a decision of the court of examiners relating to academic progress to a Court of First Appeal. Appeals should

be made in writing by a student's tutor or, if the tutor is unwilling or unable to act, by the Senior Tutor or his/her nominee (for guidance see <https://www.tcd.ie/seniortutor/students/undergraduate/> ).