Trinity College Dublin
Coláiste na Tríonóide, Baile Átha Cliath
The University of Dublin
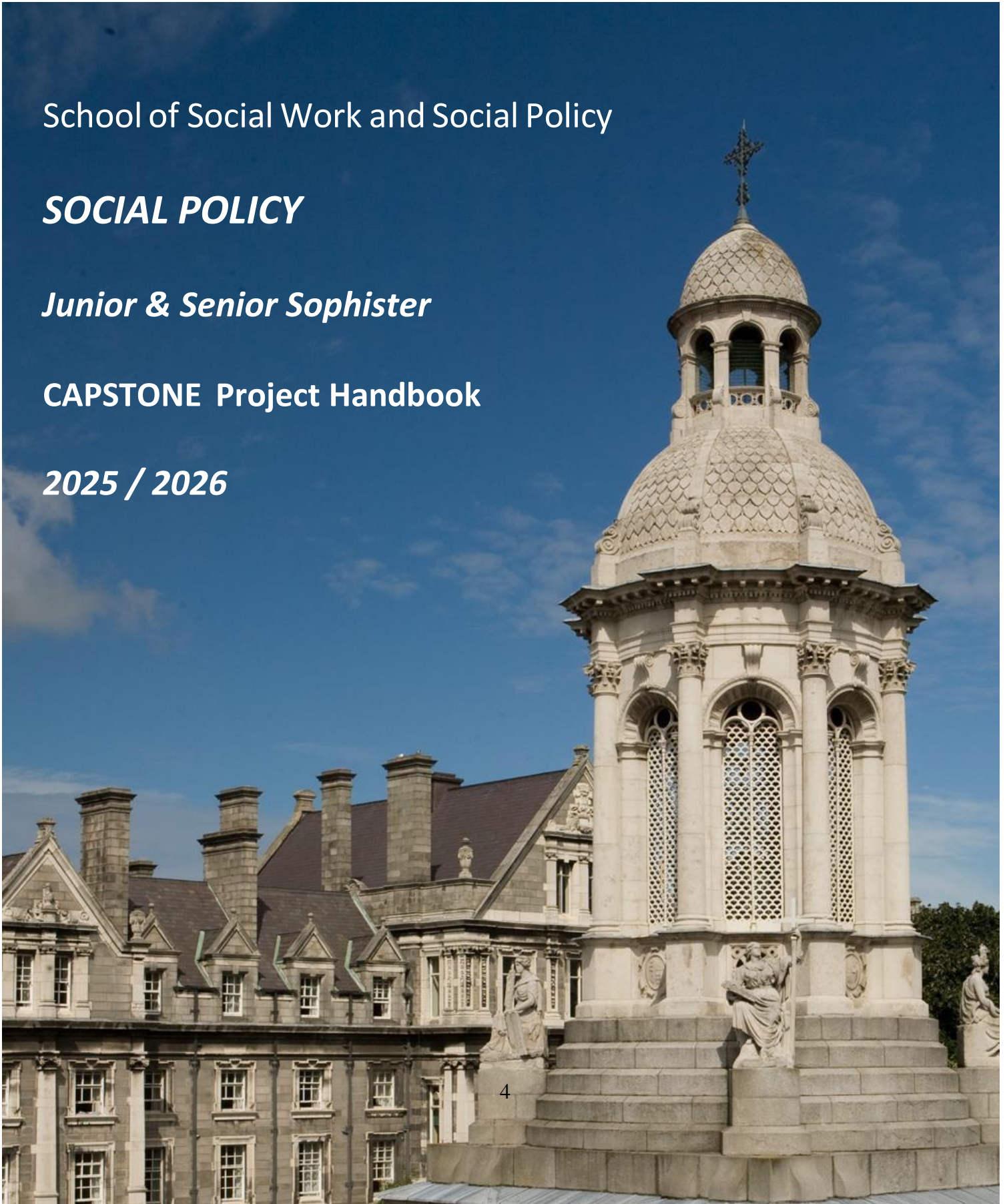
School of Social Work and Social Policy

SOCIAL POLICY

Junior & Senior Sophister

CAPSTONE Project Handbook

2025 / 2026

4

A Note on this Handbook

In the event of any conflict or inconsistency between the General Regulations published in the University Calendar and information contained in programme or local handbooks, the provisions of the General Regulations in the Calendar will prevail.

Alternative formats of the Handbook can be made available on request.
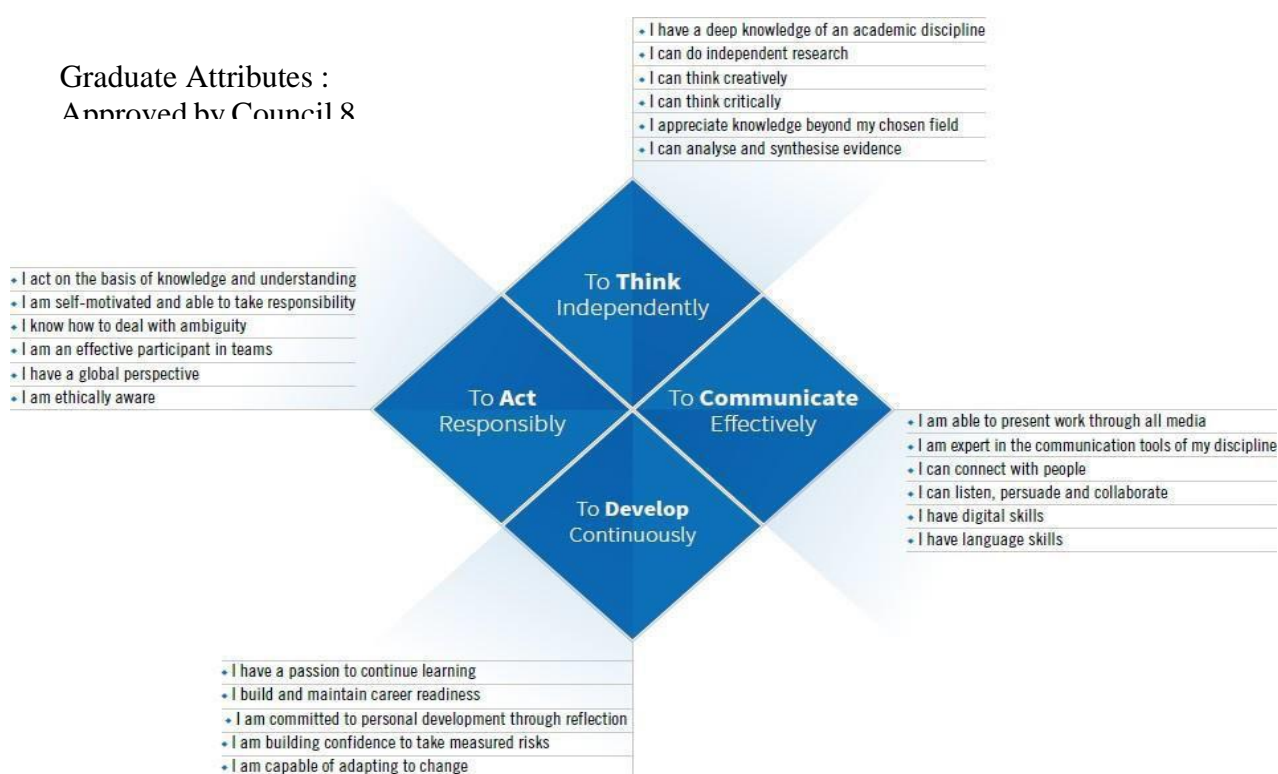
Contents

1. What is a Trinity Capstone Project?

A capstone is a significant (20 ECTS) project or dissertation, undertaken at Senior Sophister level, that provides you with an opportunity to showcase the knowledge, skills and competencies which you have acquired over the course of your undergraduate study.

The Social Policy Capstone project is rooted in the Graduate Attributes laid down by Trinity College Dublin for undergraduate study. Trinity's Graduate Attributes represent the qualities, skills and behaviours that you have an opportunity to develop as a Trinity student over your entire university experience.

During your time as an undergraduate in Trinity you have the opportunity through your coursework and assessments, as well as co-curricular and extra-curricular activities, to develop and improve these attributes. The Trinity **Graduate Attributes** are:

Graduate Attributes :
Approved by Council 8

- I have a deep knowledge of an academic discipline
- I can do independent research
- I can think creatively
- I can think critically
- I appreciate knowledge beyond my chosen field
- I can analyse and synthesise evidence

- I act on the basis of knowledge and understanding
- I am self-motivated and able to take responsibility
- I know how to deal with ambiguity
- I am an effective participant in teams
- I have a global perspective
- I am ethically aware

To Think Independently

To Act Responsibly

To Communicate Effectively

- I am able to present work through all media
- I am expert in the communication tools of my discipline
- I can connect with people
- I can listen, persuade and collaborate
- I have digital skills
- I have language skills

To Develop Continuously

- I have a passion to continue learning
- I build and maintain career readiness
- I am committed to personal development through reflection
- I am building confidence to take measured risks
- I am capable of adapting to change

Capstone Project Contacts

Role	Name	Email
Capstone Module Lead	Dr Paula Mayock	pmayock@tcd.ie
Director of the Joint Honours Programme	Dr Philip Curry	pcurry@tcd.ie

2. A visual guide to the Capstone Project Process in Social Policy
(with Indicative Timelines for Junior and Senior Sophisters in 2025/2026)

Choosing SOCIAL POLICY, as a CAPSTONE PROJECT

CAPSTONE Application Open on (TBC by JH Office) and Close on (TBC by JH Office)
Change of Mind: (TBC by JH Office)

THERE ARE TWO SOCIAL POLICY CAPSTONE OPTIONS

Option 1
Self-Selected
CAPSTONE Project
Work with Supervisor to refine topic and research questions

Option 2
Select a research topic that aligns with a thematic area of social policy in the School as CAPSTONE Project.
Work with Supervisor to refine topic and research questions

SUPERVISOR APPOINTED by WEEEK 7

Research question(s) and proposal refinement, methodological design finalised, ethics application submitted (where relevant)

Before end of Michaelmas Term

Documentary or primary/secondary data collection, analysis and write-up

SUBMISSION OF DISSERTATION
MARCH 27TH, 2026

Junior Sophister Students

Senior Sophister Students

3. CAPSTONE Module (SSU44000) Senior Sophister 2025 / 2026

3.1 Lectures, Workshops & Deadlines

> **Mondays:** 11.00-12.00, ROOM 2.16 FOSTER PLACE
>
> **Tuesdays**: 12.00-13.00, ROOM 2.16 FOSTER PLACE
>
> **Dr. Paula Mayock**

Week 4. **Monday September 15th:**

Introduction to Capstone

Week 4. **Tuesday September 16th:**

Choosing and Finalising a Research Topic

Week 5. **Monday September 22nd:**

Research Ethics

Week 5. **Tuesday September 23rd:**

Applying for Ethical Approval

Week 6. **Monday September 29th and Tuesday September 30th:**

Workshops: Reviewing progress with research topic and research design

with Capstone Lead and peers.

Week 7. **ALLOCATION OF SUPERVISORS**

Week 8. **Monday October 13th and Tuesday October 14TH:**

Documentary and Desk-based Research and Policy Analysis

4. Senior Sophister Year CAPSTONE Projects in Social Policy (2025 / 2026)

The Capstone project in Social Policy provides you with an opportunity to apply the knowledge and skills you have acquired, as a student of social policy, to a piece of original research presented in a 10,000-word written dissertation or thesis.

If you decide to do a Capstone in social policy, you will be required to conduct independent policy research and analysis under the guidance of a Supervisor in the School of Social Work and Social Policy.
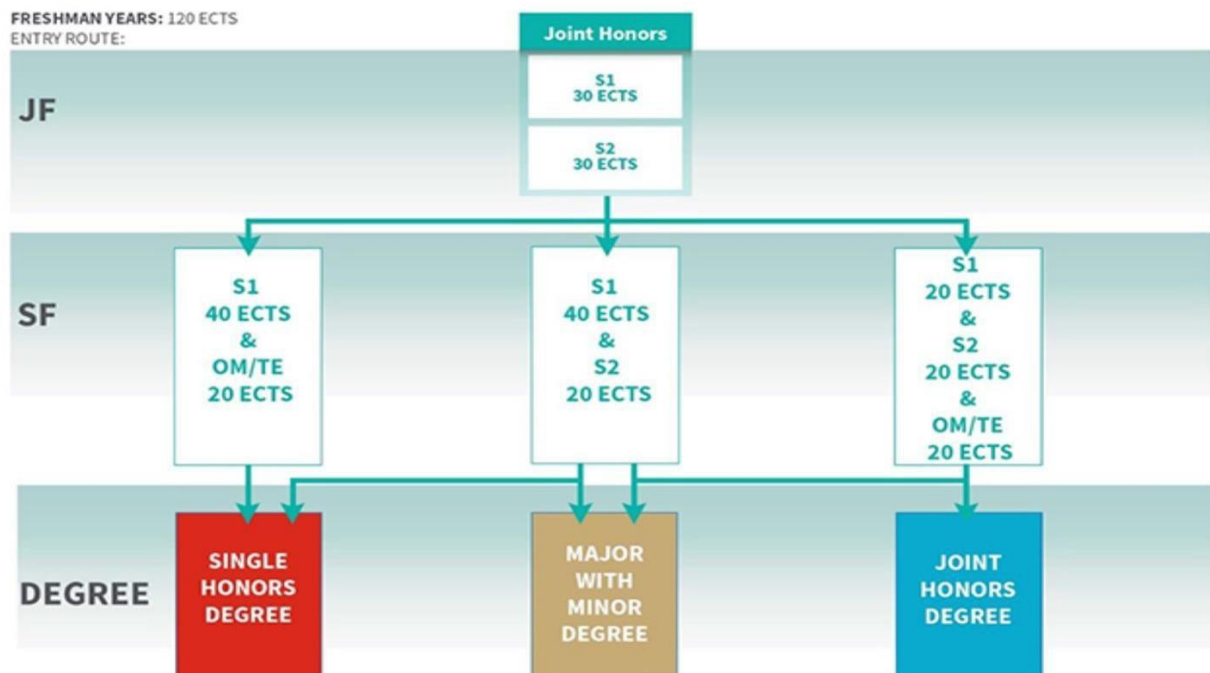
5. Junior Sophister Year (2025 / 2026) CAPSTONE Projects in Social Policy (2026 / 2027)

Junior Sophister Students (2025-2026) who plan to undertake their CAPSTONE Project in Social Policy in 2026-2027 must have completed the following modules:

- Senior Fresh Year: **An Introduction to Research Methods for Social Policy** *(either 5 or 10 ECTs)*
- Junior Sophister Year: ***Quantitative Methods for Social Policy*** *(either 5 or 10 ECTs)*

Common Architecture

FRESHMAN YEARS: 120 ECTS
ENTRY ROUTE:

	Joint Honors
JF	S1 30 ECTS
	S2 30 ECTS

SF	S1 40 ECTS & OM/TE 20 ECTS	S1 40 ECTS & S2 20 ECTS	S1 20 ECTS & S2 20 ECTS & OM/TE 20 ECTS

DEGREE	SINGLE HONORS DEGREE	MAJOR WITH MINOR DEGREE	JOINT HONORS DEGREE

KEY: S1 - Subject 1 | S2 - Subject 2 | OM - Open Modules | TE - Trinity Electives | JF - Junior Freshman | SF - Senior Freshman

6. Learning objectives of a CAPSTONE Project in Social Policy

Your capstone project in Social Policy will support you to:

1. Develop and demonstrate practical and critical knowledge of your chosen social policy field;
2. Enhance your skills for identifying a research or policy problem and formulating appropriate research question(s);
3. Strengthen your critical appraisal and analytical skills relevant to undertaking a systematised review of the extant literature in your field and linking it with the research problem;
4. Strengthen your critical appraisal and analytical skills relevant to undertaking primary or secondary research and linking new findings back to existing empirical, theoretical and policy literature;
5. Critically analyse an area of social policy through independent research;
6. Reflect on and address, where relevant, ethical issues raised by your research project;
7. Reflect on and address the limitations of your research project;
8. Organise, structure and write a dissertation to a professional standard in the field of social policy.

6. Learning objectives of a CAPSTONE Project in Social Policy

7. How to select your topic in Social Policy

There are two options available to students who choose to undertake a capstone project in social policy:

1. You **self-select** a topic and work with your Supervisor to refine your proposed topic and research questions; OR
2. You select to work under the guidance of a Supervisor in a **thematic area of social policy in the School**.

The following are among the School's thematic areas for Capstone:

Aging	Climate Change and Sustainable Social Policy	Community Living and Cooperativism	Disability
Health/Global Health Policy	Policy-making Process	Sexual and reproductive Health and Policy	Housing and Homelessness
Migrant and Refugee Policy	Poverty, Work and Welfare	Intergenerational Relations	Youth and Children
Education	Criminology	Substance Use	Citizenship

PLEASE NOTE THAT YOUR CHOSEN CAPSTONE RESEARCH TOPIC MUST BE RELEVANT TO THE

FIELD OF SOCIAL POLICY

8. Allocation of Supervisors

Capstone Supervisors are allocated to guide your independent project by the Capstone Module Lead, **Dr Paula Mayock.** Supervisors will be allocated from among the staff of the School of Social Work and Social Policy. The Capstone dissertation is your own independent piece of work.

8.1   The Role of the Social Policy CAPSTONE Supervisor

The role of the supervisor is to provide effective supervision in your field of study and provide guidance to you as you undertake your research project.

You can expect to meet with your supervisor on approximately four occasions during the academic year. Please note that supervision may be group-based in instances where students are working on a common theme with the same supervisor.

Your supervisor will advise you on research methods and skills, help you to refine your research ideas, and give feedback on drafts of your dissertation. **You can expect your supervisor to read one full draft of your dissertation**, which may be submitted incrementally, chapter by chapter. You will need to discuss and agree a schedule for submitting your dissertation chapters for feedback with your supervisor.

It *is not* the role of your supervisor to design or execute your research, or to take responsibility for the writing or submission of your Capstone project.

All lecturing staff in the School of Social Work and Social Policy are qualified to provide undergraduate supervision, and you may be assigned a supervisor who is not a specialist in the precise topic you have chosen.

While your project is an independent piece of research, your supervisor can decide to meet you on a one-to-one basis or in a group, particularly if your methodologies or themes are similar to other students.

9. What a CAPSTONE in Social Policy involves

The Capstone project requires a significant level of independent research and is an integrative exercise allowing you to showcase skills and knowledge developed over your four years of study.

Social Policy Capstone projects are written dissertations of **10,000 words** in formats including, but not limited to, one of the following:

1. Desk-based policy analysis;
2. A systematic /comprehensive social policy literature review;
3. Original empirical research using quantitative, qualitative or mixed methodologies, involving either: a) secondary analysis of an existing data set; OR b) primary data collection and analysis.

You will select one of these methods to research your topic of interest *or* you're a research topic that falls within the School's thematic areas for Capstone.

* Please note that students are allowed a leeway of 10% above the 10,000-word maximum word count limit *

10. Structure of the CAPSTONE Project in Social Policy

The structure of the capstone dissertation in social policy will vary from project to project and there are many acceptable approaches among supervisors in the School of Social Work and Social Policy. You should always consult your supervisor about structure of your project. Below is a one broad template of how a Capstone project in social policy could be structured:

1. Joint Honours Social Policy Assignment Cover Sheet;

2. Title page;

3. Acknowledgements, if desired;

4. Abstract of no more than half a page (300 words) summarising the aims, theoretical approaches, methodology and main findings of your dissertation;

5. Table of contents;

6. List of tables, figures, and acronyms, if applicable;

7. Introduction, which states your research aims, and broadly introduces existing literature to justify and explain your research/policy problem or question(s);

8. Literature or scoping review chapter which includes a discussion of how national, regional and international policies, international evidence, and theoretical or conceptual knowledge informs your study;

9. Research methodology chapter with subsections that discuss and reflect on the research strategy/ design, access and sampling, data collection instruments, data analysis technique(s), ethical issues (including your own positioning) and limitations of your research;

10. Findings chapter, which should include the presentation of your results;

11. Discussion and conclusions chapter, which evaluates the main findings, discusses implications for research, policy and theory (if applicable) and outlines avenues for future research;

12. Bibliography, in line with the departmental guidelines;

13. Appendices, including questionnaires, interview guide, coding frames and access letters where applicable.

* Please note that the Capstone project word count includes areas/points 7-11 only*

11. CAPSTONE Grading

Each capstone project will be read and evaluated by an academic who is <u>not</u> your supervisor and guided by the standards and benchmarks outlined in the School of Social Work and Social Policy's Capstone Assessment Matrix – *see Appendix A*. Senior Sophister dissertations will also be made available to the External Examiner at the Court of Examiners meeting held in Hilary term.

The 10,000-word maximum word count does not include the Title Page, Acknowledgements, Abstract, Table of Contents, List of Tables/Figures or the Bibliography (which are not considered in the word count).

* A 5% penalty will be imposed on submissions that exceed the maximum word count*

12. Academic Writing

12.1 The Use and Referencing of Generative AI

Aligned with the College Statement on Artificial Intelligence and Generative AI in Teaching, Learning, Assessment & Research (2024), the use of GenAI is permitted unless otherwise stated. Where the output of GenAI is used to inform a student's document or work output, this usage should be acknowledged and appropriately cited, as per Library guidelines on acknowledging and reference GenAI. From an academic integrity perspective, if a student generates content from a GenAI tool and submits it as his/her/their own work, it is considered plagiarism, which is defined as academic misconduct in accordance with College Academic Integrity Policy.

12.2 School of Social Work and Social Policy on Generative AI

Generative Artificial Intelligence (GenAI) refers to artificial intelligence systems capable of generating new content, ideas, or data that mimic human-like creativity. It uses deep learning algorithms to produce outputs ranging from text and images to music and code, based on patterns it learns from vast datasets. GenAI uses large language models to analyse and understand the structure of the data it's trained on, enabling the generation of novel content. Examples include ChatGPT, Google Bard, CoPilot, Grammarly and Notion.

The University recognises that GenAI offers new opportunities for teaching, learning, assessment and research. It also recognises that these technologies present challenges and risks, including to academic integrity, ethics, student learning, privacy, impartiality, intellectual property and sustainability.

The purpose of this policy is to outline the core principles of the School of Social Work and Social Policy's approach to student use of GenAI. This policy compliments the College level policy on GenAI while considering the unique needs and demands of our School.

Encouraging the development of GenAI literacy

In line with College policy, the School is committed to supporting the opportunity for students and staff to become GenAI literate and fluent, thereby helping them to navigate and respond to the challenges and risks of GenAI in order to harness the potential of GenAI to enhance teaching, learning, assessment and research – and to be prepared for future challenges as these technologies evolve.

Appreciating what GenAI is and is not good for

Within a research context there are some tasks which GenAI is particularly useful for. For example, generating statistical code or as an aid when brainstorming questions to ask participants in a survey or interview.

GenAI may be useful when undertaking discursive writing such as an essay but only when used with discretion and understood as an assistive tool.

For a research literature review for a Capstone, Masters or PhD dissertation it is advisable to use GenAI sparingly, if at all. It may be useful as a way to check grammar and spelling and may sometimes be used to generate ideas but the deep knowledge of the literature that comes from systematic searching, independent reading and the exertion involved in shaping it into your final review are important parts of the research process and will play an important role in deciding the aims and value of your research.

Using GenAI is not recommended for reflective writing, which is often deeply personal and requires use of self, or for applied case study analysis (both very relevant for our School).

Understanding the limitations of GenAI

A crucial part of GenAI literacy is understanding the risks and limitations of these technologies, particularly when used for academic purposes.

While GenAI tools can generate very eloquent, convincing text, they do not store facts and knowledge, rather they generate outputs based on probabilities. Thus, GenAI is prone to making factual errors (called 'hallucinations') which are nonetheless very convincingly presented. This is where

academic/professional judgement and domain expertise are very important. If you are using GenAI, you need to double check the information it is giving you as it will present information which is simply not true. Therefore, it is crucial for any user to fact-check any output from a GenAI tool. Bear in mind that your module coordinator will be a domain expert and hence very likely to spot non-existent or miscited sources.

As well as factual errors users should be aware that GenAI tools can exhibit bias as a result of bias embedded in its training data. GenAI does not engage in systematic and rigorous evaluation of research evidence and should not be used as a substitute.

GenAI has proven to be a very effective tool for exploring information, suggesting activities or plans appropriate to a problem or task, or generating ideas or materials through interactive dialogue.

Ensuring that GenAI use does not impede student learning

Inappropriate use of GenAi can impede student progress in terms of acquiring the Trinity education graduate attributes (independent thinking, effective communication, responsible action, and continuous development) and achieving the learning outcomes of any given module. For their own benefit, it is strongly recommended that students follow the advice of module leads about when to use and not use GenAI tools.

Ensuring that GenAI use complies with academic integrity

Aligned with the College Statement on Artificial Intelligence and Generative AI in Teaching, Learning, Assessment & Research (2024), the use of GenAI is permitted unless otherwise stated. Where the output of GenAI is used to inform a student's document or work output, this usage should be acknowledged and appropriately cited, as per Library guidelines on acknowledging and referencing GenAI. From an academic integrity perspective, if a student generates content from a GenAI tool and submits it as his/her/their own work (i.e. fails to acknowledge and appropriately cite the use of GenAI), it is considered plagiarism, which is defined as academic misconduct in accordance with College Academic Integrity Policy.

Note any long verbatim quotation (e.g. more than one paragraph), even with citation, may be

considered inappropriate or poor practice in student assessment documents and publications.

Awareness of ethical issues in the use of GenAI

The use of GenAI tools can have important ethical implications which users should be aware of.

The training and use of GenAI systems consume significant amounts of energy and resources, leading to sustainability concerns.

Many GenAI tools are trained on vast amounts of data gleaned from a wide variety of sources. However, the training of such tools is not transparent and the exact extent of their training data and sources remains unknown. Some major GenAI providers have been sued for copyright infringement.

Some GenAI tools that have been trained on material on the open web are likely to have ingested protected personal data, copyright-protected content, copyright-infringing content, misinformation, disinformation, hate speech, defamation, and all manner of other unlawful content. Additionally, some GenAI tools harvest information from user prompts including contextual information from users' interaction with GenAI tools, leading to privacy and intellectual property concerns. GenAI tools vary in regard to the extent of these concerns.

Avoiding unlawful ways of using GenAI

Given the nature of the work of the School of Social Work and Social Policy it is very important that all staff and students understand the ways in which GenAI can be used unlawfully. For students this is important both for their time in College and in employment afterwards.

Most GenAI tools harvest inputs and use interactions with users for their systems development. Therefore personal, private or sensitive information about colleagues, students or clients / service users should never be used as part of inputs, prompts, queries, instructions and other interactions when using GenAI tools. Even where sharing such private information is not necessarily unlawful, it is against College regulations.

Student work (submitted assessments and contributions) are considered private information, and are not allowed to be uploaded into a third-party GenAI tool for any reason. Similarly, content which is confidential in Trinity or confidential to your user's studies or work (research, teaching or administrative) or for which you do not own the copyright, or which is not publicly available, should not be used in creating inputs, prompts, queries, instructions, contextual information, and other interactions for GenAI.

Using GenAI appropriately on work placement

Students on placement outside of the university should familiarise themselves with and always adhere to policies on the use of GenAI in their host organisations.

When preparing placement related coursework, students should never, for any reason, input confidential service user information including, names, locations, case notes or any identifying information into any GenAI tool.

RESOURCES:

Trinity's Generative Artificial Intelligence (GenAI) Hub

https://www.tcd.ie/academicpractice/resources/generative_ai/

College Statement on Artificial Intelligence and Generative AI in Teaching, Learning, Assessment & Research

https://www.tcd.ie/academicpractice/assets/pdf/college-statement-on-genai.pdf

TCD library guide on using GenAI

https://libguides.tcd.ie/gen-ai

College statement on academic integrity

https://www.tcd.ie/about/policies/academic-policies/academic-integrity/

UNESCO (2023) Guidance for Generative AI in Education and Research.

https://www.unesco.org/en/articles/guidance-generative-ai-education-and-research

All CAPSTONE submissions in social policy must have the Plagiarism/AI declaration attached. **CLICK HERE FOR 2025 / 2026 VERSION.**

12.3 Plagiarism

If you copy another student's coursework, engage someone to write your work, quote material from any published or electronic source without acknowledgement, or extensively paraphrase such material without acknowledgement, you have committed plagiarism.

The College's definition of plagiarism and specification of its consequences can be viewed here https://libguides.tcd.ie/academic-integrity. These webpages are designed to help you to understand what plagiarism is and to employ the principles of academic integrity so as to avoid plagiarising. They also set out the regulations in Trinity relating to plagiarism offences and how they are dealt with. The College Calendar defines plagiarism, gives examples of the kinds of actions that are deemed to constitute plagiarism, and elaborates on the procedures for dealing with plagiarism cases. It is essential that you read the Calendar entry that is relevant to you as an undergraduate or postgraduate student. You should also look at the **matrix** that explains the different levels of plagiarism and how they are dealt with.
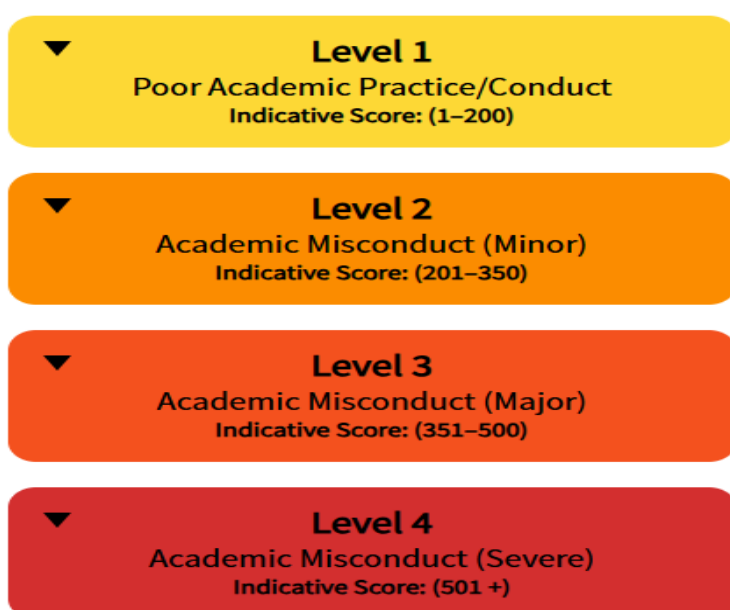
The webpages also contain materials and advice on citation styles https://libguides.tcd.ie/plagiarism/citation-styles which are used to reference properly. You should familiarise yourself with the content of these pages. Your course handbook may also contain specific examples of referencing conventions in your discipline.

All students must complete the Ready Steady Write plagiarism tutorial https://libguides.tcd.ie/plagiarism/ready-steady-write and sign a declaration when submitting course work, confirming that you understand what plagiarism is and have completed the tutorial**.** If you read the information on plagiarism, complete the tutorial and still have difficulty understanding what plagiarism is and how to avoid it, please seek advice from your College tutor, your Course Directors or from Student Learning Development.

12.4 Academic Misconduct

Academic misconduct includes offences such as plagiarism, collusion, falsification and cheating in any undergraduate or postgraduate assessment or assignment.

In cases of suspected academic misconduct, the module coordinator completes the **Academic Integrity Form**. The form calculates an **Indicative Score** according to the severity of the suspected offence. The score determines the recommended consequences.

Level 1
Poor Academic Practice/Conduct
Indicative Score: (1–200)

Level 2
Academic Misconduct (Minor)
Indicative Score: (201–350)

Level 3
Academic Misconduct (Major)
Indicative Score: (351–500)

Level 4
Academic Misconduct (Severe)
Indicative Score: (501 +)

Level	Points Range	Consequences
Level 1 (poor academic practice/conduct)	1 - 200	**Mandatory academic integrity training is required** The outcome is recorded on SITS by the module coordinator to inform any future instances of concern. This record will not appear on the student's transcript. The student is given the option to accept a referencing penalty or correct the work. If they choose to correct the work, all elements identified as poor academic practice must be amended. Other content may or may not be altered as appropriate to the assessment and as determined by the

| | | School. The corrected work will be assessed. In the case of examinations, the work must be reassessed. The mark for the component/ assessment/examination may or may not be reduced as decided by the Director of Teaching and Learning (Undergraduate or Postgraduate). |

Level	Points Range	Consequences
Level 2 Academic Misconduct (**Minor**)	201 - 350	**Mandatory academic integrity training is required** The outcome is recorded on SITS by the module coordinator to inform any future instances of concern. This record will not appear on the student's transcript. The work must be resubmitted. The student is required to amend all elements identified as breaching academic integrity. Other content may or may not be altered as appropriate to the assessment and as determined by the School. The resubmitted work will be assessed. In the case of examinations, the work must be reassessed. The component/assessment/ examination mark will be reduced or capped at the pass mark as decided by the Director of Teaching and Learning (Undergraduate or Postgraduate). and might not be confirmed until the reassessment Court of Examiners.

Level	Points Range	Consequences
Level 3 Academic Misconduct (**Major**)	351 - 500	**Mandatory academic integrity training is required** The outcome is recorded on SITS by the module coordinator to inform any future instances of concern. The work must be resubmitted at the reassessment session. The student is required to amend all elements identified as breaching academic integrity. Other content may or may not be altered as appropriate to the assessment and as determined by the School. In the case of examinations, the work must be reassessed. The mark for the module will be capped at the pass mark and will not be confirmed until the reassessment Court of Examiners.

Level	Points Range	Consequences
Level 4 Academic Misconduct (**Severe**)	501 +	Case referred directly to the Junior Dean. Information on the sanctions in cases which are brought before the Junior Dean's Office can be found at https://www.tcd.ie/Junior_Dean/student-discipline/).

Please click here for:

- Frequently Asked Questions on Academic Integrity.

13. Accessibility and Support

The School of Social Work and Social Policy is committed to an inclusive learning environment for all of our students. One of the ways we do this is through working closely with the Trinity Disability Service. If you have a disability, a mental health condition, or an ongoing illness or medical condition, the Disability Service is there to support you.

If you register with the Disability Service, you will have an opportunity to discuss your learning needs and explore reasonable accommodations to enhance your learning experience and support you with assessments and examinations. While respecting your confidentiality as a priority, the Disability Service will inform the school with your permission if there are changes we can make to teaching and assessments which will support you.

For more information on the Disability Service and how to register, please visit www.tcd.ie/disability or contact your Tutor, who will advise and assist you

14. Appendix A

14.1 Assessment Matrix School of Social Work and Social Policy Marking Scale

First class honours 70-100

First class honours in the School of Social Work and Social Policy are divided into grade bands which represent excellent, outstanding, and extraordinary performances.

A first-class answer demonstrates a comprehensive and accurate answer to the question, which exhibits a detailed knowledge of the relevant material as well as a broad base of knowledge. Theory and evidence will be well integrated, and the selection of sources, ideas, methods or techniques will be well judged and appropriately organised to address the relevant issue or problem. It will demonstrate a high level of ability to evaluate and integrate information and ideas, to deal with knowledge in a critical way, and to reason and argue in a logical way.

70-76 EXCELLENT

First class answers (excellent) demonstrate **a number of** the following criteria:

•   Comprehensiveness and accuracy.

•   Clarity of argument and quality of expression.

•   Excellent structure and organization.

•   Integration of a range of relevant materials.

•   Evidence of additional reading.

•   Critical evaluation.

•   Lacks errors of any significant kind.

•   Contains reasoned argument and comes to a logical conclusion.

•   Need not demonstrate independence thinking or originality.

77-89 OUTSTANDING

In addition to the above criteria, an outstanding answer will be consistently of a very high standard and will show some evidence of independence of judgement, originality or sound critical thinking.

90-100 EXTRAORDINARY

In addition to the criteria above, an extraordinary answer will exhibit an exceptional level of performance. Answers at this level are of a standard significantly higher than is expected of an undergraduate student. It will show originality and a sophisticated insight into the subject matter.

_____

Second Class, First Division **II.1** *60-69*

An upper second-class answer generally shows a sound understanding of both the basic principles and relevant details, supported by examples, which are demonstrably well understood, and which are presented in a coherent and logical fashion. The answer should be well presented, display some analytical ability, and contain no major errors of omissions. Not necessarily excellent in any area.

Upper second-class answers cover a wider band of students. Such answers are clearly highly competent and typically possess the following qualities:

- accurate and well-informed.

- comprehensive.

- well-organised and structured.

- evidence of reading.

- a sound grasps of basic principles.

- understanding of the relevant details.

- succinct and cogent presentation; and

- evaluation of material although these evaluations may be derivative.

One essential aspect of an upper second-class answer is that is must have completely dealt with the question asked by the examiner. In questions:

- all the major issues and most of the minor issues must have been identified.

- the application of basic principles must be accurate and comprehensive; and

- there should be a conclusion that weighs up the pros and cons of the arguments.

Second Class. Second Division   II.2   50-59

A substantially correct answer which shows an understanding of the basic principles.

Lower second-class answers display an acceptable level of competence, as indicated by the following qualities:

- generally accurate.

- an adequate answer to the question based largely on textbooks and lecture notes.

- clearly presentation; and

- no real development of arguments.

Third Class Honors   III   40-49

A basic understanding of the main issues if not necessarily coherently or correctly presented.

Third class answers demonstrate some knowledge of understanding of the general area, but a third-class answer tends to be weak in the following ways:

- descriptive only.

- does not answer the question directly.

- misses key points of information and interpretation.

- contains serious inaccuracies.

- sparse coverage of material; and

- assertions not supported by argument or evidence.

_____

Fail   *F1*   *30-39*

Answers in the range usually contain some appropriate material (poorly organised) and some evidence that the student has attended lectures and done a bare minimum of reading. The characteristics of a fail grade include:

- misunderstanding of basic material.

- failure to answer the question set.

- totally inadequate information; and

- incoherent presentation.

_____

Bad Fail   *F2*   *0-29*

Answers in this range contain virtually no appropriate material and an inadequate understanding of basic concepts.

_____

The following conventions apply to all years.

- The overall mark (and associated grade) for a year is the weighted average of all module results, using the ECTS credit rating for the weighting of each module.

- To rise with their year, a student must pass (>40%) all modules worth in total 60 credits or pass by compensation. To pass by compensation a student must have an overall arithmetic mean of 40+ and pass modules totaling 50 credits and get a mark of 35+ (Qualified Pass) in any failed module(s).

- If a student has achieved both Fail and Qualified Pass marks in the Semester 1 and 2 assessments, they must present in the supplemental session for reassessment in the modules for which they obtained a Qualified Pass or Fail.

- The marks of the assessments passed in the Semester 1 and 2 examinations are considered together with those obtained in the Supplemental assessments. The standard compensation rules apply to this combined set of results.

- In the case of students who have been given permission to withdraw from or defer all or part of the annual assessments and to sit a supplemental assessment in that year, the overall result in the Autumn will be graded.

- In the case of students who are reassessed in Semester 1 or Semester 2, the overall result in the autumn will be graded. Two attempts at the assessment will be recorded on Transcripts of Results.