



Trinity College Dublin

Coláiste na Tríonóide, Baile Átha Cliath

The University of Dublin

A meeting of the Undergraduate Studies Committee was held on 12 September 2017 at 2.15pm in the Boardroom.

Present: Professor Gillian Martin, Senior Lecturer/Dean of Undergraduate Studies (*Chair*)
 Ms Patricia Callaghan, Academic Secretary
 Professor Aidan Seery, Senior Tutor
 Professor Kevin O'Kelly, Dean of Students
 Professor Kevin Mitchell, Associate Dean of Undergraduate Science Education
 Professor Kristian Myrseth, School of Business
 Professor Paula Colavita, School of Chemistry
 Professor Mike Brady, School of Computer Science and Statistics
 Professor Nicholas Johnson, School of Creative Arts
 Professor Derek Sullivan, School of Dental Science
 Professor Stephen Minton, School of Education
 Professor Alan O'Connor, School of Engineering
 Professor Frank Wellmer, School of Genetics and Microbiology
 Professor Rachel Moss, School of Histories and Humanities
 Professor Rachel Hoare, School of Languages, Literatures and Cultural Studies
 Professor Rachel Walsh, School of Law
 Professor Pauline Sloane, School of Linguistic, Speech and Communication Sciences
 Professor Vladimir Dotsenko, School of Mathematics
 Professor Naomi Elliott, School of Nursing and Midwifery
 Professor John Walsh, School of Pharmacy and Pharmaceutical Sciences
 Professor Paul Eastham, School of Physics
 Professor Elizabeth Nixon, School of Psychology
 Professor Cathriona Russell, School of Religions, Peace Studies and Theology
 Professor Michael Wycherley, School of Social Sciences and Philosophy
 Professor Philip Curry, School of Social Work and Social Policy
 Ms Sally Anne McCarthy, Student Representative

Apologies: Professor Derek Nolan, School of Biochemistry and Immunology
 Professor Mark Hennessy, School of Natural Sciences
 Professor Alice Jorgensen, School of English
 Professor Stephen Matterson, Director of TSM
 Professor Kevin Conlon, School of Medicine
 Ms Alice Mac Pherson, Education Officer, Students' Union

In attendance: Ms Elaine Egan, Trinity Teaching and Learning; Ms Siobhán Dunne, Library Representative; Dr Alison Oldam, Director of Student Services; Ms Orlaith Tunney and Ms Jackie Pryor for USC/17-18/004; Mr Declan Coogan, Global Relations Office, for USC/17-18/005; Ms Fedelma McNamara for USC/17-18/007

USC/17-18/001 Minutes of the meetings of 23 and 30 May 2017
 The minutes were approved.

USC/16-17/002 Matters arising

USC/16-17/065 & USC/16-17/073 The proposals for dual B.A. programmes with Columbia University in European Studies, in Middle Eastern and European Languages and

Cultures, in English Studies and in History had been sent for external review. Feedback had already been received for three of the proposals and the fourth was awaited.

USC/16-17/068 Council approved the continuation of the Feasibility Study in A-Level Admissions, to be tested in the first instance in Northern Ireland, for a further year.

USC/16-17/074 A document on the Trinity Admissions Feasibility Study had been circulated to provide clarification on the objectives of the Study. Members had requested this information at the last meeting of USC of the previous academic year. The Senior Lecturer/Dean of Undergraduate Studies summarised the study for new committee members. In response to a query regarding a proposal to move the administration of TAFS to the Academic Registry, she noted that a meeting had taken place between the Vice-Provost and staff from the Academic Registry and TTL, but, as yet, no final decision had been taken. A report on TAFS would be produced at the end of the current academic year to coincide with the first cohort of entrants via the Feasibility Study completing their programme of study.

USC/16-17/075 The Calendar entry for plagiarism had been updated and also the matrix (available at <http://tcd-ie.libguides.com/plagiarism>). Members should ensure that all course handbooks contain a link to the Calendar and to the updated matrix and that students are made aware of it.

USC/16-17/048 Council had approved the proposal that 'seen' papers would no longer be permitted in the Foundation Scholarship examination.

USC/16-17/003 Entrance Exhibitions

A memorandum from the Senior Lecturer/Dean of Undergraduate Studies, dated 7 September 2017 was circulated together with a memorandum to Council from the Senior Lecturer/Dean of Undergraduate Studies, dated 1 June 2017.

Entrance exhibitions are awarded to Trinity new entrants from the EU who present with 560 points or above (excluding bonus points for mathematics) in the Leaving Certificate (or equivalent). Entrance exhibitioners receive a book token worth €150 and are invited along with their parents/guardians and school principal to a reception hosted by the Provost in the Dining Hall. The award is valued by recipients and their schools for its recognition of academic achievement.

Entrance exhibitioners whose gross family income is €40,000 or less are eligible to apply for a Sizarship which entitles the student to free Commons. Very few sizarships are awarded each year (3 in 2015/16).

In light of the aim to increase diversity in Trinity, it might be considered timely to reconsider what and who Trinity wishes to reward through the entrance exhibitions. It could be argued that achieving 560 points is more easily achievable in some schools than in others and, therefore, that the current method does not encourage diversity. The Senior Lecturer/Dean of Undergraduate Studies had been tasked with bringing a paper to Council in June to ascertain whether there is an appetite for proposing an alternative system for awarding entrance exhibitions.

The paper suggested that one alternative allocation criterion might be to award entrance exhibitions to students accepted into the Junior Fresh year who achieve the highest points among Trinity entrants from their school. Whilst it would be possible to apply this criterion to students from the Republic of Ireland, an alternative would have to be investigated for other EU entrants.

Using 2015/16 data, figures were provided to give an indication of the potential outcomes if this alternative criterion were to be used. The limitations and constraints of the data were highlighted and the indicative nature of the data was emphasised.

The figures showed that based on this criterion, the number of entrance exhibitioners who had taken the Leaving Certificate would not change significantly; the distribution across the Faculties would change somewhat; the distribution by gender would remain similar; and the geographical distribution of students would change. In the current scheme, 43% of entrance exhibitioners are from Dublin whereas using the new criterion shows this reduced to 30%. An increase in the numbers of students from Connaught, Munster and Ulster (excluding Northern Ireland) would occur if using the alternative criterion. The new criterion would create a shift in the balance between recipients coming from fee-paying, non-fee paying and 'grind' schools, resulting in less recipients coming from fee-paying and more from non-fee paying schools; the 'grind' school numbers would stay the same.

Consideration would need to be given to whether a points threshold should be retained, and at what level it should be set.

Following consideration and discussion of the paper by Council, a group was set up to develop a proposal for an alternative way to award entrance exhibitions. The group comprises the Registrar, the Senior Lecturer/Dean of Undergraduate Studies, the manager of ASD, the Admissions Officer and other staff from the Academic Registry. The group is aiming to bring proposals forward early in Michaelmas term 2017 for implementation for new entrants in 2018.

Currently, entrance exhibition are awarded to EU entrants. If one were to move to rewarding the 'best in school' for Leaving Certificate entrants, one possible way to reward non-Leaving Certificate entrants might be to use the criterion of best in country. However, it was noted that if a threshold on points were to be retained, it would not be possible to consider extending the scheme to non-EU students as results from non-EU countries are not converted into equivalent LC points and there is not always a national terminal examination.

A number of members felt that 'diversity' was not the correct term to use when discussing the purposes of looking into new criteria for allocating entrance exhibitions.

A discussion took place on the significance of setting a points threshold in ensuring excellence in the recipients. The Senior Lecturer/Dean of Undergraduate Studies noted that the group was considering a minimum points threshold. Approximately 22% of students nationally achieve 450 points and above in the Leaving Certificate and the group had been looking at this threshold. However, the need to consider excellence in both the national context and in the context of Trinity was emphasised.

In response to a query it was noted that the students who enter College via the DARE route would be captured if they entered with full points, but those entering on reduced points would most likely not. It was noted that in 2015/16, approximately 6% of entrance exhibitioners came from DEIS schools. The Senior Lecturer/Dean of Undergraduate Studies advised that adapting the award scheme to select students from a wider pool of schools should inherently increase the applications for Sizarships.

A brief discussion took place around the criterion of taking just one student from schools with particular reference to large schools that may have many students progressing to Trinity. Members wondered whether the criterion could be to award an entrance exhibition to a percentage of top students from each school rather than just the top student. It was noted that using a very low percentage, with a minimum of 1 student

from each school, would prevent a significant increase in numbers. Should two students from a school tie on their points profile, it was proposed that both students would receive an entrance exhibition award.

The Dean of Undergraduate Studies/Senior Lecturer thanked members for their comments and undertook to convey these to the group.

USC/16-17/004 Demonstration of MyCareer

A document providing details of the MyCareer system was circulated. Ms Orlaith Tunney and Ms Jackie Pryor from the Careers Advisory Service (CAS) attended the meeting to demonstrate the system to the committee. The Senior Lecturer/Dean of Undergraduate Studies had chaired the Careers Management System Steering Group and the Academic Secretary was the project champion. The introduction of MyCareer was being managed by Ms Tunney, supported by Ms Pryor and other CAS colleagues.

MyCareer is an online career management system, which went live in summer 2017. MyCareer allows students, graduates, employers, and Trinity staff to connect with CAS and will allow CAS to monitor and report on the engagement of the College community with careers events. The system will enable students and staff to:

- View vacancies, competitions and employers;
- Search postgraduate courses and funding;
- View employer and CAS events;
- Submit queries to the CAS team.

It also facilitates the following:

- Students can book an appointment with a Careers Consultant, and book onto events with employers and CAS;
- Graduates can connect with the Trinity Careers Advisory Service to search vacancies and employers, postgraduate courses and funding and also view events with employers and the Careers Advisory Service
- Employers can advertise vacancies, view and book on to events and raise their visibility with the Trinity community
- Postgraduate providers can advertise courses and funding opportunities.

SITS feeds relevant student information to MyCareer on a daily basis. The demonstration at USC focused on the student experience with MyCareer. Mock student data were entered into the system and the various options available to students were demonstrated.

In response to various queries, the following information was provided: currently there are 320 companies from across many different sectors registered on the system; graduates can access the system, but cannot avail of one-to-one meetings with career consultants (for two years post-graduation, they can avail of the CV clinic and practice interviews and Job Search Workshops); temporary positions in Trinity that do not go through the HR service can be entered into the system; vacancies submitted by employers are subject to an approval process by CAS.

Directors were asked to encourage undergraduate and postgraduate students to log into the system and update their profile. This would ensure that students receive information that is relevant and tailored to their interests. The system is available to all students. Student and graduate levels of career-readiness are captured as part of the profile.

Members congratulated Ms Tunney and Ms Pryor for their excellent work on the system.

USC/16-17/005 International Foundation Programme

An 'Update for USC and request for Approval of Additional Degree Destinations for the Trinity International Foundation Programme' was circulated. Mr Declan Coogan, Global Relations Office (GRO), attended the meeting for this item.

The Senior Lecturer/Dean of Undergraduate Studies provided members with some background information on the International Foundation Programme (IFP). A proposal for the IFP- had been brought to USC in October 2015 and, subsequently, approved by Council in January 2016. The IFP is designed to prepare for entry to Trinity, non-EU students from regions of the world where the secondary school leaving qualification does not allow them to qualify for direct admission into Trinity undergraduate programmes. Students who complete the programme successfully obtain a Level 6 on the NFQ, Special Purpose Award (Certificate in International Foundation Studies).

Previously, there had been an external provider, but there had been difficulties in certain programmes with progression of students once they came to Trinity. Therefore, the decision was taken to develop an International Foundation Programme and this commenced in September 2016. It was highlighted that the modules on the IFP had been designed with input from Trinity staff in collaboration with Marino Institute of Education and the programme is delivered by Marino on their campus.

Mr Coogan noted that the main objective of the programme is to widen access to Trinity and increase diversity. In the first year of the programme, 98 applications were received from 29 different countries, resulting in 24 registrations. This represented an increase compared with the number of registrations to the programme offered by the previous provider. Two pathways are available to students: Pathway A for Business and Social Sciences, and Pathway B for Science, Engineering and Health Sciences. One-third of students on the programme opted for Pathway A, and two-thirds for Pathway B. Out of the 24 students registered on the IFP, 19 have progressed to programmes in Trinity, with most of the other students registering on programmes in other third-level institutions.

One hundred and fifty nine applications were received from 43 different countries for entry to the Foundation Programme in 2017/18: 53 students are due to register. This exceeds the target level of 40 students for year 2. Pathway B continues to be significantly more popular than Pathway A.

Demand for degree destinations is monitored by GRO which liaises with Schools to explore whether new destination programmes can be added. This process had occurred on an informal basis, but will now be formalised with any new destination programmes being brought to USC. The circulated document provided details of new destination programmes that had been approved by Schools. USC gave approval for these new destination programmes to be added.

The document provided details of the minimum entry requirements for admission to programmes in Trinity. A query was raised regarding the mathematics entry requirement for Engineering and it was noted that the progression of students who proceed to Trinity from the IFP will be monitored by Global Relations and that the minimum entry requirements could be reviewed if necessary. It was noted that some courses carry out an interview prior to admitting students and some Directors expressed their interest in adding an interview to the admissions process in their Schools.

Comments included a member's suggestion that international accreditation could be sought for the programme. Assurance was also given by the presenter that all necessary requirements for unaccompanied minors had been met. A member queried whether the programme could be useful in facilitating access to third-level education for refugees and

the presenter noted that this was something that warranted exploration. In response to a query, the presenter noted that the GRO is responsible for the marketing of the programme and has a dedicated budget and staff for this purpose. GRO runs digital and email campaigns, produces programme-specific materials, and utilises its existing network of partners around the world. Students present with national qualifications that would not be eligible for direct entry to Trinity and apply to the programme through a dedicated website. Country-specific requirements for the programme were benchmarked against peer institutions and approved in Trinity.

USC/16-17/006 2105/16 Annual Report of the Senior Lecturer/Dean of Undergraduate Studies

The Annual Report of the Senior Lecturer/Dean of Undergraduate Studies was circulated, together with a memorandum dated 7 September 2017. (The report is appended to these minutes).

The Senior Lecturer/Dean of Undergraduate Studies noted that this was the first year that data on admissions were not included in the Annual Report. A separate admissions report for 2016/17 would be produced by the Academic Registry. In future, the focus of the annual reports of the Senior Lecturer/Dean of Undergraduate Studies and Dean of Graduate Studies would provide a more high-level analysis.

The Senior Lecturer/Dean of Undergraduate Studies advised that the circulated report was a draft version and that two aspects of the data were still being investigated. Members were invited to send any comments on the report to undergraduate.studies@tcd.ie

USC/16-17/007 Trinity Education Project

Ms Fedelma McNamara, Trinity Education Project, was welcomed to the meeting for this item. Ms McNamara provided an update on the Trinity Education Project (TEP) to the committee.

TEP has moved into the implementation stage. The roll-out will take place in two phases: Phase 1 in 2018-19, for Science, Engineering, and Engineering with Management, and the clinical programmes (health sciences programmes and clinical speech and language studies), and Phase 2, in 2019-20, for all other programmes. The governance structure of TEP comprises six sub-groups that report to the TEP Steering Committee which is chaired by the Provost.

Subgroup 1, TEP Public Affairs, Marketing and Internal Communications, chaired by the VP/CAO (Lead: Head of Communications)

The subgroup had met twice and produced a number of communications on TEP.

Subgroup 2, Technology & Business Processes Re-engineering, Mainstreaming and Planning/ Management of Transition and Systems, chaired by Director of IT Services (Lead: Director of Student Services)

The subgroup met has been meeting on a regular basis and is currently scoping the impact on business processes with the introduction of the new Academic Year Structure in 2018-19. More than forty workshops between IT Services and Academic Registry (AR) have been hosted and run by AR. The impact on business processes of the introduction of the new Academic Year Structure have been presented to School Administrative Managers at an AR Forum on 31/08.

Subgroup 3, Trinity Electives & Approved Modules, chaired by the Provost (Lead: Senior Lecturer/Dean of Undergraduate Studies)

A number of meetings had been held over the summer, including meetings with Research Theme leads. Agreement had been received for development of 6 Trinity Electives linked to the research themes and a language & culture module for Phase 1 of the programme

roll-out.

Subgroup 4, Pedagogy, chaired by the Senior Lecturer/Dean of Undergraduate Studies (Lead: Senior Academic Developer)

A number of sub-groups have been established to consider strategies in relation to: assessment framework; embedding graduate attributes; technology-enhanced and blended learning; and designing and assessing multi-disciplinary modules taught to diverse groups of students.

Subgroup 5, Internships & Careers, Student Exchanges/Mobility & Co-Curriculum Activities (Employability), chaired by the Dean of Students (Lead: Academic Secretary)

Terms of reference have been approved and a draft plan for engagement with Schools has been developed.

Subgroup 6, Progression & Awards, Fixed Timetable, Learning Spaces Design, chaired by the Associate Dean of UG Science Education (Lead: Manager of ASD)

The subgroup had been active in looking at the progression and awards regulations and at issues surrounding a fixed timetable. The timeline for the introduction of a fixed timetable is 2019/20.

In addition to the activities of the sub-groups, a number of communications had been sent out over the summer in relation to the Academic Year Structure and Progression and Awards regulations. Ms McNamara and the Senior Lecturer/Dean of Undergraduate Studies have met with the majority of Heads of Programmes, DUTLs and School Administrative Managers of programmes involved in Phase 1 of TEP. A monthly TEP forum for School Administrative Managers would commence in October 2017.

A diagram was displayed to convey what was being implemented under TEP and when. In preparation for the introduction of the new Academic Year Structure, assessment would be the priority for Michaelmas term 2017, including looking at module sizes and semesterisation of assessment. The new progression rules would be rolled out in 2018/19 for all students (apart from the 70:30 award calculation, which would apply only to new entrants in 2018/19 on those programmes being introduced in Phase I of TEP). The new programme architecture would roll out for Phase 1 programmes in 2018/19. A very small number of Trinity Electives would roll out for Phase 1 programmes in 2019/20.

Some members noted that despite the high level of information provided by TEP, not all Schools were aware of the main tenets of the project. The Senior Lecturer/Dean of Undergraduate Studies highlighted the key role of DUTLs in providing information to Schools, and to report back to USC on issues arising in Schools. Members emphasised the requirement for clear, concise information that highlighted the main action points and deadlines for Schools and the rationale behind them. The Senior Lecturer/Dean of Undergraduate Studies noted that a glossary of terms is in development and will be shared at a later stage. Ms McNamara will produce a set of slides detailing the key items that have been approved, brief rationale, progress to date, and the next steps.

USC/16-17/008 USC Self-evaluation Survey Results 2016/17

The results of the self-evaluation survey on USC were circulated. The Senior Lecturer/Dean of Undergraduate Studies emphasised the careful management that went into the planning of the meeting agendas and noted the uncertainty around the amount of discussion which might be generated by a particular agenda item.

USC/16-17/009 Any other business

Undergraduate and postgraduate course proposals approved by Council would shortly be housed in a repository on the TTL website. This would assist Schools when preparing new course proposals.