

FACULTY OF ARTS,  
HUMANITIES AND SOCIAL  
SCIENCES  
QUALITY REPORT  
(2016-17)

Submitted to Quality Committee 22 March 2018

## Contents

<b>1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY .....</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>2. QUALITY REPORT .....</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>2.1 Quality of Undergraduate Programme Provision.....</b>	<b>4</b>
<i>UG: Student Evaluations.....</i>	<i>4</i>
<i>UG: External Examiners (EE).....</i>	<i>4</i>
<b>2.2 Quality of Postgraduate Programme Provision.....</b>	<b>5</b>
<i>PGT: Student Evaluations .....</i>	<i>5</i>
<i>PGT: External Examiners .....</i>	<i>5</i>
<b>2.3 Summary of enhancements across the Faculty.....</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>2.4 Summary of issues to be escalated to College Level .....</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>2.5 College response to issues outlined in previous year's Annual Faculty Quality Report.....</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>2.6 Faculty Projects / Initiatives.....</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>3. APPENDICES -FACULTY AT A GLANCE .....</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>3.1 Course and Module Evaluation .....</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>3.2 External Examiner Reports.....</b>	<b>18</b>
<b>3.3 Accreditation Cycle .....</b>	<b>23</b>
<b>3.4 Quality Review Cycle .....</b>	<b>24</b>
<b>3.5 Progression, Retention and Completion Statistics.....</b>	<b>29</b>
<b>3.6 Irish Survey of Student Engagement.....</b>	<b>33</b>
<b>3.7 Internationals Student Barometer.....</b>	<b>34</b>
<b>3.8 Benchmarking.....</b>	<b>35</b>
<b>3.9 Head of School Reports .....</b>	<b>37</b>

## **1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

This report has been compiled based on information submitted by all twelve schools in the Faculty of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences. Following poor attendance at last year's Faculty Executive on Quality, this year's meeting was opened up to Directors of Teaching and Learning UG and PG, as well as the usual Faculty Executive membership. The Executive took place on 30 November 2017, and attendance was much improved on the previous year. This was also attended by the Quality Officer and AO from the Quality Office.

Undergraduate modules continue to be evaluated by all Schools, with some schools piloting mid-module evaluations. All postgraduate courses are evaluated either by the School or the Faculty Office. Issues raised are dealt with in the main by the School in question, although some are escalated to Faculty and College level. There are many examples outlined in this report which show the seriousness with which schools in AHSS take student feedback, and the many steps which have been taken to improve the student experience based on this feedback. In 2016/17, schools were already starting to make themselves TEP-ready, with many schools reporting changes in assessment methods and timings as well as changes to course schedules.

As is evident from section 3.1.2 of the appendices, many schools in FAHSS have thoroughly analysed the results of the PGR survey, and many changes have been made to try to address the concerns of the students.

External Examiners (EEs) continue to play an important role. They appear for the most part to be satisfied with the courses which they examine, although they continue to raise important issues, most of which are dealt with by the School in question. The process for receiving and distributing External Examiner reports within College needs to be improved – an online form for submission of the reports seems like the simplest and most efficient method, and the Faculty would strongly support the development of such a system.

The Faculty of AHSS managed a project, with the support of the other Faculties, to provide a licence for Turning Point responseware software to all lecturers. This will be reviewed at the end of Hilary Term.

In 2016/17, quality reviews took place for the Schools of Histories and Humanities, Law and Religion, Peace Studies and Theology, as well as the Trinity Long Room Hub. Work is on-going on implementing the changes recommended, where appropriate. In particular in the School of RPST, a Taskforce is working to implement the changes recommended by the reviewers, thereby bringing the structures of the School in-line with College structures.

The importance with which schools in AHSS view the Quality process in College is evidenced by the comprehensive reports submitted by Heads of School, available in appendix 3.9 of this report.

Looking at draft figures, retention in the Faculty (non-TSM), from JF to SF, has increased from 95% to 96.8% from the previous year, with TSM seeing a slight drop from 95% to 94.3%. However, both figures are well above the College Strategic Plan target of 90% retention.

## 2. QUALITY REPORT

### 2.1 Quality of Undergraduate Programme Provision

#### *UG: Student Evaluations*

Schools in AHSS understand the importance of student evaluations - in most schools, close to 100% of all UG modules were evaluated and in the remainder, there were reasons why 100% evaluation was not reached. In the School of Linguistic, Speech and Communication Studies (SSLSC), some modules are evaluated by other schools, where shared teaching is taking place. Some modules, such as placement modules and the research project module in the Bachelor in Deaf Studies, do not involve direct teaching and thus do not lend themselves to student evaluation in the same way as taught UG modules. However, procedures will be put in place to ensure that these modules are also evaluated in 1718 with tailored evaluation mechanisms.

Evaluation methods used continue to be both paper-based and online. Response rates vary from 22% to 100%. Taking the School of Histories and Humanities (SHH) as an example, paper-based module evaluation forms were circulated in class in the Departments of Classics and History of Art and Architecture, so response rates were high, with only those absent on the day not participating. In the Department of History online surveys were trialled for Freshman modules this year. This was not a success, with generally a low response rate. It is planned to revert to a paper-based survey next year. A number of schools have introduced mid-module evaluations, so that students may be able to see the benefits of providing feedback.

This year, the SEng is piloting a new approach to student evaluation (partly in response to work done by the Academic Secretary and the Student's Union in 2016-17). It has set up a Staff-Student liaison committee in which the DTLUG and Year Heads meet with the student reps midway through the semester to review issues and report back to the School on possible actions.

In general, schools in AHSS have demonstrated that they listen to student feedback and act accordingly, where appropriate. Schools have reported making changes in response to UG student feedback, which also tie in with the new TEP curriculum – eg increased use of Continuous Assessment and the use of alternative assessment methods such as blogs, essays, groupwork projects, reflective learning pieces.

Schools continue to introduce innovative teaching methods, such as 'buzz group' activities in SLaw. TBS is in the advanced stages of creating an ethics stream running through each year of the BBS degree in order to ensure that TBS graduates having strong ethical awareness and expertise when it comes to future business decisions.

Regarding feedback, schools are endeavouring to abide by the College regulations for returning feedback to students in a timely fashion. However, in some schools this is difficult due to large student numbers and limited resources.

#### *UG: External Examiners (EE)*

EE Reports are received and reviewed in each School. In most cases, feedback to the EEs is verbal, during their Court of Examiner (CoE) visit. However, in some cases written feedback is provided to EEs on whether and how their feedback has been incorporated. One school mentioned that new EEs are shown the reports from previous EEs, and given an update on any changes implemented. In a number

of courses, students are invited to meet with EEs to share their evaluations of the courses and modules.

EEs on undergraduate courses continue to criticise bunching of grades and the reluctance of some academic staff to use the full range of marks, particularly in the higher end of the range.

## **2.2 Quality of Postgraduate Programme Provision**

### *PGT: Student Evaluations*

For 2016/17, Schools have reported that 100% of programmes were evaluated.

Methods used for evaluations, feedback to students and so on, are broadly similar to those reported for UG courses. Some schools, such as the School of Law (SLaw), are introducing an interim survey at the end of MT/beginning of HT, with feedback provided to course committee and students soon thereafter.

One interesting example was in the PG Cert in 21st Century Teaching & Learning, who used in-class online surveys at the end of each module. The students were emailed a feedback form at the end of each module. As the course focuses on digital engagement in classroom environments, it was felt that providing a route for online feedback was more relevant than hardcopy surveys. The feedback surveys were created as Google Forms and were accessible via any smart device (i.e. smartphone, laptop, tablet etc.). As the students were already encouraged to use their smart devices in the modules, filling out an online feedback form during class-time at the end of each module was not an onerous task for them.

Changes have been made in many schools to timetabling and assessment deadlines in response to student feedback. Changes have also been made to course structures, with modules being changed on foot of student feedback.

A number of schools have reported changes to dissertation supervision processes – SLaw is introducing group supervision.

In terms of PGR students, schools in AHSS have outlined many improvements to improve the student experience for PGR students – providing more taught modules, ensuring better communication about these modules and other issues to PGR students, increased research seminars.

### *PGT: External Examiners*

Processes for dealing with EE feedback are largely the same in PGT as for UG. One interesting example is in SLaw, where EE comments are incorporated annually into a "grading memo" for internal and external examiners.

Common issues raised by EEs on PGT courses remain transparency in marking, marking to the full range, and the low number of distinctions being awarded. It was noted in particular that this could affect the competitiveness of students for research funding.

## 2.3 Summary of enhancements across the Faculty

Enhancements reported by a number of Schools across the Faculty include:

Issue	Cohort	Source of Feedback	Resolution
Providing timely feedback	UG	Students	Using Peer and self-assessment
Reliance on traditional exams, over assessing students	UG/PGT	Students/ EE	Including more varied assessment types and more continuous assessment. coursework/project matrix shared with academics to ensure good spread of deadlines
Students having limited options in modules	UG/PGR	Students	School provided additional modules, ensuring students are well informed about available modules
Timetabling	UG/PGT	Students	Have tried to introduce more student-friendly hours, in one school this involves double teaching
Teaching increasingly larger groups of students	UG	Students	New 'Buzz Group' activities. Training and development for adjunct staff.
Low student participation in evaluations	UG	School	Mid-module evaluation, in-class/on-line evaluations
Students not feeling involved or well informed	PGT	Students	Regular meetings with course directors, one-to-one meetings with all students at beginning of course to set objectives, improved School website, handbooks, 'Twitter for Research' workshop, learning agreement between student and supervisor
English Support for international students	PGT	Students, EE	Additional academic writing sessions for international students, additional tutorial
Placements	PGT	Students	Introducing evaluation of the placements, employing new staff in Tallaght Hospital
Use of Technology	PGT	Students	More use of Blackboard, development of SPSS module.
Bunching of grades, not using full range of marks, small number of distinctions awarded	UG/PGT	EE	Clearer Marking schemes, staff required to provide feedback if on whether a grade is border-line, review marking practices upwards in the first class range, more extensive and tightly monitored moderation processes
Supervision of increasing numbers of PGT Students	UG/PGT	EE	Group supervision
Dissertations	PGT	EE	Group discussions on dissertation topics, changing submission dates, one-to-one meetings. Facility to submit ethics approval applications via Blackboard

## 2.4 Summary of issues to be escalated to College Level

- Library resourcing. Key issues include insufficient numbers of core texts, numbers of books in stacks, and limited student borrowing rights.
- The facility for students to register for modules online
- Online courses
  - Online students currently obliged to pay the sports centre charge.
  - Online students not being able to pay fees in two instalments.
  - Online students getting the same standard letters as other students. This letter refers to students requiring health insurance, which is irrelevant for online students.
- Delays in students receiving Garda Vetting.
- Difficulty in securing student placements, particularly in the School of Education.
- Receiving Clarity from HSE on what placements are appropriate and eligible.
- Quality of teaching space, particularly in the Arts Building and the School of CA.

- Difficulty in providing timely feedback to large cohorts of students due to limited resources
- No effective system for anonymous marking in the College
- Large tutorial and classes/ too few tutorials

## **2.5 College response to issues outlined in previous year's Annual Faculty Quality Report**

### *2.5.1 Lack of available teaching space and poor quality of space that is available.*

Some further improvements have been made to space in the Arts Building, with the refurbishment of two more seminar rooms in the Arts Building with funding from the Commercial Revenue Unit (CRU). Further improvements may be achieved through the planned Arts Building refurbishment. Space issues have been highlighted to the Bursar for consideration in the Estates Strategy and it is hoped that improvements in teaching facilities will result from this project.

### *2.5.2 SITS (i) students should be able to select and register for modules online via SITS (ii) Schools request that the ability of SITS to provide statistics such as means/medians/standard deviations etc. be reinstated, as it is useful information for Courts of Examiners, and requested by some EEs.*

(i) The requirement for students to select and register for modules online is a key deliverable of fixed timetabling in TEP (ii) the ability of SITS to provide statistics to support the Courts of Examiners is now in place.

### *2.5.3 Lack of library resources*

The Library continues to work to address issues around resources. Kinsella Hall has been introduced as an overnight/weekend study space and the Library is able to cover the cost of Sunday opening from Easter to the end of term each year. Work has been completed in the Berkeley Library to increase the number of sockets/USB points on the desks. With regard to e-legal deposit and the resulting issues around access to on-line resources, the Library has introduced additional terminals in the 1937 Reading Room for PGs and is expanding the number of terminals within the Library on which e-legal deposit material can be accessed. There are now dedicated terminals in the Counter Reserve area specifically for researchers / academics. The Library has also introduced a Patron Driven Acquisition system whereby readers can request that the Library order a copy of a particular item in the eLD (UK) collection that they believe is required at Trinity. The eLD (UK) Act 2013 is due for review in 2019 and the question of access will be raised then. An on-line interlibrary loan form is being trialled in an effort to streamline the process of requesting books. With regard to increasing the limit on the number of books that can be borrowed, the Library is benchmarking the borrowing limits for undergraduate and postgraduate readers against comparable institutions and will present the findings to the Library & Information Policy Committee for discussion and decision in Trinity term.

2.5.4 *Online students are (i) currently obliged to pay the sports centre charge, (ii) (non-EU) not able to pay fees in two instalments; (iii) get the same standard letters as other students which refers to students requiring health insurance, which is irrelevant for online students, and also informs them that they may register up until November, even though they must be registered to take part in online courses.*

- (i) The application of the Sports Centre charge to on-line students was raised by the Director of the Academic Registry (AR) in May 2017 but a decision was made not to change the current policy.
- (ii) In relation to Non-EU on-line students not being allowed to pay their fees in two instalments, the issue was considered by planning group in May 2017 and the right of non-EU to pay in instalments was agreed and is currently being implemented.
- (iii) Offer letters are currently tailored to four student categories -UG, PG, EU and Non-EU. The facility to tailor letters for on-line students is not currently available.

2.5.5 *Marking & examination:*

- (i) delays in some Schools entering marks on SITS, which in turn impacts on other schools*
- (ii) the turnaround time for marking, Courts of Examiners and Courts of First Appeals is unrealistic and could lead to inequalities in how students are treated, with some students having longer to contact their tutors and take an appeal than others.*

An Academic Registry [project](#) is currently underway to outline the roadmap for the implementation of the new academic year structure, and the timing of courts of examiners will be considered as part of this.

- (iii) Reluctance of some markers to mark above 70%;*
- (iv) the lack of a grade between 'Pass' and 'Distinction' in PGT;*
- (v) the lack of anonymous marking in PGT.*

Assessment and marking will be addressed as part of the implementation of the Trinity Education Project (TEP).

## **2.6 Faculty Projects / Initiatives**

*Turning Point Responseware:* The Faculty, in conjunction with the other Faculties, purchased a one-year site licence TCD for Turning Point responseware technology. This gives all lecturers in TCD access to a classroom response system, which students use with existing 'clickers' or with a mobile phone application. The project was managed by the Faculty of AHSS. Five training sessions with a trainer from Belfast took place in Trinity as well as two Trinity-specific online Forums. 180 staff members from across the College signed up for the licence, of which 64 signed in to use the system more than 10 times. A qualitative survey of staff who signed up for the licence will be carried out at the end of Hilary Term 18.

*Facilities Improvement:* Some further improvements have been made to space in the Arts Building, with the refurbishment of two more seminar rooms in the Arts Building, with funding from CRU. The Faculty is also cooperating with the Bursar on the Trinity Estates Strategy and hopes to see improvements in teaching facilities as a result of this project.

*Funding for M.Ed:* to support the enhancement of the quality of teaching in the Faculty, the Faculty

Dean has provided funding for a number of years for new academic staff, who are not eligible for the College fee remission scheme, to undertake the Diploma/M.Ed in Higher Education.

*Athena Swan:* The Faculty of AHSS in encouraging schools to start preparing for Athena Swan submissions. A number of events have been held and are planned. Links have been developed with schools in Queen's University Belfast who have already received silver and gold accreditation. All schools have been asked to appoint Athena Swan Champion(s). SHH is currently at the most advanced stage within AHSS, but other Schools are starting the process.

*Dual Degrees with Columbia University:* An operational framework and four proposals for Dual Degrees with Columbia University were approved by University Council in October 2017 with entry into the programmes to commence in September 2018. The agreement was signed and the programme was launched in New York in February 2018, and interest has been exceptionally high.

### 3 APPENDICES -FACULTY AT A GLANCE

#### 3.1 Course and Module Evaluation

Table 3.1

Number of UG Modules provided	1000+	% of UG Modules/Courses evaluated	90%
Number of PGT Courses provided	68	Number of PGT Modules/courses evaluated	100%
Number of PhD students in Faculty	606	Number of PhD students participating in PGR Survey	159

##### 3.1.1 Undergraduate Course and Module Evaluations

#### Issues raised by students that could be resolved at School level and actions taken/positive enhancements introduced by the School:

##### Course Structures and Assessments

A number of schools have made changes on foot of student feedback to module scheduling, module content, the nature of assessments and assessment deadlines and also in the communication of these requirements. Specific examples include:

- School of Creative Arts (SCA) – timely feedback is difficult to provide due to staff workloads. School tries to overcome using approaches such as peer and self-assessment.
- School of Social Work and Social Policy (SSWSP): nature of assessments has been varied following feedback from students and now includes blogs, essays, groupwork projects, reflective learning pieces as well as traditional exams.
- SLSCS: continuous assessment for one module removed following discussions with the Curriculum Team and in response to feedback from the EE. Exam papers for other modules adapted to reduce content areas examined and integrate this content into continuous assessment.
- SLLCS: Some students noted disappointment in not being assigned their first choice of language module. An additional module in Spanish Beginners was added this year in response to high demand. Feedback also included requests for more choice in assessment and in online materials. In response, a new project has been included in the curriculum, and the coordinator is developing a library of resources in Blackboard Learn.
- SSSP: Students reported an arising issue with tutorial clashing at the Sophister level. SSSP has resolved this matter by introducing mandatory enrollment of all students into tutorial groups, where previously this would have been organised locally by the module lecturer at Sophiser level.
- SEd: concerns regarding different referencing styles across Trinity and partner institutions have been addressed.
- SSSP: Has continued improvements in timetabling, primarily through the reallocation of 6pm lectures and tutorials to more appropriate timeslots.

- SPsych: Inclusion of additional formative assessment for some modules. One of our tutorial modules has been replaced with a Foundational Texts module – feedback on the tutorial module had previously been mixed, owing to the variable experiences that students were having with different tutors.

#### *Improved Facilities and Technology*

- SCA: digital media equipment has been increased to meet student demand.

#### *Teaching methods*

SLaw: Module lecturers continue to develop and explore methods for active learning in large group lectures of over 180 students, eg new 'buzz group' activities where students discuss legal problems and then report to the large group.

SLSCS: Students' feedback has consistently welcomed (outside) clinicians' contribution to speech and language pathology modules. An increasing number of modules are now co-taught by academic staff in conjunction with External Lecturers, such as visiting clinicians. To enhance cohesion across these modules and in response to student feedback, external contributors were asked to include at least one case study within each topic area.

SSWSP: based on student feedback, now teaching some of undergraduate modules online.

#### *Evaluation methods*

SLaw: developed a template early or mid-module evaluation forms that lecturers could adopt in order to run an anonymous gathering of feedback that could conceivably be acted on within the semester.

#### *Careers*

SSWSP: School has included timetabled sessions for students with the careers advisory service particularly the SS class to assist them with topics such as interview techniques and CV preparation.

#### **Escalations: Issues raised by students that could NOT be resolved at School level and actions taken by the School:**

- *Space and Facilities:* As in last year's report, the issue which arises most often in student evaluations is the poor quality of the teaching space and the Faculty hopes that this will improve with the College Estates Strategy. The main concern is that the Arts Building needs major redevelopment, not merely minor refurbishments, in order to meet the needs and expectations of a growing and diverse student and staff body. The School of SSP raised specific concerns about the official capacity of certain rooms. E.g. 3074 is not fit to house 150 people or room 3 in CG cannot seat 35. Some of the space used by the School of Creative Arts is entirely unsuitable, and in some instances unsafe. The School of Psychology (SPsych) reported

issues with the rooms in 7-9 Sth Leinster St being too small to host the class sizes on the MSc in ABA (despite the stated quota of students). The SCA also has issues with poor equipment across all three departments, due to limited resources.

- *Online module registration*: this is a major issue that needs resolving given our growing numbers and diverse student registration status. There needs to be an automated system whereby students can select appropriate modules given their degree pathway and disciplines prerequisites.
- *SLaw*: students would like feedback on assessments expedited. However, difficult to provide faster than the agreed 20 days, due to large numbers and limited resources.
- *SLSCS*: Students in CSLS requested inclusion of a Reading Week, as had been requested in some previous years. Given that CORU had accredited the programme with the current curriculum structure and content, this was not possible to address, but is in planning for the revisions for roll-out of TEP.

### 3.1.2 *Postgraduate Taught course and module evaluations*

#### **Issues raised by students that could be resolved at School level and actions taken/positive enhancements introduced by the School:**

##### *Course structures and Assessments*

As in UG, many schools report changes on foot of student feedback to module scheduling, module content, the nature of assessments and assessment deadlines and also in the communication of these requirements. Specific examples include:

- Trinity Business School (TBS): Student feedback suggested that full block weeks for teaching a module were quite intensive. Block weeks have been significantly reduced in all postgraduate programmes and are now only used where necessary for an adjunct member of staff. Reduction of class period from 4 hrs to 3 hrs in line with peer norms.
- SCA: students requested more regular ongoing engagement with course director, so cohort met bi-weekly for ongoing course review, careers development and general study support.
- SEd: developed a new Academic Literacy and Research module.
- SEd: many students were travelling great distances to attend lectures on Friday nights and Saturdays. Students suggested that lectures could all be fit into Saturday. This was trialed and after unanimous positive feedback from the students, all modules were switched to this format. Only two Friday evening sessions are retained —first night orientation session, and an ‘assignment support’ session to help with the first assignment.
- SCA: In MT 2016 module leaders were asked to consider reducing the number of essay based assignments and increasing composition-based assignments, in response to student feedback.

- SCA: in 17-18 team teaching has been reduced across the degree, with tighter individual responsibility of a single lecturer over the CITIC and Embodied Practices strands, leading to greater coherence and improved student experience.
- SCA: In 17-18, additional talks and workshops by scholars and industry personnel have been arranged in response to the very positive student feedback to such. The opportunities for developing oral presentation skills have been increased.
- SCA: In 17-18, the collaboration with the 'musicians in residence' will last two terms instead of one, to allow the students more time to write.
- SPsych: The contribution of all advanced modules to the overall final degree award mark as requested by students and recommended by external examiners in 15/16 is working well and allows students to gauge their performance trajectory at the end of the first year. Also, the development of a formative assessment, to provide students with the opportunity to submit a piece of work and to identify areas of strength and weakness in this.
- SPsych: Development of one-to-one meetings with all students at the beginning of the course in order to identify individual objectives for the course and to discuss any areas of interest or concern in setting out on the course.
- SPsych: In the 1st year of the programme classes ran up until the end of June. In order to allow for the classes to finish by the end of May, we have introduced double classes during certain teaching weeks throughout. So far the feedback from students on this has been very positive.
- SLSCS: In the **M.Phil. in Chinese Studies**, some substantial changes to the Mandarin language programme have been implemented, including recruiting additional tutors and using new course materials. The Mandarin curriculum was reviewed by the course coordinator.
- SLSCS: offering the Research Dissertation module in Michaelmas Term rather than in Hilary Term. Use of new lab space has allowed the possibility of accommodating all students in the same lab in Michaelmas term.

#### *International Students*

- SEd: Concerns have arisen over the level of support for international full-time students. School offered an additional academic writing session solely for full-time international students which was well received. Online tutorials are regularly provided in a number of modules (Drama) with a high international intake and are being extended as part of the new ALRM module. Support for international students remains a concern, however, and is a college-wide issue.

### *Placements*

- SLSCS: a 0.5 WTE staff member was employed, also based in Tallaght Hospital. This enabled the provision of clinical placements for students, as well as the opportunity for students to complete clinical research in Tallaght Hospital.
- SPsych: Opportunity for students to comment on the quality of the placements (introduced a new form).

### *Online*

- SEd: Full integration of all PME modules (120 ECTS) on Blackboard. Training provided for staff on the creation of content, teaching, learning and assessment using the VLE. Use of Turnitin software rubrics to enhance the assessment process. There were a number of plagiarism cases in the last academic year. Using Turnitin will flag issues for students in advance of final submission and will create a greater awareness of potential inadvertent plagiarism. The School constructed a specific Research Methods Ethics module on Blackboard where students can submit their applications for ethical approval to conduct research in a transparent and recorded manner. It also uses Panapto instructive videos in modules to enhance VLE use.
- SSWSP: The development of the SPSS module on the MSc in Applied Social Research has received extremely positive feedback with students stating that it helps to put their academic learning into context. Also, access to the online library and the greater variety of material available was cited as an improvement by online students on the PG Diploma in Applied Social Studies and occurred as a direct result of student feedback and staff liaising with the subject librarian and the online unit regularly.

### *Other*

- SEd: Students of the Guidance Counselling strand raised concerns about lack of recognition of their qualification by the Institute of Guidance Counselling (IGC). This was an issue in the previous year and was resolved in 2016-17 through providing additional classes for both students and graduates to ensure they were eligible for IGC recognition. As this was a significant undertaking, the School also engaged with the Faculty Dean and Dean of Graduate Studies to resolve the matter.

## Issues raised by students that could NOT be resolved at School level and actions taken by the School:

- SEd -

*Garda Vetting:* From a professional perspective, students must be Garda-vetted in order to undertake obligatory placements. Some students did not have Garda vetting processed in time to commence their placements (in August), which precluded them from commencing on time and impacted on their placement. Some students lost their placement as a result and had to seek another placement. The SEd was not aware of who was or was not Garda vetted until very late and it was very frustrating for both students and SEd school placement staff. Ongoing communication with school management bodies (JMB, ACMS, ETBI), the Garda vetting unit in TCD and the Teaching Council (TC) continues.

*Securing Placements:* School Placement (SP) continues to be an ongoing challenge. As there is no national school placement programme in place each provider operates a different SP model and schools find it difficult to provide placements for numerous models which all operate at different times of the school year. Schools are not compelled to provide placements for students. The ongoing difficulties have been communicated to the Teaching Council and to the DES. SEd continues to work on promoting positive partnerships between the SEd and schools who provide placements. Schools do not offer uniform placement options however and the provision of set hours (as required by the TC) for students continues to be problematic and there is an inequity in what is provided across the sector.

Students wished to have access to the library but as fees for the programme are mostly waived, the college is unlikely to grant this and all efforts in this regard have failed. This remains an ongoing concern on the part of the School and support from Faculty in resolving would be appreciated.

- SPsych: HSE providing clarity on what placements would count as 'appropriate' for students to be eligible for the HSE and access to those placements. Course Director (since summer 2016), HoS and Dean of Graduate Studies each made (in some cases repeated) effort to get clarity from the HSE and meaningful collaboration that would lead to the provision of the clarity on placements and access to them. To no avail so far.

### Online courses

- SPsych: Online students raised the issue of having to pay the sports centre charge when they were not in a position to actually use it as they do not attend campus. This issue has been on-going for a number of years, with no resolution. Current students are not happy with this situation.

For the 2016/17 intake 2-3 Non EU online students had asked to avail of a two part payment option. This allowance would be the difference between them joining the program and not. After numerous discussions with the Academic Registry they refused to allow it. The students were unable to join the program as a result.

For the 2017\18 intake it was noted the current letters automatically generated by the Academic Registry need revision to be suitably worded for online students. It is possible to change these letters and the matter will further be followed up for the next intake.

### 3.1.2 *Postgraduate Research survey*

- TBS: Student considerations were overtaken by broader discussions at the College Graduate Studies Committee and the QQI *Statutory guidelines for the QA of research degree programmes*. A review of the TBS PhD programme is currently under way that looks to address any weaknesses and also accommodate the sentiment of both evolving College policy and the QQI Statutory guidelines.
- SCA: According to the PGR survey, PhD respondents across College reported low levels of satisfaction with the variety of taught modules available (2.90/5). The School is actively working to circulate information re. the range of modules available within the three disciplines, the School, and College, as widely as possible to research students and supervisors.

The report highlighted the need for improved communication strategies to meet the informational needs of students re. additional supports available to students other than their supervisors. This information is included in the School Research Students Handbook, it is circulated at Orientation Meetings, and Course Directors and supervisors are encouraged to disseminate this information directly to their students.

- SEd: PGR students identified the lack of desk and office space for part-time students and the need for greater engagement with staff through student led research seminars as issues. The School has provided desk space for part-time students for the first time (mainly evenings and weekends) in response to these concerns. We have also facilitated doctoral students in establishing a student seminar series supported by academic staff, in addition to the regular staff seminar series.
- SLaw: Compulsory Research Module: Since the Report the School has introduced a compulsory research module. The aim of the module is to support research students in establishing a solid foundation for their research and writing. Development of this module is ongoing.

Collaboration and teamwork: PGRs are invited and encouraged to sign up and participate in School Research Groups.

Study space and facilities: The School recently renovated space dedicated for sole use by the PGR cohorts. Space incorporates dedicated desks, research and seminar space and breakout space for collaborative work.

Teaching: The School provides teaching workshops and guidelines for all PGRs involved in the teaching of its UG programmes. PGRs are strongly encouraged to apply for CAPSL training courses.

Funding: Discussion of potential new possible sources for funding law PhDs. Encouraging staff to apply for new Provost's Scholarship Project Awards and other IRC and European research funding which will fund PhDs.

- SLSCS: Over the summer, enhanced the PGR webpages and PGR course handbook to provide more information on the regulations that govern our research programmes, on external and internal funding opportunities, and on the variety and nature of taught modules available to students under the structured Ph.D. programme through a Module Catalogue and information about new modules outside the School.

Aligned with the PRG survey's findings on areas that require further attention, the School's Strategic Plan also aims to find ways of strengthening PGR students' integration in the College, School and Discipline communities, and broadening student research experiences. For instance, in September 2017 the School organised a School Research Day and a 'Twitter for Researchers' workshop, both dedicated to PGR students. The School Research Day was hosted by the HoS, DoR and DPGTL, and featured presentations by PGR students to an audience of staff and students. The Twitter for Researchers workshop was organised on foot of a visit by a leading user of Twitter for research purposes. Both events were very well-attended by PGR students, and the positive feedback received has encouraged the School to organise similar events in the future.

- SPsych: The first survey of PG research students had a low response rate (26% of the enrolled PGR cohort for 2015/16); however 80% of respondents reported that they were satisfied with the research programme in Trinity, and 70% were satisfied with the support provided by their supervisor. The SPsych operates a very robust system of appraisal, presentation, confirmation and oversight of its PG research students and a schedule of compulsory meetings incorporates a report on the supervision process from both student and supervisor. In addition there are research seminars throughout the year both at School level and organised by research groups in the school that PG students are encouraged to attend. Areas of concern included communication and dissemination of information on the structured components of the structured PhD.

SPsych provides a 10 ECTS module specifically designed for PhD students. It has streamlined the timing of this module to suit both September and March registrants and it is designed to be broadly relevant to the PG research body.

PGR students together with their supervisor produce a learning agreement detailing any modules or training in the School that the student is required to take in the case of any gaps in knowledge or skills on entry.

### 3.2 External Examiner Reports

Table 3.2

Number of UG Programmes externally examined 1617	65	Number of UG External Examiner Reports returned 1617	50	77%
Number of PG Programmes externally examined 1617	77	Number of PG External Examiner Reports returned 1617	70	91%

#### 3.2.1 Undergraduate: Issues arising from External Examiner Reports or Courts of Examiner meetings

##### **Issues raised by Undergraduate External Examiners that were resolved at School level and actions taken/ enhancements introduced by the School:**

###### *Marking and Grades Awarded*

A number of EEs commented on bunching of grades and the reluctance of markers to use the full range of marks. Other issues raised include:

- TBS: Some staff could provide more detailed comments on scripts, although the external examiner noted that “in general this was adequate and self-explanatory.”
- SLaw: External examiners noted in previous years the heavy emphasis in traditional methods of assessment, specifically end of term/year examinations. However, examiners commented on the increased diversification and range of examination methods being used.

###### *Standard of Assignments/Examinations*

- SLSCS: EE highlighted in her 2015-16 report that some content was more advanced than ‘entry level’ for the profession. This content area has been considerably reduced for the academic year 2016-17 and the assessment of same has been integrated with a related topic, as recommended by the EE. The EE has received a written response with feedback and action taken on her recommendation.

###### *Other Issues*

- SCA: improvements and college works re space. Summer works undertaken to improve 191-192 studio spaces as well as the provision of new shelving and flooring in the costume room.
- SLaw: to include international students more, introduction of lectures introducing the common law and EU law. Furthermore, a working group has been established to review the dissertation supervision model.
- SLSCS: It was suggested in 2016 and 2017 that we adopt GoReact as a technological mechanism to provide video-based feedback to students taking sign language and sign language interpreting modules. We have implemented this in 2017- 18 for some modules. In 2016, one of the External

Examiners made the suggestion that contextual information should be provided for interpreting examinations, so that students could make appropriate linguistic decisions in their interpretations. This recommendation will be implemented in the 2017-18 interpreting exam guidelines.

- SSWSP: 1. Based on external examiners feedback there have been developments in the Family and Childcare Studies module for Bachelor in Social Studies that includes a 3-part case scenario which the external felt now makes the module 'more dynamic and, therefore, realistic'. 2. The School is now committed to providing more feedback on coursework to students particularly more detailed information when students have failed beyond just the published grade in SITS and Blackboard. 3. Based on the externs comments the School is committed to ensuring that the full marking scale is used for students particularly in the first class honour category and staff have a detailed marking scheme that they can utilise for reference.

#### **Sample of Positive Comments raised by Undergraduate External Examiners**

"Over the four years I was an External Examiner, I was always impressed with the challenging nature of the examinations and other assessment methods used."

"TCD staff are thorough and consistent in the way that they mark assessed material, with exemplary moderation performed at all levels."

"TCD programmes/modules are always taught and received in an exemplary manner, stimulating a high degree of self-reflection and intellectual development. I am always impressed with the quality inherent in the students, something for which TCD must be complimented."

"Excellent admin support and high calibre of candidates and performances of students".

#### **Escalations: Issues raised by Undergraduate External Examiners that could not be resolved at School level:**

##### *Staffing*

- SLSCS: Lack of a full professor in Clinical Speech and Language Studies.

##### *Academic Registry/SITS*

- SLaw: lack of any effective system at College level for ensuring anonymous exam scripts

## Issues raised by PGT External Examiners that could be resolved at School level and actions taken/ enhancements introduced by the School:

### *Marking and Grades Awarded*

- TBS: Transparency in marking. The External Examiners emphasised the importance of annotation on scripts in order to achieve a greater degree of transparency in marking. The directors and faculty are in agreement with this and are endeavouring to enforce a standard approach.
- SEd: small number of distinctions being awarded – ongoing consideration by Med Course Board. Staff have been requested to provide feedback whether a grade is borderline or not, bearing in mind the broad grading scheme (dist, pass, fail). This will help provide more data for coordinators on the number of borderline pass/distinction results.
- SCA: The 16-17 EE report recommended that clearer and more detailed feedback be provided for the Creative Documentary module. This will be implemented in 17-18. The report also recommended the school review marking practices upwards in the first class range to reflect the strength of the academic and practice-based work being produced.
- SLCSS: following external examiner feedback, the course coordinator has requested academic staff to report which modules have been second-marked, in order to communicate this to external examiners.
- SPsych: More extensive and tightly monitored moderation processes. More conscious awareness of and ability to articulate differing expectations of performance of different cohorts of students across programmes.

### *Student Feedback*

- SLSCS: The English Language Teaching practice modules have been reviewed by the course committee to ensure that the manner and type of feedback promised to students is feasible for academic staff to deliver.

### *Standard of Assignments/Examinations*

- TBS: External examiners had brought to the School's attention that it may be over assessing the postgraduate students. For 2016/17, alternative methods for assessing students were carried out – group work, on line examinations and coursework which also helps to align the School with the TEP project goals of not being over reliant on assessment for students.

EE highlighted potential issues with deadlines for coursework and felt that students were often over burdened. Programmes have introduced a coursework/project matrix which is shared with the academics to ensure a good spread of deadlines. Furthermore, assessment will be the theme of a PG committee meeting with a view to revisiting the scale, scope and appropriateness of current activity within the context of a line of sight from School to module learning goals and outcomes.

- SPsych: The need for a more structured approach to the literature review which makes up part 1 of the dissertation was mentioned again and the school is in the process of addressing this.
- SCA: The EE encouraged School to continue to tighten the supervision process to ensure student participation and uptake during the summer dissertation period. A procedure for more formalised dissertation proposals will be implemented this year in response to that request.
- SPsych: With a view to increasing student publications, the Dissertation Module was amended and the submission of a manuscript based dissertation was approved. School is in the process of requiring the inclusion of a reflective chapter at the end of the dissertation as suggested by the EE. Furthermore, School is still in the process of introducing an alternative to examinations as a means of assessment for three modules in the first year and two in the second as suggested by several examiners. Attempts to implement the alternative have encountered unanticipated difficulties and may require structural changes to the course. The issue is still under review.

#### Curriculum and course structure

- SPsych: Providing students with a forum in which to discuss dissertation ideas in a small class setting. Setting the point of dissertation proposal submission to the end of Michaelmas term in order to ensure that ideas are developed and refined prior to the commencement of the research. Organisation of one-to-one meetings with students prior to dissertation proposal submission.
- SSWSP: Based on External Examiner feedback the design and content of presentation skills on the Master in Social Work has been significantly developed to ensure students conduct pedagogically sound presentations. Teaching on Child Welfare in a number of programmes is highlighted as an excellent addition and was developed based on previous external examiner feedback.

#### Role of EE and Information provided to EE

- SCA: The 16-17 EE report recommended bring the dissertation deadline forward in order to allow the Examiner more time to review student work in advance of the EE meeting. This is in line with the new AYS and will be implemented in 17-18 .

#### International Students

- SLSCS: Following EE feedback, additional supports are now in place for students for whom English is not a first language, and additional tutorials have been provided for students who have come from different undergraduate professional training backgrounds.

#### Other

- SCA: The EE made some sector-aware suggestions relevant to encouraging recruitment, which school has taken on, with positive effects so far (the recruitment is up 50% in 17-18).

- TBS: Training and development for adjunct staff- The School now has a Director for Adjunct Staff for the first time to ensure all adjunct staff receive the training and development required to enhance their teaching journey.
- SLSCS: following feedback on the need to better integrate the Study Abroad component of the M.Phil in Chinese Studies, we are exploring ways of improving the present module outcome and descriptions.

### Issues raised by PGT External Examiners that could NOT be resolved at School level and actions taken by the School:

#### International Students

- TBS: Some External Examiners felt that the English language requirement was quite low at 6.5 (IELTS) and suggested increasing this to 7. It was pointed out that 6.5 remains the benchmark among major competitors so this would have to be considered alongside broader changes in the business school ecosystem. A discussion on this issue was recently held at the College Graduate Studies Committee. No decision was made to change the 6.5 requirement. However, there plans were presented to roll out a College based English language for academia support programme

#### Staffing

- SPsych: D Clinical Psych: One examiner is of the belief that the course is under resourced in terms of staff. A number of considerations are under review to address this issue and a cap on numbers is being considered. Request for additional staff will also be made.

#### 3.2.2 *Feedback provided to External Examiners, and the method of feedback used.*

Methods of providing feedback to EEs remained the same as in previous years:

*CoE Meeting:* In many cases, EEs are informed of enhancements made on foot of EE comments at the next CoE meeting. In some cases, these comments would have been made by the EE's predecessor. They were also provided with feedback on specific issues through the discussion at the CoE, and discussed experience of the methods employed to address previous issues raised. Discussion also involved how repeat issues could be further improved or if alternative approaches could be employed where they persist.

*Other Meetings:* In some cases, the EEs also meet with the course staff and have a more informal, but detailed discussion about their observations. Some also meet with students

*Written Feedback:* In a number of cases, feedback is provided to the EEs via email.

*Provision of course material and Previous EE Reports:* EEs were provided with feedback initially through the provision of all course handbooks and module outlines, which in many cases addressed the issues raised in previous years. Where such issues were addressed in the course materials this was often highlighted for the EE. In some instances, previous EE reports are made available to incoming EEs.

### 3.3 Accreditation Cycle

Table 3.3

Accreditation body	Name of Prog accredited	Last Accreditation Visit	Outcome achieved	Next Visit Due
CORU	B.Sc. (Clin Lang)	2016	Accredited without conditions	2020-21
IASLT	B.Sc. (Clin Lang)	2016	Accredited without conditions	2020-21
PSI	D Clin Psych	Jan 2012	Full Accreditation	Application submitted Aug 2017. Panel visit early 2018.
PSI	D Couns Psych	June 2014	Full Accreditation	December 2018
Behaviour Analyst Certification Board	MSc in ABA	Sept 2017	Pass	Sept 2018
CORU	Bachelor in Social Studies	November 2017	Awaiting Outcome in Jan 18	2022

*TBS continued to work towards school-wide AACSB and EQUIS accreditations.*

### 3.3.1 Issues relating to Programme and School Accreditation Reviews

Issues to be escalated that could not be resolved at School level:

#### **B.Sc. (Clin Lang):**

Both accreditation bodies expressed a desire for a formal quality assurance process relating to clinical placement sites. This is a sector issue currently under review by the HSE. Informal evaluation mechanisms are in place and the Practice Education Coordinator maintains active links to ensure that any quality assurance mechanism that is introduced is incorporated into existing processes.

The IASLT again raised the issue of the lack of a full Professor in CSLS, as an outlier in the Irish context – the only programme without a full Professor.

#### Positive Aspects and Enhancements

CSLS has instituted a process of inviting external stakeholders (service placement sites, practice educators and tutors) to provide input to curriculum planning meetings, to ensure the programme is responsive to changing health service needs and is future proofed for workforce planning.

All handbooks have been revised to ensure that the links between module outcomes and CORU-mandated standards of proficiency are transparent for students.

### 3.4 Quality Review Cycle

Table 3.4

School, Programme or Trinity Research Institute	Date of Quality Reviews	Type of Quality Review (S, P, R)*	Current Status (RR, IP, PR)**	Next due
Law	24-26 January 2017	P (all UG, PGT and PGR)	Implementation Plan approved by Council in Oct 17 (IP)	2023/24
Histories & Humanities	13-15 March 2017	S	Implementation Plan to be approved by Council in Jan 18 (IP)	2023/24
Religions, Peace Studies and Theology	27-29 March 2017	S	Taskforce has been convened to address the recommendations	2023/24
Long Room Hub	12-14 June 2017	R	Review report to be approved by Council in Jan 18 (RR)	2023/24

Refer Schedule of Reviews on Quality Office Website \*School (S); Programme (P); Research (R). \*\* Review Report (RR); Implementation Plan (IP); Progress Report (PR)

3.4.1 College level issues/recommendations raised in Quality Review Reports for escalation to Quality Committee and Council

<p><i>Staffing</i></p>	<p><u>Link future growth to resources</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The capping of course enrolment needs to be fully transparent, so that adequate plans can be made for staffing <b>(Histories &amp; Humanities)</b></li> <li>• Consolidation of existing courses/no new courses without demonstrating sufficient resources <b>(Law)</b></li> </ul> <p><u>Make strategic appointments</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Employ a legal skills advisor <b>(Law)</b></li> <li>• Provide administrative contact point and systems support for off campus PG courses <b>(M.Th.)</b></li> <li>• Establish a School Office with one Senior School administrator and all admin staff reporting to this officer <b>(Confederal School of Religions, Peace Studies and Theology)</b></li> </ul>	<p><i>On-going</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Resource discussions occur at School level with the relevant Faculty Dean. All schools are required to submit a three- year staffing plan to the Dean</li> <li>• Growth in student numbers forms part of the School Strategic Plans and discussion on GR II Strategy</li> </ul> <p><i>Current initiatives</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A taskforce is established to progress recommendations arising from the Confederal School review</li> </ul> <p><i>Ongoing</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Progress on appointments is being progressed through the relevant School implementation plans and 3yr Staffing Plans with Faculty Deans</li> </ul>
<p><i>Harmonisation of processes</i></p>	<p><u>Standardisation of processes across taught courses</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Standardisation of processes across LLM courses <b>(Law)</b></li> <li>• Centralize on the School website all material that is common to the UG degrees offered <b>(History &amp; Humanities).</b></li> </ul> <p><u>Create a central point of contact</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Appoint one single programme coordinator for each programme who would have overall responsibility for the delivery of the programme and who could act as a single point of contact for students <b>(Histories &amp; Humanities).</b></li> </ul>	<p><i>Current initiatives</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Standardisation issues are being progressed through the relevant School implementation plans</li> </ul>
<p><i>Supports for students</i></p>	<p><u>Transferable skills training</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lack of clarity concerning professional skills and development <b>(H&amp;H)</b></li> <li>• Put greater emphasis on transferable skills <b>(Histories &amp; Humanities)</b></li> <li>• Provision of research seminars/taught modules for research students <b>(Law)</b></li> <li>• The Hub has excellent facilities for postgraduates - look at training arrangements for these and their potential to operate as a platform for training across the College <b>(Trinity Long Room Hub)</b></li> </ul> <p><u>Supports for international students</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• More guidance and oversight for M.Phil. students with regard to information, feedback on submitted work and transferable skills to replicate supports provided in US <b>(H &amp; H)</b></li> </ul>	<p><i>Current initiatives</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A <a href="#">SLD Blackboard Module</a> (Academic Skills for Successful Learning) is available for students</li> <li>• Dean of Graduate Studies is leading the development of new generic skills modules for postgraduate students</li> </ul> <p><i>Completed</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Postgraduate Research Supervision Policy published in June 2017</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Supports for international PGT students <b>(Law)</b></li> <li>• Better supports for non-native English speakers <b>(Law)</b></li> </ul> <u>Supports for research students</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Peer mentoring of incoming research students <b>(Histories &amp; Humanities)</b></li> <li>• Teaching and learning expectations for students and supports available <b>(Law)</b></li> </ul> <u>Integration of PG students</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Inclusion of PG taught course students in School events and teaching; Organise regular research seminars to be attended by staff and research students; Integrate MLitt and PhD registration and supervision across the entire school <b>(Confederal School of Religions, Peace Studies &amp; Theology)</b></li> </ul>	
<i>Relationships/ Governance</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Hub and Schools should explore the potential of a 'compact of understanding' as a framework for their interactions to ensure maximum benefit to both parties <b>(TLRH)</b></li> </ul>	<i>Current initiatives</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The relationship between Directors of Institutes and Schools is currently being addressed at Faculty and College level.</li> </ul>
<i>Assessment/ Examination</i>	<u>Assessment</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Promote a wider range of assessment methods <b>(M.Th.)</b></li> <li>• Consider increasing the proportion of continuous assessment <b>(H&amp;H)</b></li> <li>• Stricter adherence to College policies for return of written work <b>(H&amp;H)</b></li> <li>• Provide adequate feedback <b>(Law)</b></li> <li>• Modes of assessment at the School be reviewed and expanded <b>(Law)</b></li> <li>• Increase number of formative assessment opportunities <b>(Law)</b></li> </ul> <u>Examination</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide provisional marks for assessed work in the Senior Sophister year <b>(H&amp;H)</b></li> <li>• Review format of taught course examinations <b>(Law)</b></li> <li>• Encourage the use of in-term course evaluations <b>(Law)</b></li> <li>• Ensure consistency of dissertation grading <b>(Law)</b></li> </ul>	<i>Current initiatives</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assessment will be addressed as part of the TEP Assessment Framework approved in May 2016</li> </ul>
<i>Student Evaluation</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Respond publicly to student feedback <b>(Histories &amp; Humanities)</b></li> </ul>	<i>Current initiatives</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A report and recommendations on module evaluation from the Academic Secretary and Education Officer of the SU were considered by Council in September 2017. Pilot mid-term module evaluations will take place in 2017/18 in the Schools of English, Engineering and Psychology, and in TR071</li> </ul>

<i>Non-EU recruitment strategy</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Foster links with Global to promote Summer activities to increase student/staff recruitment <b>(English)</b></li> </ul>	<p><i>Current initiatives</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To be addressed as part of the Global Relations Strategy</li> </ul>
<i>Impact of TEP</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Retain year-long modules at Sophister level in TEP <b>(Histories &amp; Humanities)</b></li> <li>• The semester Start-Up Program should be preserved when TEP is introduced; this might require a slight re-adjustment of the Start-Up timetable <b>(Histories &amp; Humanities)</b></li> <li>• Consider modules having cross-disciplinary approach as ‘approved’ in TEP <b>(Law)</b></li> <li>• Consider how a cross-disciplinary component might be introduced to others that are offered so that they are suitable for classification as ‘approved modules’ <b>(Law)</b></li> <li>• Consider how studying foreign law might be made to count as part of the collection of ‘approved modules’ with reference to the content of the year abroad progs <b>(Law)</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• TEP-related recommendations to be dealt with under the TEP Implementation process</li> </ul>
<i>Systems</i>	<p>SITS</p> <p>The functionality of the SITS system needs urgently to be upgraded so as to allow direct input of module choices by students <b>(Histories &amp; Humanities)</b></p>	<p><i>Current initiatives</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• This is being reviewed within TEP</li> </ul>
<i>Strategy/ Management</i>	<p><u>Relationships between College, School and Disciplines</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continue Head of School induction for each incoming Head of Department <b>(H&amp;H)</b></li> <li>• Heads of Department to meet regularly with the Head of School <b>(H&amp;H)</b></li> <li>• Establish a School-based structure around the existing disciplines; Establish a School-wide research committee to look into the formation of more research groups (preferably inter-departmental) <b>(Confederal School of RPST)</b></li> </ul> <p><u>Alignment of School strategy with College Strategy</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The College-level planning/strategy does not mesh with School-level plans/strategies, particularly in staffing and hires, and are not transparent <b>(H&amp;H)</b></li> <li>• Adopt the best practice in governance and organization recommended by College <b>(Confederal School of Religions, Peace Studies &amp; Theology)</b></li> </ul> <p><u>Research Strategy</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hold annual research reviews and research planning with individual staff members, and feed into the development of a School-wide research strategy with the identification of core research areas and activities <b>(Confederal School of RPST)</b></li> </ul>	<p><i>Current initiatives</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The relationships between Departments and Schools being addressed in individual implementation plans</li> <li>• The development of Research Strategies to be addressed in individual implementation plans</li> </ul>
<i>Library</i>	<p><u>Strategy</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Trinity Library and TLRH should explore ways of working more closely together to develop a shared research agenda and actions related to this <b>(M.Th.)</b></li> <li>• The Hub should examine its support for university research themes <b>(TLRH)</b></li> </ul>	<p><i>Current initiatives</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Access issues have been escalated to the LIPC, and included on the Library Risk Plan</li> <li>• The Library has introduced patron-driven</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Target non-anglophone collections as a funding opportunity for philanthropy <b>(H&amp;H)</b></li> </ul> <p><u>Infrastructure/access (Histories &amp; Humanities)</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reinstate the library subscription to the ARTstor Digital</li> <li>• Re-negotiate the contract for electronic resources on legal deposit</li> <li>• Library access needs to be improved - Sunday opening</li> <li>• Desk space and electrical sockets for laptop use be expanded, esp in Berkeley Library</li> <li>• Provide training in the use of the library catalogue for all students</li> <li>• Standardize the payment of Interlibrary Loan (ILL) charges for graduate students across the School and simultaneously raise the number of loans that will be covered.</li> <li>• Increase the limit on the number of books that can be borrowed</li> <li>• Digital photography be allowed upon signature of a waiver form restricting the use of such photographs to research only</li> <li>• Recommend major investment in the curating of the Library's unique holdings collections (including the staff to curate them), so that they become properly known and properly used.</li> </ul>	<p>acquisitions to provide access to collections available on UK e-legal deposit that academics and students wish the Library to purchase for Trinity.</p> <p><i>On-going</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The issue of UK e-legal deposit will be presented to Council in Michaelmas term. The UK Non-Print Legal Deposit Review will take place in 2018. Analysis of the UK e- legal deposit is underway in preparation.</li> </ul>
<i>Funding/Finance</i>	<p><u>Funding allocation</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Income generation is not incentivized appropriately - the funds should be invested in the fund generators <b>(Histories &amp; Humanities)</b></li> <li>• Absence of financial transparency. The multipliers on grant income should be equalized across Schools <b>(Histories &amp; Humanities)</b></li> <li>• Introduce multi-annual budgeting <b>(Histories &amp; Humanities)</b></li> </ul>	<p><i>Current initiatives</i></p> <p><i>On-going</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A new Budget Allocation model has been developed</li> <li>• The relationship between Directors of Institutes and Schools is currently being addressed at Faculty and College level.</li> </ul>

### 3.5 Progression, Retention and Completion Statistics

Table 3.5.1: UG New Entrants Retention – 1617 JF students

Faculty achievement 1617 JF students	96.8%
TSM achievement 1617 JF students	94.3%
Faculty achievement 1516 JF students	95%
TSM achievement 1516 JF students	95%
Faculty achievement 1415 JF students	95.5%
TSM achievement 1415 JF students	96.7%
Faculty achievement 1314 JF students	96.5%
TSM achievement 1314 JF students	96.7%

*Strategic Plan target of 90% retention (A1.1) for transition from first year to second year.*

Table 3.5.2: UG New Entrants Retention of 1617 JF students into 1718 by course in FAHSS (non-TSM)

Course	Total on Course	Outcome	Progression Totals	
			No.	%
Acting	11	Retained in TCD	11	100%
		Was not Retained		
Ancient and Medieval History and Culture	14	Retained in TCD	14	100%
		Was not Retained		
Bachelor in Business Studies	35	Retained in TCD	35	100%
		Was not Retained		
Business Studies and French	11	Retained in TCD	11	100%
		Was not Retained		
Business Studies and German	17	Retained in TCD	16	94%
		Was not Retained	1	6%
Business Studies and Polish	5	Retained in TCD	5	100%
		Was not Retained		
Business Studies and Russian	5	Retained in TCD	4	80%
		Was not Retained	1	20%
Business Studies and Spanish	9	Retained in TCD	9	100%
		Was not Retained		
Catholic Theological Studies	3	Retained in TCD	3	100%
		Was not Retained		
Classics	9	Retained in TCD	9	100%
		Was not Retained		
Clinical Speech and Language Studies	31	Retained in TCD	30	97%
		Was not Retained	1	3%
Computer Science and Business	23	Retained in TCD	23	100%
		Was not Retained		
Computer Science and Language	20	Retained in TCD	17	85%
		Was not Retained	3	15%
Deaf Studies	9	Retained in TCD	9	100%
		Was not Retained		

Diploma in Acting and Theatre	3	Retained in TCD	3	100%
		Was not Retained		
Drama and Theatre Studies	15	Retained in TCD	14	93%
		Was not Retained	1	7%
Early and Modern Irish	1	Retained in TCD	1	100%
		Was not Retained		
Economic and Social Studies	244	Retained in TCD	236	97%
		Was not Retained	8	3%
English Studies	39	Retained in TCD	38	97%
		Was not Retained	1	3%
European Studies	46	Retained in TCD	44	95%
		Was not Retained	2	4%
History	37	Retained in TCD	36	98%
		Was not Retained	1	3%
History and Political Science	23	Retained in TCD	23	100%
		Was not Retained		
Law	85	Retained in TCD	84	98%
		Was not Retained	1	1%
Law and Business	22	Retained in TCD	21	96%
		Was not Retained	1	5%
Law and French	18	Retained in TCD	18	100%
		Was not Retained		
Law and German	14	Retained in TCD	14	100%
		Was not Retained		
Law and Political Science	21	Retained in TCD	21	100%
		Was not Retained		
Music	16	Retained in TCD	16	100%
		Was not Retained		
Music Education	9	Retained in TCD	9	100%
		Was not Retained		
Music Teaching and Performance (RIAM)	4	Retained in TCD	4	100%
		Was not Retained		
Philosophy	18	Retained in TCD	16	89%
		Was not Retained	2	11%
Philosophy, Political Science, Economics and Sociology	35	Retained in TCD	35	100%
		Was not Retained		
Political Science and Geography	17	Retained in TCD	14	82%
		Was not Retained	3	18%
Psychology	24	Retained in TCD	23	96%
		Was not Retained	1	4%

Social Studies	39	Retained in TCD	37	95%
		Was not Retained	2	5%
Sociology and Social Policy	18	Retained in TCD	17	94%
		Was not Retained	1	6%
Stage Management and Technical Theatre	11	Retained in TCD	11	100%
		Was not Retained		
World Religions and Theology	3	Retained in TCD	2	67%
		Was not Retained	1	33%
	964		964	

Table 3.5.3: UG New Entrants Retention of 1617 JF students into 1718 by course in TSM

Course	Total on Course	Outcome	Progression Totals	
			No.	%
TSM Ancient History and Archaeology	19	Retained in TCD	18	95%
		Was not Retained	1	5%
TSM Catholic Theological Studies	2	Retained in TCD	2	100%
		Was not Retained		
TSM Classical Civilisation	23	Retained in TCD	23	100%
		Was not Retained		
TSM Drama Studies	17	Retained in TCD	17	100%
		Was not Retained		
TSM Economics	42	Retained in TCD	40	96%
		Was not Retained	2	5%
TSM English Literature	87	Retained in TCD	86	99%
		Was not Retained	1	1%
TSM Film Studies	28	Retained in TCD	28	100%
		Was not Retained		
TSM French	66	Retained in TCD	62	95%
		Was not Retained	4	6%
TSM Geography	36	Retained in TCD	31	87%
		Was not Retained	5	14%
TSM German	23	Retained in TCD	20	87%
		Was not Retained	3	13%
TSM Greek	2	Retained in TCD	2	100%
		Was not Retained		
TSM History of Art and Architecture	38	Retained in TCD	37	98%
		Was not Retained	1	3%
TSM History	32	Retained in TCD	32	100%
		Was not Retained		
TSM Italian	30	Retained in TCD	27	90%
		Was not Retained	3	10%
TSM Jewish and Islamic Civilisation	8	Retained in TCD	8	75%

		Was not Retained		
TSM Latin	1	Retained in TCD		
		Was not Retained	1	100%
TSM Mathematics	24	Retained in TCD	23	96%
		Was not Retained	1	4%
TSM Modern Irish	19	Retained in TCD	17	90%
		Was not Retained	2	10%
TSM Music	11	Retained in TCD	11	100%
		Was not Retained		
TSM Philosophy	33	Retained in TCD	30	91%
		Was not Retained	3	9%
TSM Psychology	15	Retained in TCD	14	93%
		Was not Retained	1	7%
TSM Russian	9	Retained in TCD	9	100%
		Was not Retained		
TSM Sociology	50	Retained in TCD	45	90%
		Was not Retained	5	10%
TSM Spanish	37	Retained in TCD	33	89%
		Was not Retained	4	11%
TSM World Religions and Theology	12	Retained in TCD	11	92%
		Was not Retained	1	8%
	664		664	

### 3.6 Irish Survey of Student Engagement

Table 3.6: Key stats from Faculty ISSE Report 1617

Faculty Response	Total (change since 1516)	% of College Total	Male	Female	Irish Domicile	Non-Irish Domicile	1516
First Year	399 (-2%)	43%	345 (32%)	731 (68%)	808 (75%)	268 (25%)	406
Final Year	311 (+17%)	51%					266
PGT	366 (+55%)	71%					236
<b>Total</b>	<b>1076 (+19%)</b>	<b>50%</b>					<b>908</b>

\*Faculty Office does not have access to the breakdown by year into Male, Female and so on.

#### 3.6.1 Faculty Performance on ISSE indices 1617

Across the Yr1 UG cohort, AHSS scored higher than the other faculties in:

- Higher-Order Learning
- Reflective and Integrative Learning
- Effective Teaching Practice

And lower than the other faculties in:

- Quantitative Reasoning
- Collaborative Learning

However, the overall score between the three Faculties showed little variance.

#### *Reflective and Integrated Learning*

Across all students, AHSS scored particularly highly in 'evaluating a point of view or a decision or information source' (80%) and use of 'Higher Order Learning Skills' (74%). AHSS continues to be the Faculty who report the highest instance of integrating learning and reflection during their programme of study (63%) and also more opportunities to be involved in diverse debates in assignments or discussions (52%) and used problem based learning in social settings (62%).

#### *Quantitative Reasoning*

As might be expected, the Faculty scored low compared to the FEMS Faculty in terms of quantitative literacy and the use of quantitative reasoning skills.

#### *Learning Strategies*

68% of AHSS respondents reported that they identify key information from recommended reading materials compared to 42% of FEMS and 54% of HS respondents.

#### *Collaborative Learning*

AHSS scored low in this compared to the other Faculties (AHSS 35%; FEMS 48%; HS 46%). However, in AHSS the proportion of respondents in final year who frequently collaborate with other students on course materials increased by 13% in 2016/17.

#### *Effective Teaching Practice*

PGT respondents in AHSS scored the organisation of teaching on the programme lower than the PGT cohort in HS (AHSS 70%, HS 87%) Of note, the regularity of feedback provided to first year respondents across the college fell by 11% compared to 2015/16, although an increase of 8% was reported by final year respondents in AHSS on promptness of feedback received.

### *Teaching and Learning*

AHSS scored low in comparison to HS in terms of opportunities of working effectively with other (AHSS: 59%, HS: 81%). However AHSS respondents (63%) are more inclined to ask questions or contribute to discussion in class, tutorials, labs or online compared to the other faculties.

#### 3.6.2 Action on issues arising from ISSE Report

Many schools took no specific action due to the very low response rate.

Psychology: There was a low response rate overall to this survey. Notwithstanding this, the scores on all engagement and outcomes indices for students on PGT courses in the School of Psychology were above the college average on all measures, and significantly so on many of the indices.

Taking two key points from the survey:

- **Timely feedback:** The school has a policy, monitored closely, that work is returned with feedback within 3 weeks of submission. Research student supervisors in the school work closely with their students and provide regular constructive feedback for instance on work required for student appraisals, drafts for their presentations, the first 5k word piece required for the first progress report and so on.

**Development of clear and effective speaking skills:** The School has put in place several opportunities for PG students to present their work to the School academics and students and to receive feedback, both on the day and as part of a written report, for example, after appraisal meetings. PG research students present at least annually to the School and students are encouraged and facilitated to present their work externally at conferences and meetings. PhD students who have submitted their thesis will present on the day of their *viva voce* to an invited audience before the oral examination

**SWSP:** The School performed well overall in the ISSE Report 2015/16 and performed above the overall University mean in 5 of the 9 categories. The response rate was low particularly at postgraduate taught level and we seeking to improve that into the future. Regarding the categories where we performed below the mean we are reviewing the curriculum and our policies with the aim of ensuring that our school meets and exceeds the mean score in the coming years.

It is hoped that continuing initiatives within the Schools, Faculty and University will improve the Faculty's scores. Action to increase participation by all Schools in ISSE to enhance the reliability of results in the new ISSE School report which identifies results at programme level.

### **3.7 Internationals Student Barometer**

#### 3.7.1 Key issues arising from ISB Report

The Faculty received an overall satisfaction rate of 88%.

College website continues to be most important source of info for international students – CA website recently redesigned with emphasis on clarity and accessibility for all prospective students.

- Psychology: College website very influential source of information for students: the School has made concerted efforts to improve and continually update our webpages.
- Several PGT courses have produced promotional videos, primarily aimed at international applicants taking into account ISB feedback.
- Our website has a tab specifically for International Students which is very well maintained.
- The School's part-time Global Officer has been active in promoting our programmes and the School and also in coordinating responses to queries from international potential applicants.
- The school has a designated, experienced International, Socrates & Visiting Students Coordinator.

All programmes and courses have comprehensive and updated handbooks available for students with emphasis on clear marking criteria (as a potential source of difference) available for consultation by our international students.

### 3.7.2 Action to respond to issues arising from ISB Report

No particular action has been identified.

## 3.8 Benchmarking

**Benchmarking – does your school benchmark against other schools, or other Universities or plan to do so? Please give details.**

Business Schools are one of the most externally compared and ranked in the world, with a range of publically published international rankings issues each year. Given its location and resources Trinity Business School and its various programmes are highly ranked.

### MBA

**Economist Rankings:** In the world's top 100 at number 98.

### Eduniversal Rankings

- **MBA:** Ranked **5<sup>th</sup>** in MBA full time, **Western Europe** (1<sup>st</sup> in Ireland)
- **Executive MBA:** Ranked **6<sup>th</sup>** in Executive MBA & MBA part time, **Western Europe** (1<sup>st</sup> in Ireland)

### Pre- experience Programmes Eduniversal rankings

- **MSc in Management:** Ranked **1<sup>st</sup>** in General Management, **Western Europe** for (1<sup>st</sup> in Ireland)
- **MSc in Finance:** Ranked **3<sup>rd</sup>** in Corporate Finance, **Western Europe** (1<sup>st</sup> in Ireland)
- **MSc in International Management:** Ranked **5<sup>th</sup>** in International Management, **Western Europe** (1<sup>st</sup> in Ireland)
- **PG Diploma in Accounting:** Ranked **17<sup>th</sup>** in Accounting and Auditing, **Western Europe** (1<sup>st</sup> in Ireland)
- **MSc Digital Marketing Strategy:** Ranked **13<sup>th</sup>** in the **GLOBAL** ranking for E-Business (1<sup>st</sup> in Ireland)
- The School is currently at an advanced stage of going through the approval process for both AACSB (US) and EQUIS (European) accreditation. This has required extensive assessment on a whole school basis. Our MBA is currently accredited by AMBA. With the award of these

accreditations we will become a triple crown business school. This will place it in the top 100 in the world as a business school.

- We are also members of the UK's Chartered Association of Business Schools which provides another means for international benchmarking and early alerts to new innovation in business education.

The Trinity Business School has its own Quality and Accreditations Unit that assesses and manages the quality and performance factors needed to maintain and enhance our position in international rankings.

SLSCS: There is no other school on the island that combines the diverse disciplines within our School and only one comparable school of which we are aware within Europe. Few other countries offer a third- level programme in Deaf Studies; in most other universities the discipline of Speech and Language Therapy is based within a Health Sciences faculty. For this reason, individual disciplines benchmark relative to peers, but at a School level it is difficult to find relevant comparators.

The clinical programme has strong relationships with partner programmes in UCC, NUIG and UL, with regular meetings of Practice Education Coordinators and regular collaboration between the programmes on common issues related to professional education and practice.

SPsych: The School does not have an overall benchmark for all the PG courses with specific institutions; given the diverse nature of the courses, each external examiner comments on the comparability of the specific PG course to similar courses at other high impact universities. The DTLPG directly asks about such comparability at each course's Board of Examiners' meetings. Typically to date external examiners have very favourably compared our PG courses to comparable courses of which they have experience.

### 3.9 Head of School Reports

**Trinity Business School** is in the process of embedding a number of new features in its undergraduate programmes aimed at making our students more 'work ready' and to have a stronger moral compass upon graduation. These include:

1. The introduction of internships which are linked to courses and formally assessed. Currently, the School has one such programme on the Bachelor of Business Studies degree but intends to open this course up to other business related undergraduate degrees. It is also exploring the creation of a second internship based course with the cumulative aim of incorporating summer internships at the end of both Senior Freshman and Junior Sophister Years.
2. The School is in the advanced stages of creating an ethics stream running through each year of the BBS degree in order to achieve the objective of ensuring that Business School graduates having strong ethical awareness and expertise when it comes to future business decisions.
3. TBS is also in the process of introducing courses dealing with well-being (including stress awareness & management and general guidance on mental and physical health issues relevant for business) with a view to enabling our graduates to lead happier, healthier and more fulfilled lives in the new dynamic but challenging, uncertain and stressful world of work.

---

The **School of Creative Arts** is undergoing substantial and substantive rethinking of its academic mission, curriculum and administration. The strategy is to consolidate and strengthen the separate disciplines of Drama, Film and Music into a coherent School of Creative Arts and enable all areas of research, teaching and administration to meet best practices and enable educational excellence. The goal is to enhance the research outputs and teaching outcomes while rationalising for efficiency the administrative structures. These concerns are articulated in light of the Trinity Education Project and the possible move of the School to the Trinity Technology Enterprise Campus in the coming years.

During 2018-19 the School will be undergoing a Quality Review. The School's specific Terms of Reference for the review include:

- (i) A unified School of Creative Arts with disciplinary strands of Theatre and Performance, Film and Digital Media, and Music.
- (ii) New and reduced degree entry points which would see students enter a Creative Arts degree programme with major courses of study within discipline specific tracks.
- (iii) The establishment of the Samuel Beckett Centre for the Creative Arts in a purpose built facility housing all three disciplines and Arts Technology Research Laboratory and their respective laboratory, rehearsal, performance, teaching and research spaces.
- (iv) New administrative structure to match the unified School of Creative Arts academic mission.

Regarding student assessments the SCA requires a coherent and unified student assessment strategy across the disciplines of Drama, Film and Music. The School has up to this point allowed each Discipline to manage its own assessments without due diligence being applied equally amongst the departments. Film Studies and its use of paper assessments circulated during class time has been our most successful model, while Drama's commendable electronic feedback forms have been less successful in achieving a healthy percentage of student involvement. The Music Department requires further compliance in student assessments as a matter of urgency. The issues that have

arisen in our internal review of the student feedback loop further highlights the need for the separate disciplines of Drama, Film and Music to consolidate policies of best practices.

There are issues in the School that have not been captured through student feedback including the debilitating reduction in academic staff members with a loss through retirement and resignation of three senior staff in Music, four in Drama, and two in Film. There are three more retirements scheduled in the next three years. We have had one replacement in each discipline during that time (one which resigned) with two more scheduled. These numbers place the SCA in an unfavourable position. The resulting pressure on remaining staff leads to issues such as reduced research outputs, tardy returns of student assessments and reduction in new programme development and commercialisation schemes. The chronic lack of resourcing has lowered the overall morale of the School challenging our growth potential. This lack of resourcing is also exemplified in the unresolved space issues with many of our facilities unfit for purpose as has been noted in the Bursar's study of College buildings.

Our academic Staff across the Disciplines of Drama, Film and Music are well aware of best practices in creative arts education globally. Our influence is recognised internationally so it is urgent that the School maintain that reputation through a rigorous application of quality review, internal, external and student assessment and strategic planning. However, if the School remains under-resourced we will continue to struggle to meet those requirements. A unified SCA will be one step toward establishing compliance with best practices, while enhancing commercialisation potential, enabling international student enrolment and encouraging world class research and funding that can follow.

---

The **School of Education** continually strives to ensure that all aspects of its work are of the highest quality. This ranges from the development, implementation and evaluation of policy and procedures to student and staff experience. This is informed and implemented through the use of statutory committees and groups such as the School Committee, School Executive and Research Ethics Committee, as well as those constituted via the School such as the Research Committee, the various Course Boards, the Postgraduate Admissions Advisory Committee, as well as the four research groups and two research centres. Collectively, as well as individually, these bodies engage in both routine monitoring and discussion of operational issues, but also engage when necessary in strategic planning in relation to both substantive content and quality. In particular I would add that the Programme Coordinators and Directors within the School are very alert to student and staff issues which affect the quality of their respective areas and where necessary and after meaningful consultation, act positively and in a timely manner to effect change.

Over the past two years (and partially in light of the 2015 School Review) the School has introduced a number of new initiatives in relation to quality assurance procedures in light of feedback from staff (academic and administrative) and students. The basis for this has come from formal internal reviews of 1) the M.Ed. and 2) the Professional Masters in Education (PME). A review of the School's doctoral admissions policy has also been undertaken which has led to changes in this regard. The School is planning further changes in this area as part of its review of its doctoral provision more generally; namely research methods training, the confirmation process and supervisor training.

An area which is worth highlighting is the provision of regular training for MEd and PME supervisors, with a specific emphasis on non-TCD staff. This has been a priority for a number of years. The training sessions emphasise policy and procedures in the context of supervisory roles and

expectations. The content of these sessions is regularly reviewed and adjusted in light of 1) feedback from participants and 2) any alteration in School and/or College policy. For example, changes in the School's ethics procedures from a being paper-based to electronic submission process (via Blackboard), necessitated extensive training. The same was also the case for changes in the PME thesis format. Additionally, full and part-time staff are also expected to participate in these training activities to ensure they are fully up-to-date with changes in policy and procedures.

---

**School of English:** Two problematic issues come up repeatedly in student surveys. For some undergraduate cohorts timetabling is the single most negative issue (6.00pm lectures are very unpopular and lead to long working days for students). We hope that the development of a fixed timetable as part of TEP will alleviate this issue.

Postgraduates in taught Mphils regularly complain about the poor standard of accommodation and the spaces in which they are taught. Although a refurbishment of the Arts Building is planned, the teaching spaces of the building are mainly out of scope. This is an issue about which the School can do nothing.

More positively, the School is presently involved in (and nearing the end of) a curriculum review of our entire undergraduate programme. We have been eager to have full student consultation at the various stages of this process. Extensive meetings were held during 2016-17 between Head of Discipline and student reps as the School developed its suite of Capstone pathways. We will continue this pattern of consultation as our curriculum takes its final form.

This year, the School is piloting a new approach to student evaluation (partly in response to work done by the Academic Secretary and the Student's Union in 2016-17). We have set up a Staff-Student liaison committee in which the DTLUG and Year Heads meet with the student reps midway through the semester to review issues and report back to the School on possible actions.

As regards student surveys, the School continues to experiment with ways to improve the student response rate.

---

The School of **Histories and Humanities:** The School underwent its Quality Review during 2016-17 and has recently submitted its implementation plan to the College Quality Committee. Engagement with the review process has been valuable for encouraging the School to reflect on its current practice and on plans for the future. The School initiated engagement with Athena SWAN during 2016-17; it plans to have its Athena SWAN team in place with balanced representation of gender, seniority and work-life challenges, for January 2018. The School is mindful of gender balance issues raised by the external reviewers.

The School is engaging with curriculum change driven by TEP - welcoming it as an opportunity to blend current excellence in undergraduate teaching and assessment with new initiatives. As a multi-disciplinary School, we benefit greatly from sharing ideas about teaching and assessment practices between disciplines - ranging from group work to skills based placements (which are already embedded in some of our programmes at UG and PG levels). In the context of skills, we draw attention to the innovative nature of the MPhil in Public History and Cultural Heritage (now in its fifth year) that includes work placements and practitioner workshops. A new MPhil programme (under consideration) in Environmental History is also exploring this work placement model.

The School continues to keep under review the effectiveness of collecting and responding to student feedback- done through paper surveys in class and staff-student liaison committees in each discipline. We have experimented with online surveys (relatively poor response rate) and are looking at mid-term evaluations and/or meetings with class reps as ways to develop more timely feedback and responses to any issues.

---

**School of Languages, Literatures and Cultural Studies:** The School profits continuously from fully engaging with the various Quality Assurance Processes in College and is fully committed to an ongoing improvement of its internal Quality Assurance. As a multidisciplinary School with the largest number of departments in College the School faces a particular challenge to guarantee consistency of practices and standards in all fields, including Quality Assurance, across its seven Departments (French, German, Irish, Italian, Near Middle Eastern Studies, Russian and Slavonic Studies, Spanish) and its Centre for European Studies, which is responsible for the delivery of its cross-School undergraduate degree. The School Review 2014 flagged such inconsistencies as a major issue across our undergraduate and postgraduate programmes and recommended a stronger oversight role for the relevant committees and Directors. The comments and recommendations of the reviewers in this regard were welcomed by the School and since then the School has worked continuously and systematically to address these issues and has implemented all recommendations of the External Reviewers. On foot of this review the strengthening of Quality Assurance processes became a strategic priority in the School's new Strategic Plan which was developed and approved in 2016. As a consequence the School has reviewed and strengthened its QA practices across all its programmes. It has, with new terms of references, empowered the undergraduate and the postgraduate committees to take a stronger role in developing, monitoring and implementing best practice across departments and has given the Directors of Undergraduate and Postgraduate Directors more powers and more support to enable them to do this aspect of their roles more effectively. This has been a very positive development as the monitoring and safeguarding of quality processes are now a regular major item at committee meetings, the awareness of and adherence to best practice across the departments has increased and the level of consistency and harmonisation across the departments is rising.

One recommendation, the introduction of a once-a-term School-wide Staff-Student forum open to all students (in addition to the staff-student meetings held regularly with student representatives at departmental level) has thrown up a number of cross-School issues, though attendance by students in this forum could improve and will over time as the format becomes more embedded.

The School is also using the introduction of TEP to review its curriculum across its subjects and some departments such as German and Italian are using this opportunity for a comprehensive overhaul and modernisation of their curricula. This is an ongoing process of which the School is also making for further harmonisation across its departments and programs.

---

The **Law School** fully engages with all quality review processes and has found them helpful in developing its educational programmes. We are in the process of addressing all issues raised in last year's Quality Review of the educational programmes. This also addresses some of the issues flagged in student evaluations and external examiner reports for the purpose of this report.

Particular innovations this year include the introduction of early or mid-module evaluation. This has been followed at undergraduate level in order to address delivery issues quickly, so that they can be addressed for the benefit of the current cohort of students. This has been a success and we expect it will become part of the general culture in the School over the next few years.

The biggest single quality issue in recent years has been the experience of students (and staff) of the dissertation component of the LLM programmes. A dedicated working group has been examining all issues of the dissertation and will report to the School Committee with a view to having a new model in place for 2018-19.

It is particularly gratifying to see that external examiners comment on the fairness and appropriate procedures followed at courts of examiners. Through the anonymization of students for the court and the adoption of structure discretion, we have succeeded in addressing weaknesses in previous approaches.

The main issue that needs to be addressed is the bunching of grades in modules. This requires a cultural shift on the part of examiners. External examiners have reported that this has improved over the years, but we shall continue to reinforce the message.

It remains unfortunate that there is no clear procedure to ensure that central college authorities address issues raised in external examiner reports and other quality processes. For many years, nearly all external examiners on law programmes have raised as a problem that there is no effective system for anonymous marking in the College. The solution would seem to be relatively simple: direct invigilators at examination venues to ensure that students complete their examination scripts anonymously (with the flap sealed). But there has never been any engagement or response from the College on this issue. The School is required to respond to issues raised in external examiner reports but there does not seem to be any equivalent obligation on the College. Not only is this a quality problem, it undermines the reputation of the College when external examiners see that their recommendations are not addressed.

This is consistent with the approach taken by the College to the recent review of the Law School's educational programmes. We have still not received any response from the College to the recommendations that were directed to it.

This creates and reinforces an impression that the College views itself as immune from any requirement to take quality procedures seriously. This is regrettable. It will also undermine the willingness of Schools to engage in quality review processes.

---

The diversity of programmes offered across the **School of Linguistic, Speech and Communication Sciences**, including professionally accredited programmes and PG CPD-accredited qualifications, has allowed the School to engage with a range of Quality Assurance mechanisms and to cross-pollinate best practice from each discipline to enhance quality overall. In particular, the most recent accreditation experience with CORU highlighted a range of practices that supported curriculum development and that highlighted the processes required to ensure that the feedback loop is

effectively closed. This process also highlighted the value of programme-level evaluation processes, rather than narrowly focusing only on module-level evaluation. Over the past year, we have also initiated a meeting between the DUTL, the Head of School and the class representatives across all UG programmes delivered by the School, to ensure that issues that may be common across the student body can be identified and to try to build a sense of a shared community of learning.

There are two areas that are the focus of further development. These are (1) the refinement of the exit survey at UG and PG levels and (2) the sharing of feedback from evaluations with students.

We have experienced disappointing levels of response to exit surveys, making it difficult to interpret the feedback provided. In part, this low response rate is likely due to the fact that students have left and feel no further obligation to engage in survey responses. CORU also highlighted the value of engaging with graduates after they have had some employment experience, to get feedback on the extent to which the programme prepared them for their work life. The challenge in implementing both these quality processes is similar – reliance on responses from those who are no longer within the university. We are currently developing our engagement with Alumni and hope to capitalize on this process for further feedback.

Sharing of feedback with students is currently done once the evaluations have been processed. However, the changes that are made on the basis of feedback are usually experienced by subsequent year groups of students. Thus students do not always have direct experience of the impact of their feedback and new groups of students do not always value the changes that have been recommended by peers. We have initiated a process of verbally advising ‘new’ year groups about the changes that have been made on foot of recommendations from previous cohorts of students. This sharing also highlights for students that the School attempts to respond to feedback and that decisions on changes are informed by the input of key stakeholders.

As a School fortunate to engage overall with relatively small class sizes (with some notable exceptions), we have strong, open and informal lines of communication with students. These informal channels of communication often provide key mechanisms for responding quickly to issues that have arisen, but are difficult to document. While formal mechanisms are valuable, it is critical that students also have an opportunity to speak with academic staff, to raise issues and to provide feedback in order to foster a sense of shared ownership of the educational process.

---

The **School of Psychology** continues to provide high-level postgraduate training. For example, the D Clin Psychology course was listed by the *Irish Times* in the top 5 Postgraduate Courses in TCD. The School’s courses undertake regular Curriculum Review both in response to internal academic developments, but also informed by the accreditation requirements from the professional body (PSI). Looking forward, in the coming year the statutory registration of Psychologists by CORU will commence and the implications of this process for postgraduate education remain to be fully determined. The School will actively engage with CORU in relation to this matter and will ensure its professional training programmes continue to meet the highest of standards. New accreditation criteria have been proposed for the *MSc Applied Behaviour Analysis* and these may pose challenges in terms of staff resourcing to meet accreditation staff-student ratio requirements. The *MSc Applied Behaviour Analysis* Course Directors are in ongoing discussion with the professional body to examine the consequences of the accreditation process. In the coming year the School will engage with Athena SWAN and values this opportunity.

In addition, we hope to propose a new postgraduate course (*MSc in Global Mental Health*), which will be based in the School of Psychology and which will link to the Trinity Research Centre in Global Health; we feel that this course has the potential to attract non-EU students to TCD. The School will look to develop an online suite of Research Methods and Statistics modules for the postgraduate students across multiple courses. Finally, there are ongoing challenges relating to access to adequate teaching space for postgraduate course students.

---

**School of Social Sciences and Philosophy:** The single biggest obstacle to improving the student experience in the SSS&P is the very high student staff ratios, which for 2015-16 were in the order of 34:1 (reaching a figure of 40:1 in the discipline of economics). Until such ratios are reduced to the College median, improving the quality of the student experience will always be difficult to address in any meaningful fashion. External reviewers (e.g. those engaged with the BESS review of 2016) have commented that “staff-student ratios that have grown to unsustainable levels” and that “Class sizes are often enormous” and that we are severely under-administered.

Staff typically find the quality assurance process to be frustrating and very time consuming, with very little return. The reports of external reviewers have repeatedly highlighted that the School is delivering a high quality education for students under almost impossible conditions (student: staff ratios, quality of space, administrative supports etc.) and yet there is very little that can be done to address these known and serious issues, given the over-arching financial constraints under which we operate. The constructive improvements suggested by reviewers almost always involved a financial investment. Until we operate in an environment in which resources clearly follow activities, staff will, unfortunately, remain cynical about the quality assurance process.

Similarly, while we are very committed to the student experience and to the evaluation process, the most common and serious issues raised each year are ones that we cannot address in a significant way. Students complain about the poor quality of teaching space, large tutorials and classes and/or too few tutorials. Improvements in these areas will require investment by college in both infrastructure and people.

---

The **School of Social Work and Social Policy** through both internal feedback from students and staff, and external feedback from external examiners and accreditors aims to respond efficiently and effectively to issues raised. The quality issues raised, that are within the remit of the School to respond to are resolved through an interactive dialogue with relevant staff and students. As noted above, the most significant issue repeatedly raised by students is the quality of the teaching spaces available to them. This issue is also repeatedly raised by the CORU, the accrediting body for our professional social work courses. The refurbishment of the Arts building, where the majority of our teaching takes place, will hopefully address some of these concerns.