Trinity College Dublin
Coláiste na Tríonóide, Baile Átha Cliath
The University of Dublin

ACADEMIC QUALITY ASSURANCE: FACULTIES REPORT

2016/17

Table of Contents

1. Introduction

The Annual Faculty Quality Report (AFQR) was introduced in 2015 as part of the [Framework](#) for Quality at Trinity College Dublin. It provides data that assists in monitoring the implementation and effectiveness of College quality assurance policies and procedures at local level, and informs the production of the Annual Institutional Quality Report to QQI and the Self- Assessment Report for Trinity's next institutional quality review in 2020/21.

The core areas covered in the Annual Faculty Quality Reports are:
  i.   Evaluation of undergraduate modules;
  ii.   Evaluation of post graduate taught surveys;
  iii. Evaluation of External Examiner findings;
  iv.   Professional Accreditation cycle;
  v.   Quality Review cycle;
  vi.   Progression and Retention figures;
  vii. Outcomes from Irish Survey of Student Engagement (ISSE), the International Student Barometer (ISB) and the Postgraduate Research Survey;
  viii. Benchmarking;
  ix.   Collaboration;
  x.   Identification of college-wide issues for escalation;
  xi.   Identification of good practices.

For the first time in 2016/17, the Faculty reports included (i) data on benchmarking against other schools or universities and (ii) a precis from Heads of School on the priorities, challenges and achievements affecting the quality of teaching, learning and the student experience in their respective schools.

The individual reports are discussed at each of the Annual Faculty Executive Quality Meetings, attended by the Quality Officer, before being submitted to the Quality Committee for consideration. The 2016/17 AFQRs were presented for discussion at Quality Committee on 22 March 2018.

Following Quality Committee review of the individual Faculty reports, a consolidated report is produced by the Quality Office for consideration by the University Council. The consolidated report summarises common quality assurance issues and good practice across schools and faculties, and also escalates College-level issues for consideration.

The importance of the AFQR in supporting and promoting quality at local and Institutional level was acknowledged in the QQI [Quality Within Higher Education 2017 Summary Report](#) as an example of '*an effective QA procedure that leads to tangible QA improvements at school and college level*'.

2. Executive Summary

The 2016/17 Annual Faculty Quality Reports (AFQR) outline the common issues facing schools as identified from local quality assurance processes, the actions and enhancements that have been put in place to address these issues and the issues that the faculties would like to raise to College level for attention.

The reports demonstrate that, at local level, schools and faculties have put in place a variety of enhancements to improve the quality of teaching and research, and the student experience.

In 2016/17, schools in all three faculties implemented extensive curriculum reviews, either in response to changing external environments or to align with the Trinity Education Project (e.g. Nursing and Midwifery, Dentistry, Natural Sciences). The AFQRs highlighted the challenge for schools who have programmes that are externally accredited in maintaining the requirements of the external bodies while simultaneously providing scope to incorporate TEP principles, such as Trinity electives. The issue of clinical placements was raised in a number of schools, and has implications for the continuing accreditation of some programmes.

All faculties have engaged in the implementation of technology-enhanced learning through the Faculty-wide 'TuringPoint' pilot project that has been favourably received by staff and students.

The provision of appropriate teaching, learning and social spaces is an ingoing issue for students and staff, and was highlighted again in 2016/17 across all three faculties. It is hoped that some of the issued raised will be addressed by the Estates Plan or the E3 project.

The level of English language competency among international students was raised as an issue of concern in reviews of the School of Histories and Humanities and the School of Law in 2016/17. Concerns regarding the level of support for full-time international students in the School of Education have been addressed by the School offering an additional academic writing session solely for full-time international students. Following feedback from external examiners in the School of Languages, Literatures and Cultural Studies, 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 backgrounds.

Schools in all faculties are working towards Athena Swan awards in 2017/18. Additionally, schools are preparing for accreditation visits by professional bodies and, in some cases, upcoming quality reviews. Meeting the requirements of the parallel but separate processes of quality reviews, accreditation and Athena Swan creates a challenge for schools and faculties in terms of workload and duplication of data requirements. Opportunities to streamline these processes would be welcomed by schools.

The need to continue to enhance the External Examiner process was again raised this year and will be the subject of an enhancement programme for next academic year.

3. Faculty performance at a glance

Student evaluation:

All three faculties reported undergraduate module evaluation rates greater than 90% (see table 1). These figures are comparable with those achieved in 2015/16 (see figure 1). Where 100% evaluation was not achieved, explanations as to why were provided. A combination of paper-based and online evaluation methods were employed across the three faculties, with higher response rates reported for paper-based surveys. In 2016/17, the Education Officer of the Trinity Student Union and the Academic Secretary conducted a series of focus groups with 20 schools on a 'Student Evaluation Review. The resulting report recommended the introduction of mid-module evaluations, the establishment of student:staff liaison committees in all schools and the facilitation of a culture of students-as-partners in their learning through greater dialogue and engagement.

Mid-module or interim evaluations have been introduced in schools (e.g. Law and Mathematics) and staff-student liaison committees have been established to facilitate two-way dialogue between staff and students (e.g. Chemistry and Engineering). Faculties reported that improvements were introduced in response to student feedback, and some of these also align with the introduction of the new TEP curriculum (e.g. increased use of continuous assessment and the use of alternative assessment methods).

As in 2015/16, taught postgraduate programme evaluation rates of 100% were achieved in HS and AHSS in 2016/17 (see figure 2). In the Faculty of EMS, 83% of postgraduate taught programmes were evaluated, an increase of 3% on 2015/16. The Faculty reports that the three schools where taught PG programmes are not formally evaluated will put procedures in place to address this in the future. A range of evaluation methods were reported, including for example the use of in-class, online surveys, focus groups and meetings with class representatives.

External Examiner reports:

In the Faculty of AHSS and the Faculty of HS there were slight decreases in the percentage of undergraduate External Examiner (EE) reports returned compared to 2015/16 (see figure 3). In FEMS the percentage (91%) was comparable to the return rate of the previous two years. The Faculty of EMS reported that the Dean has written to the course directors to ensure that EE reports are returned and actioned.

Issues raised by UG External Examiners in 2016/17 included bunching of grades and reluctance to mark in the higher end of the range (AHSS), disparity of marks from overseas project supervisors and predictability of exam papers (HS); and gender balance in External Examiner panels and contact hours for developing problem-solving skills (EMS). These issues have been addressed by the development of specific criteria and grade descriptors for overseas supervisor's marks in the School of Medicine and the restructuring of exam papers to reduce question predictability in the School of Pharmacy & Pharmaceutical Science. In Chemistry, a new procedure for selection of external examiners has been introduced which facilitates monitoring the overall diversity of the nominees in terms of gender and geography. The School invested in the provision of high-quality demonstrating time from postgraduates to support the development of problem-solving skills in UG students. They

emphasise however that continued financial support from the School for this initiative is not sustainable.

In relation to PGT External Examiner (EE) reports, there were slight decreases in the percentage of reports returned in AHSS (98% in 2015/16 vs 92% in 2016/17) and EMS (86% in 2015/16 vs 80% in 2016/17) compared to last year (see figure 4). In HS, the percentage reports returned increased from 28% in 2015/16 to 88% in 2016/17. Issues raised by PGT Examiners included transparency in marking and the low number of distinctions being awarded (AHSS), resourcing for research dissertations (HS – Medicine) and the high number of hours for PGT students in the School of Computer Science and Statistics (EMS). In AHSS enhancements to address these issues included clearer marking schemes, provision of feedback on border-line grades, review of marking processes upwards and more extensive and tightly monitored moderation processes. In the School of Computer Science and Statistics, the new M.Sc.in Computer Science has been designed to reduce timetabled hours and the course director is monitoring the burden of coursework on the new programme. In Health Sciences, postgraduate External Examiners in the School of Medicine (Obstetrics/Gynaecology, Radiation Therapy, Human Health and Disease) raised resourcing in terms of clinical/administrative staff and IT support as issues of concern.

Accreditation:

Accreditation visits were reported in all three faculties in 2016/17. In the School of Engineering the BAI, the B.Sc. in Engineering with management and the M.Sc. in Civil Engineering were accredited by Engineers Ireland until 2021. The reviewers recommended that the School appoint an Internship Officer to oversee all aspects of the School's internship programmes and liaise with industry. The position has been included in the E3 Business Plan and an appointment will be made in September 2018. In Health Sciences, the Dental Council assessed the Diploma in Dental Hygiene, the Diploma in Nursing and the National Dental Nursing Training Programmes and all were accredited until 2021. The B.Sc. in Occupational Therapy received full accreditation in March 2017 until 2021. The School of Nursing & Midwifery is awaiting the outcome of the Nursing and Midwifery Board of Ireland (NMBI) assessment in December 2016 of the B.Sc. in Nursing, the B.Sc. in Midwifery, the Higher Diploma in Children's Nursing and the Higher Diploma in Midwifery. In Pharmacy & Pharmaceutical Science, the 5-year integrated Master of Pharmacy was approved and recognised for a period of three years until 2020. In AHSS, the M.Sc. in Applied Behavioural Analysis (ABA) was accredited until September 2018 and the B.Sc. (Clin. Lang.) is accredited until 2021.

Quality Reviews:

Quality reviews occurred in the Faculties of HS and AHSS during the reporting period – in HS, the Schools of Pharmacy & Pharmaceutical Science and Dental Science were reviewed, and in AHSS two schools (Confederal School of Religions, Peace Studies and Theology and the School of Histories and Humanities) were reviewed; a programme review of all eleven Law programmes was completed and a review of the Trinity Long Room Hub took place. In addition, follow-up reports (Implementation Plans or Progress Reports) for seven reviews were approved by the Quality Committee.

Progression/Retention:

In 2016/17, an overall retention rate of 96**%** was achieved, where retention is defined as students who progressed to year 2 in the same course (91%), repeated Year 1 (2%) or who transferred to another course within College (3%) (see table 1). The overall College retention rate of 96% can be disaggregated as follows: AHSS -98%, FEMS – 96%, HS – 96%, multi-faculty courses – 92% and TSM - 86%.

The overall College progression rate of 91% can be disaggregated as follows: AHSS -90%, FEMS – 90%, HS – 95%, multi-faculty courses – 86% and TSM - 86%.

In 2016/17, both the College progression rate and the individual Faculty progression rates exceeded the Strategic Plan target of 90% progression (Strategic Plan A1.1)

Irish Survey of Student Engagement (ISSE):

The overall ISSE response rate for Trinity in 2016/17 was 24.6% (2,047 students), a slight increase on the 2015/16 response rate of 22.8% (1,811 students). The Faculty of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences (AHSS) had the highest number of respondents across all faculties and this represents an increase of 19% compared with 2015/16. Respondents from the Faculty of Engineering, Mathematics & Science (FEMS) also increased (by 16%) compared with 2015/16 whereas representation by the Faculty of Health Sciences (HS) decreased by 4% compared with 2015/16. Three schools within the Faculty of Health Sciences expressed concern regarding the validity of the data given the very low response rates for individual schools. This is to be addressed by efforts to increase overall participation by students for 2017/18.

Trinity's scores are higher than the overall score of the other six ISSE Irish Universities in three of the nine indices: Higher Order Learning, Reflective and Integrative Learning, and Quantitative Reasoning. At a sectoral level, Higher Order Learning (critical thinking and problem-solving) continues to be the highest scored index (TCD 38.9; ISSE Univ 38.1). Student Faculty Interaction has been the lowest scoring index in ISSE since the survey began in 2012/13 and in Trinity, this was mirrored in the Yr1 responses from all three faculties in 2016/17 (AHSS – 7.9; FEMS – 5.3 and HS – 10.9). This may be a factor of large class sizes in first year and points to the continuing need to focus on the first year experience. A high percentage of respondents (45%) said that they 'never' discussed their performance with academic staff. Engagement with academics on discussing academic performance grows as the year of study progresses (YR1 7%, YRF 17%, PGT 21%) and again this may also be related to large class sizes and staff:student ratios.

A number of schools reported actions arising from the 2016/17 ISSE report. The School of Psychology has put in place opportunities for PG students to present their work to the School academics and students and to receive feedback, in order to encourage the development of clear and effective speaking skills. In the School of Social Work and Social Policy, a review of the curriculum and policies is underway in the categories in which the School performed below the University mean in order to improve the scores in future years.

Postgraduate Research Survey:

The Postgraduate Research (PGR) survey was introduced in 2015/16 as an enhancement initiative to address an information gap identified in the 2013/14 Annual Faculty Quality Report (AFQR). It targets Masters (M.Sc. and M.Litt.) and Doctoral (Professional Doctorate and Structured PhD) research

students across the three faculties with questions concerning (i) funding, (ii) professional and skills development, (iii) experience of the postgraduate research programme and (iv) overall satisfaction.

In 2016/17, 394 students responded to the survey, a response rate of 26%, which was identical to 2015/16. The majority of the respondents at institutional level were doctoral students (362, 92%) and this was mirrored at Faculty level, with response rates of 89%, 94% and 94% recorded for doctoral students in the faculties of HS, AHSS and EMS respectively.

The key findings of the 2016/17 postgraduate research survey revealed that participation by students in courses to improve their teaching and learning practice (Graduate Teaching Assistants) are relatively low overall (40%) but had increased from a low of 30% in 2015/16. AHSS reported the highest level of engagement (55%) in courses to improve teaching and learning practice, compared with FEMS and HS (31% each). It was noted, however, that opportunities to engage in teaching and demonstrating are higher in FEMS (76%) and HS (60%) than in AHSS (49%).

With respect to the variety of modules available in the structured PhD Programme, the findings suggested that students have a low level of awareness of courses available to them and in particular of modules that are run outside the Discipline – School – Faculty structure. A survey question on the usefulness of taught modules found that 66% of AHSS, 56% of HS and 48% of FEMS PGR respondents found the taught modules useful. The role of supervisors in raising awareness amongst their students of the modules available in the Structured PhD is an important factor in addressing this. Skills attainment in Innovation and Entrepreneurship in terms of the opportunity to develop and apply skills during their research programme received the lowest score in 2016/17 at institutional level. The College has an Innovation and Entrepreneurship Strategy and offers a joint Certificate in Innovation and Entrepreneurship within which students can avail of modules at no cost. A review of the Joint Certificate in Innovation & Entrepreneurship programme undertaken in October 2017 found that the graduate disciplines highly value the programme, but that more effort needs to be put into publicising it.

Schools in all faculties reported taking action in response to the survey results. In the School of Medicine, the Director of Teaching and Learning Postgraduate is investigating the provision of statistics training for credit in response to a request from postgraduate students and has written to all new PhD students to clarify what credits they are required to take. In the School of Pharmacy and Pharmaceutical Sciences, efforts have been made to improve the engagement level between PGR students and the School. A Faculty Strategic Planning day scheduled for April 2018 will focus on postgraduate offerings with a particular emphasis on streamlining, opportunities for cross-school offerings, response to market demands, key strategic appointments and infrastructural requirements to support PGT and PGR.

In the Schools of Physics, Genetics & Microbiology and Linguistics, Speech and Communication Sciences, handbooks have been revised to provide more information to postgraduate students on, for example, the PhD confirmation and submission process, and the availability of taught modules. Additionally, opportunities have been sought for increased integration of postgraduate students into School life through participation in seminar programmes and other School activities. The Law School provides teaching workshops and guidelines for all PGRs involved in the teaching of its UG programmes and postgraduate research students are strongly encouraged to apply for CAPSL training courses.

With regard to funding for postgraduate students, the School of Chemistry reported that it is paying its postgraduate demonstrators from School reserves and that while the direct input of postgraduate demonstrators in the lab sessions enhances the undergraduate student experience, the use of school

reserves in this way is unsustainable. Discussion of potential new possible sources for funding for Law PhDs is underway and staff are encouraged to apply for new Provost's Scholarship Project Awards and other IRC and European research funding which will fund PhDs.

Benchmarking:

The Faculty reports for AHSS and HS provided information on benchmarking. In HS, the Schools of Medicine and Dental Science referred to the benchmarking process that is undertaken by their respective professional bodies (the Irish Medical Council and the Dental Council) as part of the accreditation process. The School of Nursing referred to the benchmarking exercise that is undertaken as part of the QS rankings, noting that it is the only School of Nursing & Midwifery in Ireland in the top 50, at 36th place in the 2017 subject rankings.

Business Schools are among the most externally benchmarked and ranked in the world, with a range of publically published international rankings issued each year. Given its location and resources, the Trinity Business School and its various programmes are highly ranked. The School of Linguistic, Speech and Communication Sciences reported that there is no other school within Ireland that combines the diverse disciplines of the School and only one comparable school of which they are aware in Europe. They note that 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 their peers, but at a School level it is difficult to find relevant comparators. The School of Psychology reports that it does not have an overall benchmark against 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 and the External Examiners generally compare the School PG courses very favourably to comparable courses of which they have experience.

Collaborative and Transnational Provision:

The Faculty of EMS reported three collaborative or transnational education arrangements with partner institutions – BAI Engineering and Computer Science articulation agreement with Thapar University (India), BAI Engineering Double Diploma Award with National des Sciences Appliquees (INSA) de Lyon (France) and the joint Masters in Development Practice with UCD.

The Faculty of AHSS reported that an operational framework and four proposals for Dual Degrees with Columbia University have been approved, with entry to commence in September 2018.

Table 1: Faculty performance at a glance 2016/17

	Faculty	Health Science	Arts, Humanities, Social Sciences	Engineering, Maths and Science
1	No. of **UG** Modules taught	393	1000+	596
	No. and % of UG Modules evaluated	393 (100%)	900+ (90%)	582 (97%)
2	No. of **PG** courses/ programmes taught	42	68	24
	No. and % of PG courses/programmes evaluated by Faculty Office/School	42 (100%)	68 (100%)	20 (83%)
3	No. of Programmes Externally Examined	UG 51 PGT 35 *	UG 65 PGT 77	UG 34 PGT 25
	No. and % of External Examiner reports returned[1]	UG 46 (73%) PGT 31 (88%)*	UG 50 (77%) PGT 71 (92%)	UG 31 (91%) PGT 20 (80%)
4	Name of Accreditation Bodies and no. of programmes they accredited in 2016/17	• Dental Council (3) • Association of Occupational Therapists of Ireland (AOTI) (1) • CORU (1) • Nursing & Midwifery Board of Ireland (NMBI) (4 pending) • Pharmaceutical Society of Ireland (PSI) (1)	Behaviour Analyst Certification Board (1) CORU (1) Irish Association of Speech and Language Therapists (IASLT) (1)	Engineers Ireland (8)
5	Quality Reviews in 2016/17	• School of Pharmacy & Pharmaceutical Science • School of Dental Science	• Confederal School of Religions, Peace Studies & Theology, • School of Histories and Humanities • Law Programmes • Trinity Long Room Hub	None

* Updated April 2018

---

[1] External examination of HS programmes occurs at each cohort level in order to satisfy Professional Statutory Body requirements. Therefore there is a many:1 and 1:many relationship between external examiner reports, taught programmes and strands within programmes..

Faculty	Health Science	Arts, Humanities, Social Sciences	Engineering, Maths and Science
Quality Review Follow-up at Quality Committee in 2016/17	• Implementation Plan for the School of Pharmacy & Pharmaceutical Science • Implementation Plan for the B.Sc. Human Nutrition & Dietetics	• Implementation Plan for the School of English • Implementation Plan for the Masters in Theology (M.Th.)	• Implementation Plan for TCIN • Implementation Plan for the School of Computer Science and Statistics • Progress Report for the School of Chemistry
6 New entrant progression[2] *Total new entrants= 2757*	641 students of 675 (95%) progressed *	813 students of 904 (90%) progressed	684 students of 758 (90%) progressed*
New entrant repeats	3 students (0.5%) repeated	15 students (2%) repeated	22 students (3%) repeated
New entrant transfers	3 students (0.5%) transferred	51 students (6%) transferred	22 students (3%) transferred
New entrant retention[3]	647 students (96%) retained	879 students (98%) retained	728 students (96%) retained
7 Irish Survey of Student Engagement (ISSE) *Total respondents = 2047*	362 respondents – 18% of College total (175 YR1, 118 YRF and 69 PGT)	1076 respondents -52% of College total (399 YR1, 311 YRF and 366 PGT)	609 respondents -30% of College total (346 YR1, 179 YRF and 84 PGT)
8 PG Research Survey 2016/17 *Total respondents = 392*	85 respondents (22%) *76 Doctorate (89%), 9 Masters (11%)*	172 respondents (44%) *161 Doctorate (94%), 11 Masters (6%)*	135 respondents (34%) *127 Doctorate (94%), 8 Masters (6%)*

* Updated April 2018

---

[2] Progression is defined as the number of students who progress from first to second year within the same course.

[3] Retention is defined as the number of students who are retained in College i.e. either progress from first to second year in the same course, repeat the year in the same course or transfer to another course within College.

Fig 1: No. and % UG modules evaluated
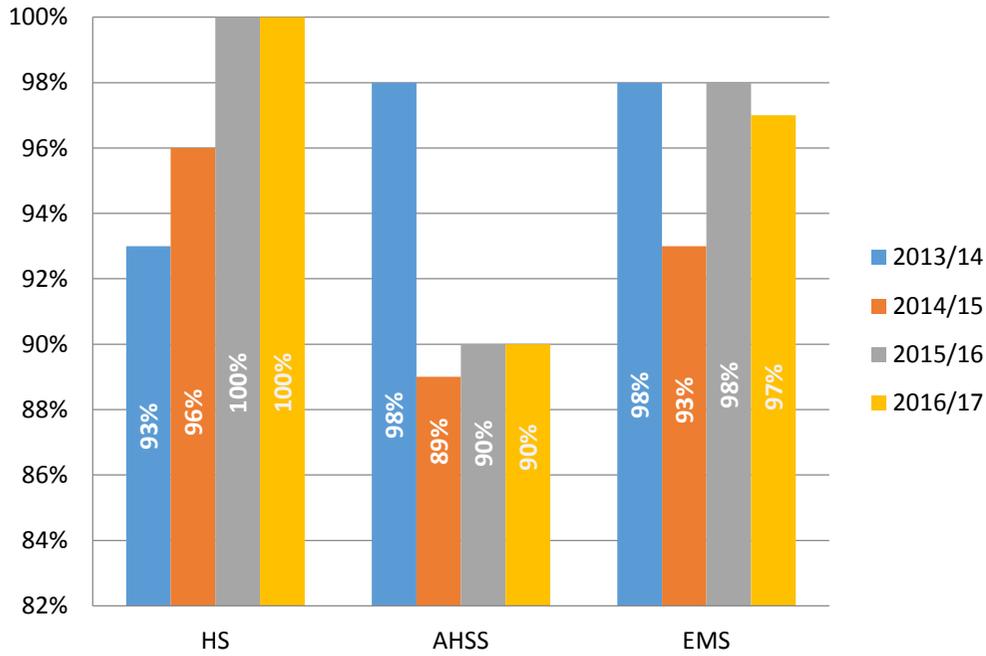
	HS	AHSS	EMS
2013/14	337, 93%	1091, 98%	655, 98%
2014/15	379, 96%	832, 89%	497, 93%
2015/16	402, 100%	900, 90%	570, 98%
2016/17	393, 100%	900, 90%	582, 97%

Fig 2: No. and % PG programmes evaluated
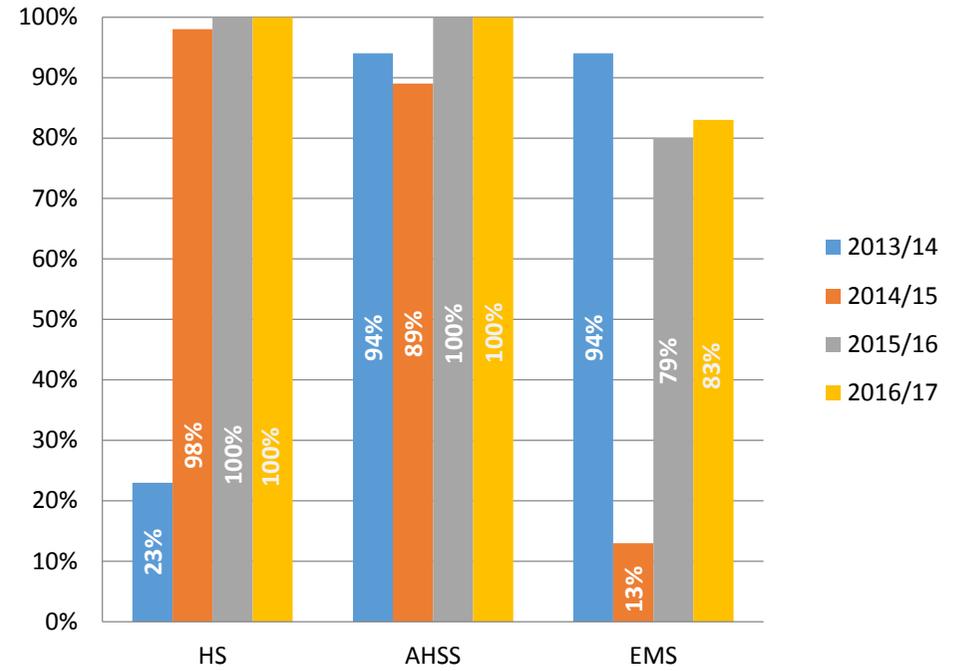
	HS	AHSS	EMS
2013/14	103, 23%	400, 94%	214, 94%
2014/15	40, 98%	55, 89%	3, 13%
2015/16	46, 100%	68, 100%	19, 79%
2016/17	42, 100%	68, 100%	20, 83%

Fig 3: % UG External Examiner Reports Returned
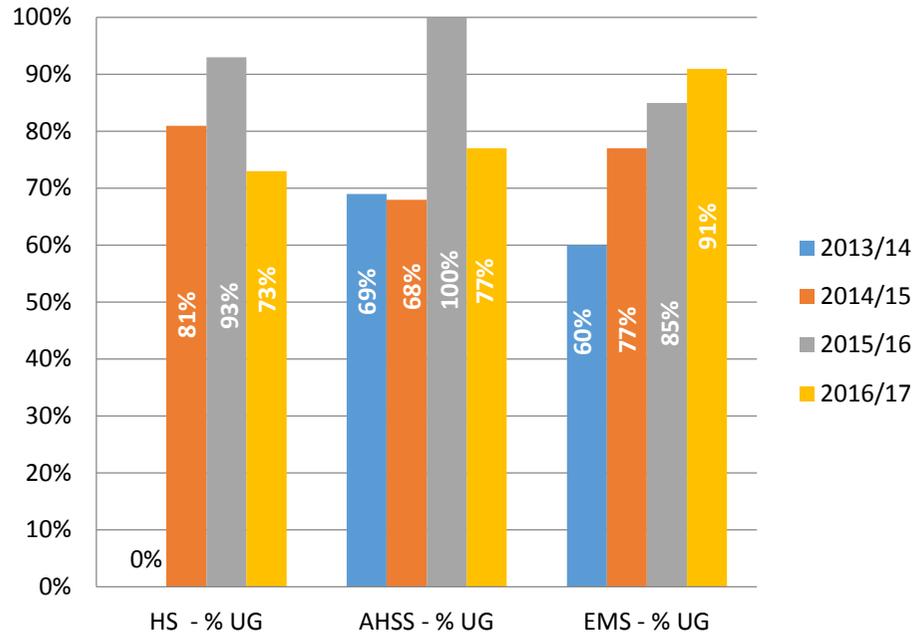
Fig 4: % PGT External Examiner Reports Returned
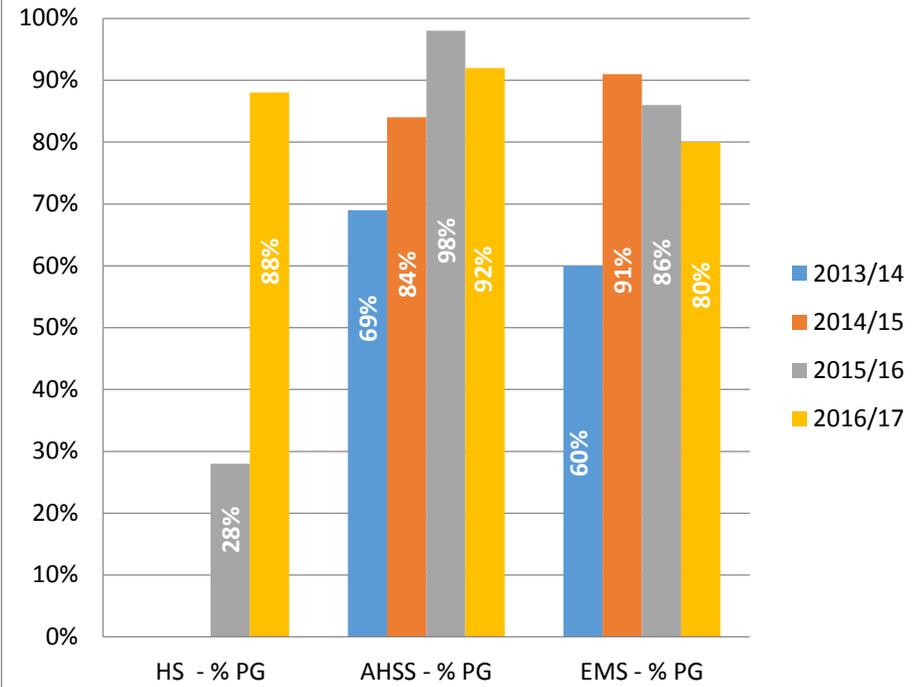
	HS	AHSS	EMS
2013/14	N/A	69%	60%
2014/15	81%	68%	77%
2015/16	93%	100%	85%
2016/17	73%	77%	91%

	HS	AHSS	EMS
2013/14	N/A	69%	60%
2014/15	N/A	84%	91%
2015/16	28%	98%	86%
2016/17	88%	92%	80%

Fig 5: No. of ISSE survey respondents
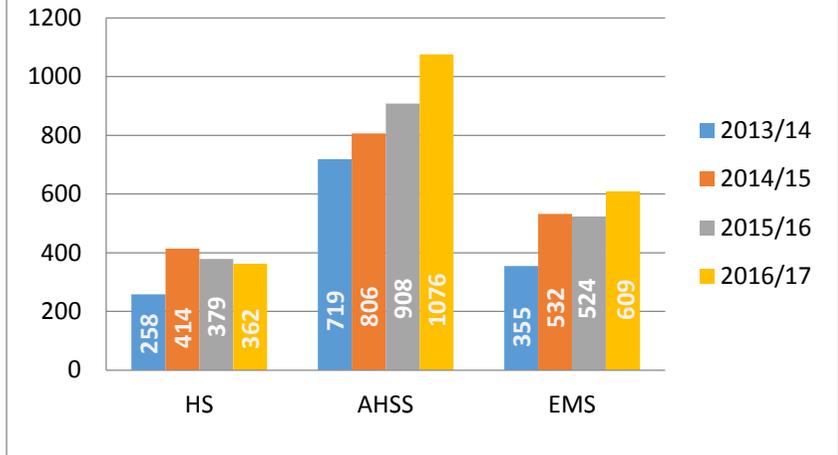
	HS	AHSS	EMS
2013/14	258	719	355
2014/15	414	806	532
2015/16	379	908	524
2016/17	362	1076	609

Fig 6: No. of PGR survey respondents
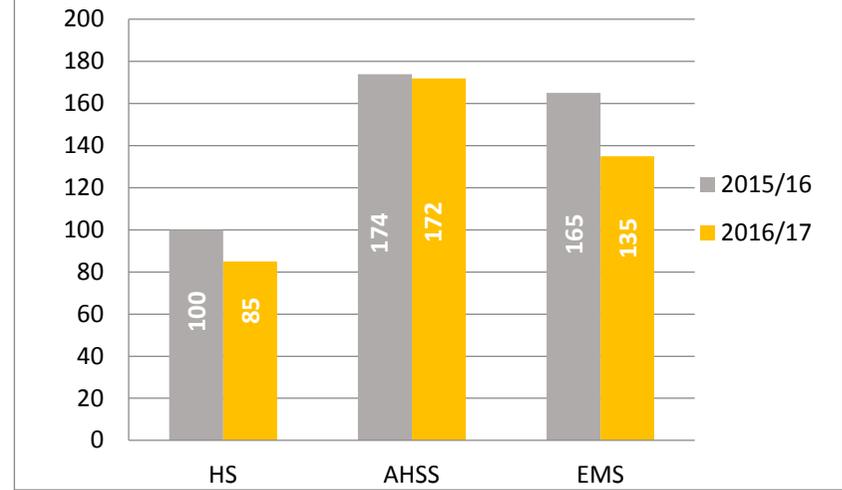
	HS	AHSS	EMS
2015/16	100, 22%	174, 42%	165, 37%
2016/17	85, 22%	172, 44%	135, 34%

4. Issues identified by the faculties to be escalated to College level

4.1 Teaching & Learning Environment

Space issues have been a recurrent feature in quality reviews and student evaluations in recent years and the lack of fit-for-purpose teaching and learning spaces was highlighted as an escalation issue in all three Faculty reports in 2016/17.

In the Faculty of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences (AHSS) the poor quality of teaching spaces in the Arts Building, including concerns about the seating capacity of some rooms, was highlighted as an issue again this year, along with the lack of suitable facilities for Law and Creative Arts students. In the summer of 2018, the Arts Building Refresh Project will begin and it is hoped that this project, along with improvements in teaching facilities arising from the Estates Strategy, will address some of the issues regarding space in the Arts Building. The School of Law has recently renovated space for the sole use of postgraduate research students and improvements to studio spaces have been undertaken in Creative Arts.

The unsuitability of Goldsmith Hall as a lecture venue was raised in quality reviews and student evaluations in the Faculty of EMS. The School of Biochemistry & Immunology reported pressure to continue to deliver its current course offerings, given the size of the rooms designated for teaching, and the limited availability of Category II space for cell cultures in the School and in the Trinity Biomedical Science Institute (TBSI) was raised by the Immunology External Examiner in 2016/17. Space is also a problem for students taking project work in Biomedical Engineering.

The lack of social and breakout spaces (e.g. canteen facilities) for undergraduate medical students in the Trinity Biomedical Sciences Institute (TBSI) was highlighted by the Faculty of HS, and the issue has been raised with both the Head of School and the building management. Securing suitable space on hospital campuses was an issue for Obstetrics and Gynaecology students based in the Coombe and Tallaght hospitals in 2016/17, and the quality and size of teaching spaces in the School of Nursing & Midwifery in D'Olier St. was highlighted once again this year. Issues with overcrowding in the School of Pharmacy & Pharmaceutical Sciences were also reported. Access to adequately-sized teaching spaces on the main campus for the School of Nursing & Midwifery will be essential to facilitate the implementation of the new undergraduate Nursing curriculum in 2018/19. A proposed fixed timetable in TEP will facilitate the release of larger teaching spaces and the scheduling of some lectures on the main campus. It is hoped that this will address the issues of overcrowding and isolation reported by students in the School of Nursing & Midwifery. In the meantime, the Faculty has invested in enhancing student spaces in the School, specifically the refurbishment of the foyer in D'Olier St., the new parent and infant room and the new Clinical Simulation Centre at St James Hospital. In the School of Medicine, some work has been undertaken at the Tallaght and Coombe Hospital sites to provide additional space for Obstetrics and Gynaecology students and to consolidate existing space into one location.

The space issues that have been repeatedly highlighted in quality reviews and student evaluations have been communicated to the Bursar, who attended the Quality Committee in October 2017 to provide an update on the Estates Strategy and how it might address the issue of space. A further update to the Committee will be provided at the start of the 2018/19 academic year. In the long-term there is a concern that the quality of teaching spaces and facilities may impede the College's strategic plans to expand the number of international students and to recruit senior, world-ranked academics.

4.2 Placements

The provision of suitable off-campus learning opportunities though placements or internships is already a key educational component for many schools whose programmes are accredited by a professional or statutory body, or where student placements are historical or voluntary in nature. Increased opportunities for experiential learning through internships and student mobility are planned as part of the Trinity Education Project (TEP) and will require effective co-ordination and oversight to ensure that the quality of student education and learning is maintained. Since the publication in 2016 of the QQI Core Statutory Quality Assurance Guidelines, the University is required to evaluate the quality of any off-campus learning environments/placements and the College's procedures for academic quality reviews (schools, programmes) have been updated to reflect this, and now include a placement checklist.

The difficulty in securing student placements was highlighted in both the AHSS and HS Faculty reports for 2016/17. In AHSS, the School of Education reported that there is no co-ordinated school placement programme in place for trainee teachers, which leads to difficulty for students in securing teaching placements and inequity in terms of what is provided across the sector. These ongoing difficulties have been communicated to the Teaching Council and to the Department of Education and Skills (DES), and a Steering Group on Teacher Supply has been established to address the issue. The School of Education reported that it continues to work on promoting positive partnerships with schools providing placements.

The School of Psychology outlined ongoing difficulty in obtaining clarity from the Health Service Executive (HSE) as to the definition of and access to 'approved' placements for its postgraduate students, and efforts by the Course Director, Head of School and Dean of Graduate Studies are on-going in this regard.

In the School of Medicine, difficulties securing placements in acute hospital settings for students on the B.Sc. Human Nutrition and Dietetics resulted in only half of the final year students being placed in September 2017, with the second cohort securing placements in January 2018. Access to appropriate clinical placements was also reported to be an issue for students on the 5-year integrated Pharmacy programme. A number of additional clinical sites have been secured over the past year to address this issue and Memorandums of Understanding (MOUs) have been signed with key clinical partners. It is anticipated that there will be further potential to expand clinical sites under the new Dublin Hospital Group structure.

In the School of Clinical Speech and Language Studies, both accreditation bodies associated with the B.Sc. in Clin. Lang. (IALT and CORU) expressed a desire for a formal quality assurance process relating to clinical placement sites. This is a sectoral 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.

4.3 Library

A number of issues regarding Library resources and access arose in the Faculty reports for AHSS and HS. In AHSS, Library opening hours, student facilities, availability of core texts and inter-library loans were highlighted as issues of concern which primarily arose from the quality review of the School of Histories and Humanities (March 2017). In HS, borrowing rights for postgraduate certificate students arose from student evaluations in the School of Medicine.

The Library continues to work to address issues around access and resources for students. 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 and the Dean of FEMS is spear-heading an initiative to improve student spaces in the Hamilton Library.

With regard to eLegal Deposit (eLD) and the resulting issues around access to online resources, the Library has introduced additional terminals in the 1937 Reading Room for postgraduate students and is expanding the number of terminals within the Library on which e-legal deposit material can be accessed. 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.

An online 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. The issue of borrowing rights for Postgraduate Certificate students has also been escalated to the Library & Information Policy Committee.

4.4 Staffing and resources

Staffing was raised as an issue of concern across all three faculties. In Health Sciences, the requirement for additional administrative and clinical staff was raised by External Examiners in the School of Medicine in relation to Obstetrics and Gynaecology, Radiation Therapy and Human Health and Disease. In AHSS, staff shortages in Clinical Speech and Language Studies and Psychology were highlighted by External Examiners and in the School of Social Sciences and Philosophy, the high staff:student ratios were highlighted by the Quality Review of the BESS programme as unsustainable. The accreditation bodies for Occupational Therapy (Association of Occupational Therapists of Ireland (AOTI)) and Pharmacy & Pharmaceutical Sciences (Pharmaceutical Society of Ireland) noted that existing staff:student ratios on the undergraduate programmes do not meet the accreditation requirements. In the School of Genetics and Microbiology, the lack of sufficient numbers of staff to supervise undergraduate projects and provide teaching on the School's undergraduate programmes was highlighted as an issue of concern.

The School of Pharmacy and Pharmaceutical Sciences is working towards recruitment of staff to achieve the desired staff student ration of 1:23. In Occupational Therapy, new staff have been appointed and the intake of students onto the UG programme has been capped at 40 to ensure compliance with the requirements of the AOTI. In the School of Psychology, a number of considerations are under review to address the staffing issue including a cap on numbers and a request for additional staff.

Other resourcing issues highlighted for escalation include (i) the quality of equipment for postgraduate teaching and research projects in the School of Pharmacy & Pharmaceutical Sciences which was highlighted by students as being inadequate and inconsistent with fees paid, (ii) difficulty in providing timely feedback to large cohorts of students due to limited resources in the schools of Creative Arts and Law and (iii) large tutorial classes or too few tutorial classes in the School of Social Sciences and Philosophy.

4.5 Systems

A number of systems issues were raised in the 2016/17 Faculty reports. The requirement for an automated system which would allow students to select appropriate modules in SITS according to their degree pathways and pre-requisites, and to register for them online was raised by AHSS. In the School of Nursing & Midwifery, the difficulty experienced by postgraduate students in applying and registering for courses via SITS was also highlighted. An additional systems issue highlighted by the School was the constraints within Academic Registry that lead to delays in responding to HSE tenders. The facility for students to select and register for modules online is important in creating a good impression of the College, and is a key deliverable of fixed timetabling in TEP. In the meantime the School has worked with individual students to try to address their problems and where possible have expedited their progress through communications with Academic Registry. An Academic Registry project is currently underway to outline the roadmap for implementation of the new academic year structure, and it is hoped that information provision for tenders will improve as a result.

In the School of Psychology, the requirement for online students to pay the sports centre charge, the inability of non-EU online students to pay fees in two instalments and the fact that current standard offer letters cannot be tailored for online students were highlighted as escalation issues. The application of the Sports Centre charge to online 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. In relation to Non-EU online 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 in the process of being implemented. Offer letters are currently tailored by Academic Registry to four student categories - UG, PG, EU and Non-EU. The facility to tailor letters for online students is not currently available.

4.6 Recruitment

In FEMS, a number of issues regarding student recruitment were raised. The need for a coherent approach to student recruitment and marketing across the Faculty was outlined and consideration given to web presence and digital marketing. The Science Course website is a current focus and the revamp of schools websites is ongoing. The Faculty would welcome College-wide initiatives to track diversity at the application stage in order that proactive initiatives to expand recruitment into under-represented countries can be developed.

4.7 Other

The School of Law highlighted the lack of a system of anonymous marking as an issue of concern. The policy relating to anonymous marking is outlined on the Academic Registry website under information for examinations and assessment. However it is not immediately discernible as policy as it is not documented in a policy format.

The Faculty of EMS requested that the timing of the Annual Faculty Quality report (AFQR) and supporting reports (e.g. ISSE) should be reviewed so that all background data corresponds to the same reporting year. This will be addressed for the 2017/18 reports.

The School of Education raised concerns regarding delays in students receiving Garda-vetting. Ongoing communication with relevant school management bodies, the Academic Registry and the Teaching Council (TC) continues to address this issue.

5. Key Enhancements/best practice

5.1 Faculty of Health Sciences

In 2016/17 the expansion of the Faculty of Health Sciences' inter-professional learning initiative has seen students in all four schools working together on complex cases, learning in and emulating the real working environment of health care professionals. Inter-professional learning workshops, attended by over 400 students from seven schools across the Faculty, were successfully run in October and November 2017 and the virtual learning environment supported face-to-face workshops with online group discussion forums.

In October 2017, the first primer inter-professional learning case study took place with students from pharmacy and physiotherapy. This session, attended by over 100 students, was designed as a topic-focused activity on the management of a patient and included practical demonstrations and case study discussion. Similar events are in development with dental sciences, pharmacy, dental hygiene, clinical speech and language studies and radiation therapy, and will be implemented in Hilary Term 2018 and in the academic year 2018/2019.

In March 2018, the first iteration of an inter-professional learning ward was piloted at St James's Hospital involving students each nursing, physiotherapy, occupational therapy and medicine. The inter-professional learning ward is the first formal clinical activity in the inter-professional learning programme and the hoped is that it will provide the foundations for expanding the inter-professional learning opportunities available to students on clinical placement.

In 2016/17, the Faculty successfully launched the 'Dean's Award in Teaching and Practice' to recognise the contribution of professionals who do not hold appointments with Trinity but contribute to excellence in teaching of its undergraduate and postgraduate students. The 'Dean's Award for Innovation in Teaching' was launched in 2015 and in 2016 an award recipient developed a teaching initiative "Videos in Microbiology (VIM)" which is currently being used by several lecturers teaching 300 students in Medicine, Human Health and Disease, Pharmacy, and Dentistry. In addition, FEMS as part of the TEP necessitated restructuring of Science, and the introduction of the new programme TR060, will use the resource from 18/19. It is envisaged that seven hundred students in Trinity will use this resource by the year 2019.

The 'Dean's Research Initiatives Fund', established in 2016, competitively awards investigators with seed funding that provides the pilot data and other foundations necessary to later secure extramural funding for cutting edge, innovative and transformative research. It aims to advance the research priorities of Trinity College's Strategic Plan 2014-2019, raise the national and international profile of the University and increase receipt of Horizon 2020 and HRB awards, as well as other funding.

In 2016/17, the School of Nursing & Midwifery undergraduate curriculum underwent an extensive review to respond to the Nursing & Midwifery Board of Ireland (NMBI) new standards and requirements, which take effect in Ireland from September 2018. The revised curriculum was approved by University Council in January 2018 and submitted for validation to NMBI in February 2018.

In the School of Pharmacy and Pharmaceutical Sciences, the new five-year fully integrated Master of Pharmacy degree was accredited in 2017 by the Pharmaceutical Society of Ireland (PSI) for three years until June 2020.

In 2018, the Faculty appointed a strategic post to secure the Bronze Athena Swan Award by November 2018, and a Faculty Athena Swan team is now in place.

While subject rankings at Trinity declined overall in 2016, the School of Nursing and Midwifery was one of a small number of subjects ranked in the top 50, increasing to 25th in the 2018 QS subject rankings.

5.2 Faculty of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences (AHSS)

A number of schools introduced mid-module evaluations and staff-student liaison committees in response to the module evaluation project conducted by the Academic Secretary and the Education Officer of the Student's Union. Changes have been made in response to undergraduate feedback, which also tie in with the new TEP curriculum e.g. increased use of continuous assessment and the use of alternative assessment methods.

Schools continue to introduce innovative teaching methods and the Trinity Business School is creating an ethics stream to be run in every year of the BBS degree in order to instil ethical awareness and expertise in business graduates. In relation to postgraduate evaluations, the PG Certificate in 21st Century Teaching & Learning, which is run by the School of Education as part of its Continuous Professional Development programme, employed in-class online student surveys which are completed at the end of each module via students' smart devices (smartphones, laptops, tablets). The School of Languages, Literatures and Cultural Studies 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.

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 and all schools have been asked to appoint Athena Swan Champion(s).

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.

The Faculty, in conjunction with the other two faculties, purchased a one-year site licence for Turning Point ResponseWare technology. This gives all lecturers in Trinity 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 and five training sessions 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 to assess its usefulness.

5.3 Faculty of Engineering, Mathematics & Science (EMS)

A key achievement in the Faculty in 2016/17 was the successfully revision of the undergraduate Science course (TR071) into four new entry streams resulting from the work of the Undergraduate Science Education Working Group and the requirements of the Trinity Education Project – the first intake of students will commence in September 2018. Undergraduate student recruitment to the Science course remained steady in 2016/17 despite an overall reduction in intake to undergraduate courses across College. There was also an increase in the number of international students recruited to the new Science course which resulted from a joint initiative with Global Relations (GR) to grow the number of students from the US.

The non-science schools in the Faculty are also well along the path of integrating TEP principals into their existing courses and programmes. The challenge for schools with professionally accredited courses is to maintain the requirements of the external bodies while simultaneously providing scope to incorporate TEP principles.

The Faculty has revised its approach to student recruitment and marketing in anticipation of the expected increase in student demand for Engineering and ICT places associated with the E3 proposal. The FEMS Global Strategy Group (GSG) was established to co-ordination non-EU recruitment with the Global Office. Meeting monthly, key Global Office personnel give timely updates on partnerships, student mobility, NEU applications and international recruitment drives. This allows FEMS the opportunity to feed into these strategic approaches. All schools have appointed a Global Champion, who acts as a first-contact point between Global and staff on the ground. With the aid of an external consultant, FEMS has conducted an extensive analysis of its course offerings, websites have been updated and extraneous materials removed, and a Global Officer for Life- and Bio-Sciences is currently in recruitment.

Within the schools of Engineering and Computer Science and Statistics, a major achievement during the year was the accreditation of the Computer Science and Computer Engineering programmes by Engineers Ireland. Accreditation of the MAI and BAI was achieved for the first time. The Faculty aims to achieve Athena Swan awards in five of its eight schools in the next 18 months. The majority of schools have now appointed an Athena Swan champion to lead this push towards accreditation.

Following pilot projects in the schools of Chemistry and Computer Science and Statistics, all FEMS schools have begun the process of establishing a School Risk Register. The Office of the COO has been providing resources to help the schools in the initial phases.

In 2016-17 an additional 32 members of FEMS staff enrolled on the TuringPoint project led-out by the AHSS Faculty Administrator. Feedback from students is extremely favourable, and the new App approach is efficient and economical. This project fits nicely with the TEP approach, and it is to be hoped additional staff members partake in future

The School of Chemistry engaged with its students in a number of ways in 2016/17 to improve the quality of the student experience. Alternative methods of undergraduate module evaluation were considered to better align with the changes brought about by the Trinity Education Project including the possibility of evaluating supplemental examinations solely by MCQ and using *viva voce* for some Sophister modules. The School supported Chemistry students who were participating in the new

Students' Union Academic Senate, and developed a Sophister Liaison Committee within the School as a vehicle for encouraging dialogue with and feedback from undergraduate students.

The School of Physics was involved in a number of notable initiatives in 2016/17to promote Physics to potential students and the wider public. The Trinity Walton Club, led by the School of Physics in collaboration with the School of Mathematics, continued its successful delivery of physics, mathematics, electronics and computers to secondary school students with over 500 students taking part in the programme in the School in 2016/17. In the summer of 2017 a residential component to the programme was introduced to attract a greater number of non-EU students.

The School was the second physics department in Ireland to be awarded the Institute of Physics 'Juno Practitioner' status and was one of the first three schools in College to be awarded Athena SWAN Bronze. The School commissioned a large-scale radio frequency telescope LOFAR in Ireland, the winner of the SFI National Award in 2017. This is the first large telescope built in Ireland in over 150 years.

The accreditation panel for the School of Engineering recommended that the School appoint an Internship Officer who would oversee all aspects of the School's Internship programmes and act as the liaison person with industry. The position has been included in the E3 Business Plan and the appointment will be filled in September 2018.

External Examiners in the School of Chemistry identified the lack of gender balance in the External Examiner panel and in the cohort of students chosen by Examiners to provide feedback on the student experience as an issue of concern. The School has addressed these issues by aiming to achieve a 3/6 female representation in External Examiner panels and by making gender balance a criterion in the nomination process. Additionally, wherever possible, a gender balance will be sought in the cohort of students that meet with Examiners.