



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

**Review of the
Trinity College
Law Programmes**

24 - 26 January 2017

External Reviewers:

Prof. Trevor C.W. Farrow, Osgoode Hall Law School;

Prof. John Jackson, University of Nottingham;

Prof. Dr. Christa Tobler, Europa Institute of the University of Leiden
and Institute for European Global Studies, Basel.

Table of Contents

1.	Reviewers' Report	1
2.	Responses provided by the Law School	33
3.	Response from the Dean of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences	44

**TRINITY COLLEGE DUBLIN
SCHOOL OF LAW PROGRAMMES QUALITY REVIEW**

REPORT OF THE EXTERNAL REVIEWERS

Prof. Trevor C.W. Farrow, PhD., Osgoode Hall Law School (Canada)

**Prof. John Jackson, LLM (Wales), School of Law, University of Nottingham
(UK)**

**Prof. Dr. Christa Tobler, LLM (Leiden), Europa Institute of the University of
Leiden (the Netherlands) and Institute for European Global Studies, Basel
(Switzerland)**

7 MARCH 2017

1. Introduction

a) Overview

This report, written in our capacity as external reviewers, is part of a programmes quality review undertaken by the Trinity College Dublin (“Trinity” or the “College”) School of Law (the “School” or “School of Law”) during the academic year 2016/2017. The report contains our findings as well as a number of recommendations that we make for consideration by the College and the School.

This report is divided as follows: in this introductory part (section 1), the report first describes the scope and purpose of the review as set out in the Terms of Reference (“ToR”) and it explains the method of review. Thereafter, we set out what we consider to be important elements in terms of the general background and context against which our more specific considerations should be viewed. The following sections of the report then deal with the current programmes and future directions in undergraduate teaching (section 2), postgraduate teaching (section 3), postgraduate research (section 4) and with teaching and learning more generally at the School of Law (both of which apply to varying degrees across all aspects of the programmes on offer) (section 5). A conclusion is then provided at the end of the report (section 6), followed by a summary of our recommendations (section 7).

b) Scope, Purpose and Method of Review

According to the ToR, the scope of the present review includes, and is limited to, the review of the quality of Trinity’s School of Law Teaching and Research Programmes, both undergraduate and postgraduate. In the framework of this mandate, the focus is, therefore, specifically on the Law Programmes. As such, the scope of the present

review differs somewhat from that carried out in 2008/2009, which was a more holistic review of the School of Law as a whole.

The general purpose of this review, as far as the external reviewers are concerned, is to provide constructive commentary and feedback on the existing Law Programmes as well as on the strategic directions of these programmes in the context of the School and College strategies as well as of external developments related to the School, legal scholarship and the legal profession more generally.

The ToR also lists a number of specific aims or purposes of the review. With respect to the existing programmes, these are to review and provide commentary on the following aspects:

- How the School of Law's existing programmes conform to international best practices and respond to global trends in legal education;
- The appropriateness of the rules for supervision and submission of LLM theses; and
- The appropriateness of the Law and Language programmes as currently designed.

With respect to future developments, the ToR lists the following issues:

- The implications of the Trinity Education Project (TEP) for the undergraduate law programmes;
- The School of Law's Strategic Plan 2015-2020, with particular reference to the impact of the development of postgraduate educational opportunities in the School on the future direction of legal education in the School; and
- How international recruitment of postgraduate taught students can be increased.

In support of the ToR, the Head of School provided us with further questions ("Quality Review of Law School Educational Programmes: Issues"). This one-page issues sheet essentially tracks the core issues set out in the ToR, with the additional question about the pedagogical case for a new School building. While we are specifically guided by the ToR in this report, we do also provide some comments regarding facilities and the potential for a new building.

In order to better understand and address all of these issues, we were provided with extensive and helpful written documentation on both the quality review procedure and the School (organisation, current programmes, previous review, plans for the future – including the documentation mentioned in Appendix A). With respect to the School, these documents included in particular the Report of the External Reviewers as written in the framework of the Law School Review 2008/2009 and the School of Law Educational Programmes Quality Review Self-Assessment Report ("SAR"), with very extensive appendices providing information on all aspects related to the Law Programmes.

We studied the core of these documents before holding a telephone conference on 9 January 2017, intended to confirm the process and clarify any questions in advance of

the on-site visit that took place on 24-26 January 2017. During the on-site visit, we were given additional documentation, and we held meetings with staff (both administrative and academic), students, a number of co-curricular programme representatives, and some external community stakeholders (involved in the clinical education programme). We also visited several different locations in the College that are relevant for the School in order to get an immediate impression of the facilities offered to both students and staff.

The various sources of information formed an essential basis for our reflections and deliberations and, eventually, for the writing of this report. We wish to express our gratitude to our hosts for having made our visit and work particularly agreeable. Everything was organised in an excellent manner and we were taken care of in a friendly, caring and professional manner that we highly appreciated. The administrative staff, students and faculty at the College and the School of Law should be highly commended for their excellent work in support of this review.

c) General Context/Background

i. World Class University and Law School

The School of Law, situated in an internationally leading university, is a world class institution – consistently ranking in the top 100 law schools in the world. Founded in 1740, within one of the oldest universities in Europe, the School is clearly proud of the many long-standing traditions that have made it such a leading success (see e.g. Trinity, School of Law, Undergraduate Programmes in Law; the SAR). During this review, the reviewers have been conscious of the importance of history and tradition, which often have important influences on why students choose to come to the School.

ii. Modern Law School

Although conscious of history and tradition, modern law schools must be attentive to the realities of new generations of students and the current landscape of legal practice. With rising tuition, globalised classrooms, increased pressures in terms of employment prospects, the need for innovation, etc., students are demanding a high degree of performance and service. Students have become active participants in their learning environments and are seeking sustained opportunities for critical engagement and professional and ethical development and reflection. Opportunities to build experiential education into the core curriculum are increasingly being pursued, as part of best pedagogical practices that combine recurring opportunities to engage in theory, practice and reflection. The role of technology has dramatically changed how legal education can be delivered (both within and beyond the classroom). Further, given the diversity of career paths that are potentially available (and which will further develop over the coming years), students are no longer only looking to train to become lawyers. Of course, many (if not most) still are, and as such, the School of Law must be able to offer an adequate grounding in the requisite modules to allow students to pursue a career in the practice of law. However, an attention to multi-disciplinarity is increasingly important (particularly at the undergraduate level of a liberal education) (see e.g. the Strategic Plans of the College and the School). Finally, the roles of legal professionals and the practice of law are rapidly changing,

particularly in light of globalisation and the many access to justice challenges that face most levels of society. While many sectors of the economy have leapt forward in recent decades, the practice of law has comparatively not kept pace. To the extent that law and lawyers seek to stay relevant (which they should and must do), innovation is required at all levels of the justice system. Law schools are not immune from this discussion. If lawyers are expected to innovate and adapt to the demands of a modern globalised economy, students need to be provided with a grounding in this sort of innovative thinking from the outset. While there is still clearly a place for many of the traditional subjects and approaches, more attention – at all law schools – needs to be paid to the future of law and legal practice (see e.g. the School’s Strategic Plan; the SAR).

iii. Resource Realities – Financial, Space and Human

It is clear to the reviewers that current financial constraints on both the College and the School are real and significant, and they are not going away (if anything, they appear to be increasing) (see e.g. the Trinity Strategic Plan, as well as the financial materials that were provided to us). For the School of Law in particular, financial constraints have a direct impact on administrative staff (in terms of an increased workload involved in implementing and operating new systems), faculty (which in turn impacts the School’s capacity for teaching and supervision), co-curricular activities (which are becoming increasingly important aspects of the modern law school experience), increased costs and fees (resulting in direct financial strains on students), and facilities (which directly impacts the amount of creativity and innovation that can be brought to the learning environment). While it was not our role to comment on financial matters, all of our comments and recommendations are made with these specific realities in mind.

iv. New Curricular Challenges and Opportunities

During our review, we became aware of new initiatives that are potentially planned for the School, including the TEP, new LLM streams, and a review of current (and potentially new) joint undergraduate programmes – the “Law and” programmes (French, German, Politics and Business, etc.) (see e.g. the School’s Strategic Plan; the SAR). With respect to all of these initiatives, we see great potential (many of which will ultimately be determined by strategic policy choices and resource allocations made by the School in line with faculty research and teaching strengths and interests, as well as student demands). However, in light of financial realities (as well as the current strains under which faculty and many programmes are already operating), very careful attention must be paid to the sustainability of all of these new initiatives as well as their impact on the delivery of other current aspects of the various law programmes. We were made acutely aware of the demands that are already placed on staff, faculty and students. Put simply, very careful and cautious attention should be paid when bringing on new programmes so as not to dilute and further strain the quality of current offerings (including the School’s capacity for excellent teaching, research and supervision).

2. Current Programmes and Future Directions: Undergraduate

a) Curriculum

i. The Core LLB

One of the strengths of the core LLB degree is the extent to which students are able to opt for a broad range of law modules in their third and fourth years after they have completed two years of study in the core legal subjects. The introduction of 10 and 5 ECTS in the third and fourth years would seem to have facilitated the introduction of new modules and the range of options on offer is impressive. In our meeting with students it was clear that students appreciate the range of choice offered to them and the quality of the teaching that is delivered. The types of modules offered appears to be in line with the trend in modern law schools which is to offer modules that both build upon the core modules that allow students to pursue a career in law and appeal to students who are not intending to pursue a career in law. We note the ambition in the School's Strategic Plan to halve the average number of students enrolled in each module in the final senior sophomore year by increasing the number of modules offered. Apart from enriching student choice, this should also increase the opportunities for students to engage in innovative teaching and learning techniques and allow for a greater emphasis on skills development. We also agree that the School's decision to differentiate the third and fourth year modules will enhance the final year student's experience by ensuring that they are challenged appropriately in line with their progression (assuming this does not add insurmountable administrative burdens on the scheduling of modules). Our only note of caution is that this should be accomplished without unduly restricting student choice. It may be difficult for all options to be offered in any given year when for whatever reason (such as sickness, research leave, secondment, etc.) an instructor offering a specialist module may not be available. *We recommend that thought be given as to how third and fourth year students who are anxious to pursue a particular module which is not offered in a particular year be facilitated by being allowed to take it a year earlier or later than they should in terms of progression.*

A strength of the programme, and this applies to the joint programmes as well, is that all modules – where possible – are delivered by academics who are active scholars in the subject (see e.g. the SAR). This applies both to the foundation modules in the first and second years and to the more specialist modules in the third and fourth years. Students clearly appreciate being taught by academics who are experts in the field. We note that the School involves its senior staff in the teaching of foundation subjects, especially in the first year, which instils in students from the beginning the view that teaching is taken very seriously in the School. One of the comments expressed in our meeting with students was that they very much appreciate being taught by professors who are experienced, knowledgeable and professional (both in terms of the subjects being taught, as well as more generally around the needs of young law students, some of whom are away from home for the first time). *We would encourage the School to maintain its policy of involving senior academic staff in the teaching of foundation subjects.* We note that in addition to lectures there are small group seminars delivered by PhD students or adjunct staff which are compulsory for first year students with four cycles of seminars per module. Clearly it is important that there is a high level of coordination between the module coordinators and the seminar teachers (this currently seems to be being achieved).

While students were generally complimentary about the quality of teaching (see e.g. the SAR), in our meeting with them there was a view that they should be provided with greater feedback, particularly on examinations and in some cases coursework essays as well. Some complained that they had little understanding of how marks were allocated and that it was left up to them to contact staff to ask about feedback after an examination. We understand from our meeting with staff that students are given plenty of opportunity in class time to learn about examination and essay writing techniques. We are very conscious of the resource implications that are involved in providing feedback and consider that the School may need to manage student expectations on feedback by better communication at the outset of their study in the School on what they can expect. Nevertheless, *we recommend that adequate feedback be provided whenever possible (ideally in formative ways that allow students to learn from the feedback and apply it in the context of subsequent moments of evaluation). We also recommend that when resources allow, consideration be given to employing (even on a part-time basis) a legal skills adviser who would be available to lead classes on examination and essay writing techniques and sessions on feedback. Further, feedback could be an ongoing subject of one of the School's teaching and learning faculty retreat sessions.*

- **Study Abroad**

One of the distinctive offerings made available to students in the core degree as well as in the joint law degrees is the opportunity for students to study abroad as part of the School's extensive exchange programme (see e.g. the SAR). The opportunity to study abroad enables students to obtain a global experience of legal education and to interact with other legal cultures in a manner that has obvious advantages for them as they prepare to engage in their future careers with a modernised globalised economy. We were told that entry into the programme is a competitive process. Each year between one quarter and one third of all students on the law, law and business and law and political science degrees undertake study abroad, which is a clear indication of the success of the programme. The fact that the year abroad counts substantially towards the degree classification means that the School needs to have systems in place for ensuring that there are suitable assessment procedures at partner institutions involved in the exchange programme. We note that the programme is not subject to quality review, although informal feedback suggests that the programme is highly beneficial to students. Given the success of the year abroad programme and the fact that so many students avail themselves of it, *we recommend that consideration be given to putting in place more formal quality review procedures in order to ensure that students continue to benefit educationally from the year abroad. Aspects of this review would include both programme content as well as programme administration (communication, evaluation, etc.).*

- **Clinical Legal Education (CLE)**

One recent innovation has been the introduction of greater experiential learning into the curriculum. The most evident illustration of this has been the launch of a Clinical Legal Education (CLE) module, although there are also opportunities for experiential learning in other modules such as Public Interest Law and there would appear to be

plans to integrate experiential learning into the planned compulsory dissertation (see below).

The CLE module began as an option for final year students in 2013 and the number of students in the module (which is dependent upon placements being provided for them) has now increased to a cohort of 35. The School has made a substantial commitment to the module – and to experiential learning more generally – by appointing a full-time faculty member in the area and the module seems to be progressing extremely well. We met with external stakeholders who provide the placements, all of whom were very pleased with the way in which students were prepared for their placements and with how the placements had worked out. We were impressed with the range of service providers – including law firms, state organisations and NGOs – and our meeting with these providers clearly demonstrated to us that they engaged the students in meaningful work which enriched their experiential experience. While a view was expressed that students would benefit from longer placements than the three weeks that are currently on offer, we recognise the resource implications of this for some service providers and the need to ensure that students are not over-burdened in terms of their academic commitments.

The success of the programme is clearly dependent upon good relationships being built up between the School and service providers and the full-time Faculty member appears to be doing an excellent job in promoting these. The providers told us that they would welcome more formal feedback from the students themselves about their experience of the placement and they liked the idea of an annual reception at which they could meet with students and staff in the School along with other providers in order to share experiences together. *We recommend that the School give consideration to CLE service providers being given more feedback on the student experience of placements and more opportunities to meet students, staff and other providers. Further, we recommend, as far as possible, expanding the opportunities for clinical and experiential education, so as to accommodate all students who would like to have these opportunities. Such increased opportunities could come through an expanded pool of partner service providers. Other opportunities could come through an increase in experiential learning opportunities being provided in connection with current and future curricular offerings (in addition to the CLE module).* (For further comments on these issues, see section 5 below.)

- **Dissertation**

At present, we were told that there is a dissertation option available to students that is taken by approximately 20 students each year. Each student is intensively supervised by a process of meetings to work up a viable project followed by the reading of drafts. One member of staff commented that the standard is in the league of a research masters. The School is now planning to introduce a compulsory module in the final year which will be taken for the first time by students who will graduate in 2019. The rationale for this, which will also be a part of the TEP, is that it will enable all students to develop their research and group work skills in an environment where they are required to work with others in producing a concentrated piece of writing. We were told about the plans that are being made for this initiative. It is intended that there will be two streams, one of which will be based on thematic research and the

other on projects involving community outreach (potentially in groups). Although academic staff by and large seem to welcome this development in the curriculum, in our meetings with them there was clearly a concern about the impact this will have upon faculty workload and resources. The group work component may mean that not every individual student will have to be supervised as intensively as those undertaking the optional dissertation at present but the degree to which students will be required in each stream to work together to produce a piece of work as opposed to producing an individual piece of writing still appears to be under discussion. In our meetings with students there was clearly some anxiety as to what the group work will entail and how it will be assessed. *While the compulsory dissertation is a welcome development, we recommend that it be carefully planned so that it does not stretch existing resources and that the supervision and assessment procedures are clearly communicated to students well in advance of its introduction.*

- **Curricular Innovation**

The dissertation is one example of how the School is giving active thought to introducing more diverse forms of learning and assessment into the curriculum (see e.g. the School's Strategic Plan). In our meetings with staff we were told that the School has been putting a lot of thought into diversifying the student experience of learning and broadening the forms of assessment beyond the traditional examination and coursework methods. Examples given were requiring students to do presentations, short papers, reflective journals, engage in mock parliaments and mooting, etc. We were told that the teaching staff engage in discussion forums on learning and teaching twice a year at which issues such as problem-based learning were discussed. While students in the core programme were generally complimentary about the academic content of their courses, they felt that there was scope for an increase in activities that would be more conducive to legal practice such as mooting, oral presentations and generally more experiential learning opportunities. *We would encourage the School to continue to diversify its forms of learning and teaching by providing more opportunities for mooting, oral presentations and experiential learning.* (For further comments on these issues, see section 5 below.)

- **Trinity Education Project (TEP)**

The TEP is a College initiative designed to renew the College's undergraduate programmes, with a general focus on the importance of a liberal arts approach. There appears to be general support within the School for the aims and objectives of the TEP. The TEP is also having the positive administrative effect of forcing the College and the School to look critically at all aspects of their programmes and curricular aspirations (as identified, for example, in the Strategic Plans of both the College and the School). However, there is concern about how the new degree architecture will impact on the distinctiveness of the core LLB (see e.g. the SAR). The effect of introducing the capstone project of 20 ECTS, a free elective at 10 ECTS and approved modules at 20 ECTS will be to reduce the number of law modules that students will be able to choose from (the TEP currently contemplates a total of 30 ECTS of modules outside the student's immediate discipline). The School is particularly concerned that this will skew law module choices in favour of modules that are perceived to be preferred by future employers. We were told that there were plans to

address this by enabling ‘approved’ modules to include some of the current law modules that have a cross-disciplinary dimension such as jurisprudence, criminology, and economic and legal aspects of competition policy. We believe this is a sensible approach to take as it will both preserve the distinctiveness of the core degree, whilst at the same time introducing students to a range of different disciplines (albeit within a law context) in line with the objectives of the TEP to introduce more breadth into the undergraduate curriculum. There is no doubt that an interdisciplinary approach to law and learning should be encouraged, and further, we acknowledge that not all students at the School will choose to practise law (at least not as it is currently understood). *We would encourage the College and School to continue to explore the proposal that certain current law modules which adopt a cross-disciplinary approach be considered as ‘approved’ modules so as to maximise choice and keep as many professional pathways open as possible. As the School continues to expand the number of new modules it offers, we recommend that it consider how a cross-disciplinary component might be introduced to some of those that are offered so that they are suitable for classification as ‘approved modules’ – always being careful, as far as possible, to stay true to the interdisciplinary and liberal arts goals of the TEP.*

The School is also concerned about the threat that the TEP architecture poses to the vitality of the School’s study abroad scheme. The attractiveness of the scheme would no doubt suffer if students could not study abroad within the TEP architecture without keeping their professional pathways open. The School has proposed that foreign law studied in a foreign university should count as part of the approved modules because studying foreign law is significantly different from studying Irish law in terms of content, cultural context, pedagogical methods and intellectual outlook. The year abroad appears to be immensely beneficial to students in terms of giving them a transformative educational experience quite outside the confines of studying law ‘at home’. In our view, it would be a pity and somewhat ironic if the introduction of the TEP had the effect of inhibiting students from studying abroad, given that one of its key objectives appears to be to ‘broaden’ students’ horizons. *We therefore recommend that active consideration be given to 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 programmes.*

ii. “Law and” Programmes (Political Science, German, French, Business)

• Law and Business/Law and Political Science

These programmes give students greater breadth by enabling them to study law in conjunction with another discipline. Inevitably, this means that the choice students are given within each discipline of what they can study is more restricted than it would be if they were to study mainly within one discipline. The focus group reports we viewed raised issues of module choice but in our meetings with students who are doing these programmes, they seemed broadly satisfied with the content and range of choice of modules, although there was mention of the fact that the political science modules weighted as 15 credits restrict the choice of modules that can be taken. The concerns that were raised with us by students were more about matters of inconsistency between Schools in terms of when module choices have to be made, different marking

schemes and methods of assessment. There was also considered to be a lack of communication between the Schools so that there were clashes over timetabling and a lack of communication about module changes. A view was expressed that although the School of Law made efforts to integrate joint students into the School, more efforts could be made by the Political Science Department in particular to make students feel part of their Department. In general, there was a feeling that the programmes could be better integrated as a whole.

When we spoke to the teachers involved we were assured that there is in fact a lot of communication between the coordinators on the law side with their respective coordinators on the politics or business side. A number of these problems would seem to be ones of communications and of managing expectations so that students are notified at the outset of what to expect in embarking upon a joint programme. But *we recommend that further thought be given as to how issues of inconsistency and communication might be improved so that these joint programmes are better integrated, with one coordinator being appointed who would have overall responsibility for the programme and who would act as a single point of contact for students.*

- **Law and French/Law and German**

The law and language programmes (Law and French and Law and German) offer the advantage of small bespoke classes in French law subjects and German law subjects respectively in the first two years of each programme followed by a year in which students study law in France or Germany as part of their degree. Students in both programmes are also offered the opportunity to study all the core subjects necessary for professional entry to the Irish legal profession.

The Law School has a number of concerns about the delivery of the Law and French programmes (see e.g. the SAR). First of all, there is a concern which was echoed by the students in the programme who spoke to us that students do not receive enough French language speaking to equip them for the Law and French classes which are taught exclusively in French and for the year abroad in which classes are also taught in French. There is also a concern that the French law subjects are delivered by only one lecturer in the School and by an adjunct lecturer and if either of these teachers were at any time to become unavailable, the programme would become vulnerable. The students who spoke to us also considered that too much responsibility rests on the shoulders of primarily one lecturer to deliver the programme and there was a perceived lack of engagement by the School of Law in the programme. Finally, there is a resource concern on the part of the School of Law which questions whether it is appropriate to direct limited School resources towards a programme which is populated by very small numbers of students.

We do not consider that we are adequately positioned to make a recommendation as to whether the Law and French programme should continue or not. That question is outside the ToR and is a matter for the School and the College. We consider that there is undoubted value in the programme in terms of its aim of delivering French law subjects in French, thereby helping to equip students to understand and apply French law in a manner that can work to their benefit if they wish to pursue a legal career in a

French speaking country or if they wish to understand the influence of the French legal system in various parts of the world. (By contrast we gained the impression that the German law subjects in the Law and German programme are not delivered exclusively in German, although we understand that a significant amount of German is used in the law courses.) However, we consider that if the Law and French programme continues, the concerns about it certainly need to be addressed. In our meeting with the Schools responsible for the programme's delivery, there was an acceptance that the amount of French language speaking on the programme was insufficient. *We recommend that if the Law and French programme continues, sufficient French language support be re-introduced into the programme.* (We understand that the French-speaking component used to be provided by the Law School.) *We also recommend that if the programme continues the School of Law address the issue of the programme's long-term sustainability and establish proper oversight and quality assurance into the delivery of the programme.*

There are different issues with the Law and German programme. The School of Law considers that there is an adequate level of teaching provided by the German Department and that there are not the same resource problems with this programme because there is generous support provided by the DAAD for the German law lectureship. The students we spoke to considered that they were very well taken care of by the German Department but they consider they are overworked in having to do too many subjects. Both Schools responsible for the delivery of the programme accept that there is an unduly heavy workload for the students, which has arisen because of the way in which credits for the programme have been allocated. At the joint meeting with the Schools it was considered that this problem will be addressed by the new TEP project, which will automatically restrict the credits involved. Although there were fewer concerns expressed by students about the delivery of the German law modules, there was a similar concern expressed by them as by the Law and French students that a significant amount of the delivery hinges on one German law lecturer who delivers the German law modules.

We recommend that consideration be given to appointing one single programme coordinator for each programme (French and German) who would have overall responsibility for the delivery of the programme and who could act as a single point of contact for students. We heard that there was a mixed coordinating committee of the law and languages programmes which was attended by the coordinators of the programmes and the Directors of Undergraduate Teaching and Learning in each of the Schools. This committee does not seem to have been always active but it was re-established this year. In addition to the new position of the single programme coordinators, *we recommend that consideration be given to establishing a distinct coordinating committee for each of the separate law and language programmes that would consist of representatives from the School of Law and the French or German Departments, which would be chaired by the programme coordinator and which would report to the Directors of Undergraduate Teaching and Learning in both the School of Law and the School of Languages, Literatures & Cultural Studies.* Although making this recommendation, we are certainly conscious of resource allocation issues (in terms of faculty and staff time). However, without better coordination and communication, the current challenges in both programmes that were reported to us will continue.

b) Co-curriculum

One of the ways in which the Law School aims to enhance the student experience is by supporting a range of co-curricular services and activities for students (see e.g. the School's Strategic Plan). During our visit a meeting devoted to a discussion of these initiatives demonstrated the wide range of supports that are available for students from career advice and Law Fairs to supports for various student activities including the Law Society, the Trinity College Review, the Free Legal Advice Centres, the Law Student Colloquium, the Eagle, the European Law Students Association and the S2S mentoring service. We were impressed with the range of these supports and will only comment on a few of them.

i. Mooting

The Student Law Society and the European Law Students Association are active in running international mooting competitions with some academic and financial support provided by the School. One issue in the meeting with students that was raised was whether students might be able to obtain credit for mooting activity. We understand that some form of mooting has been built into the Private Law Remedies module but there seemed to be a demand from students for further opportunities for mooting for credit. We understand that this is matter that is being considered and *we recommend that the School considers ways in which students might be further encouraged to engage in mooting and advocacy for credit. For example, in addition to adding mooting opportunities in current modules, a for-credit Advocacy module could be added (for students who are enrolled in competitive mooting and lawyering competitions during a given year).* (For further comments on these issues, see section 5 below.)

ii. Mentoring (2 levels)

We understand that there are two mentoring services that are offered to students. Student to student mentoring is provided to all students in their first and second years. In addition a programme called 'gradlink' has been developed whereby students in their third and fourth years are mentored by alumni of the School who work within the legal community. We understand there were 30 such mentors last year when the initiative started and this year the response has been even greater. As this initiative gathers pace, it will require increasing amounts of administrative and organisational supports from the School. It is clearly an excellent way of developing closer links between the School and its alumni (see e.g. the School's Strategic Plan) apart from providing students with an invaluable experience of legal practice in the community. *We recommend that the School consider how the 'gradlink' programme might be integrated more formally into the curriculum as part of its drive to increase opportunities for experiential education.*

iii. Student Wellness

The School provides students with pastoral support through a College tutor system. Given increasing demands and stresses on students these days (debt, job prospects,

physical and mental health awareness, etc.), the mental and physical wellness of students is of central importance in terms of their overall academic success. *We recommend, as part of its strategic planning process, that the School should pay particular attention to issues of student wellness.* Mentoring programs, which are currently in place, should be encouraged and expanded. Further, policies and communication procedures should be reviewed to ensure, as far as possible, that students who need assistance will know how to find it and will be supported in doing so (with the assistance of designated, supported and trained members of the School's academic and administrative staff).

3. Current Programmes and Future Directions: Postgraduate Teaching (LLM)

The School offers a number of LLM. programmes, three of which are specialised in terms of their substantive focus. Compared to other universities, these programmes are special in that a majority of students are from outside Ireland. This special composition of the student body presents not only significant opportunities, but also particular pedagogical, administrative and communication challenges. As some students indicated to us, not all of these challenges appear to have been met by the School. Having said that, one student representative in particular went out of his way to state that, like many of his colleagues, he will forever be proud to be part of the special Trinity community.

a) General Remarks: Challenges Related to Composition of Student Body

More than 50% of the School's postgraduate students are foreign, drawn from over 30 countries around the world, and 20 % from outside Europe. Both students and instructors are therefore presented with a particularly international classroom (see e.g. the SAR).

From the College's perspective, third country students from outside the European Union are interesting not least from a financial point of view, due to the fact that they pay a considerably higher fee than Irish and other EU students (although we understand that more third country students does not automatically mean a substantially higher income for the School of Law under the present College rules, as much of that money is used to cross-subsidise other Schools). Full fee paying foreign students tend to see themselves as service recipients who are entitled to an excellent service from the School they have chosen. They come to Trinity for just one year, investing valuable time and money and embarking on a challenging experience in a different cultural, legal and teaching context. They expect this special year to be a crucial life experience not only academically but also personally. Where the School succeeds in providing this experience, these students will be its very best ambassadors all over the world and they will also lead others to choose Trinity. In other words, these students form a particularly valuable resource to the School, not least in terms of increased recruitment of new third country students (which is one the School's strategic aims). The challenge which this poses for the School is considerable given that it has just one academic year (as opposed to the four years of undergraduate studies) to uphold, consolidate and build on its reputation as a world class law school.

We must, however, conclude from the postgraduate students' comments that the School is not entirely succeeding, at least in some important circumstances, in providing the study experience that students are hoping for or that the School, in fact, wishes to provide. In addition to the challenge of the brevity of the studies, we believe that there is an additional challenge that follows from the different starting points of the students in terms of their previous education. Those students who have done their undergraduate studies in Ireland should be ready for what one adjunct lecturer described as a more "hands off" approach than undergraduate teaching (i.e. often requiring more self-reliance, self-direction and responsibility from the students). While some of the students who have done their undergraduate studies outside Ireland may also be ready for such an approach, in our experience, which was confirmed by some of the students' comments, many face the challenge of having to do certain things for the very first time in their academic education (e.g. writing an essay or making a presentation) because they have little to no experience of active and critical learning and thinking, including active class participation. These students may need a more structured manner of teaching and more instruction, guidance and feedback than would normally be necessary for postgraduate students.

During the review, the postgraduate teaching staff reported that extra lectures were delivered last year for international students to help them with particular challenges such as engaging in research work. Whilst this is to be commended, and while we recognise that some members of academic staff are working hard to address these issues, given the students' feedback on these matters *we recommend that the challenges of the international classroom, including an appreciation of the different starting points of students in terms of their previous education, be taken seriously by all of the teaching staff.*

b) Curriculum (Programme Structure and Syllabus) and Student Experience

i. Teaching

On the level of postgraduate teaching, the School offers a wide range of interesting and relevant modules, a fact that is appreciated by the students (see e.g. Masters in Laws (LLM.) brochure). We note, however, that today there appears to be a smaller number of teaching faculty than at the time of the last review (see e.g. 2008/2009 Review) but that this more limited number of faculty teaches more modules/courses. Further, more than half of the LLM. modules are delivered by adjunct lecturers (see e.g. the SAR). It would appear that it is notably in this context that students voiced a certain level of criticism. Whilst they appreciate the high level of knowledge of their teachers, they also felt that in some instances teaching skills were rather limited ('brilliant professionals who teach in a random manner'). More generally, many students appear to feel that the School should make a greater effort to make the diverse body of postgraduate students feel at least equally important as the undergraduate students and also to ensure well-structured, interactive teaching that allows for more personal contact with the instructors. In this respect, we point to our remarks in the special section on teaching and learning in this report (section 5 below). We also think that much could be achieved through better communication with the students, be it in order to provide information to them (for example, students

might have to be alerted time and time again to the information in handbooks as they seem to forget those) or to give them opportunities to discuss matters with those responsible for the programme. *Overall, we recommend that the School better support some of its adjunct teaching faculty (and indeed any member of faculty who is seeking support) in terms of teaching and learning skills (course delivery, assessment as well as content). Further, we recommend that the School better communicate with the students about some of its teaching and learning expectations, as well as some of its available materials and supports for student learning.* Engaging the students as far as possible in their learning environment will militate in favour of happier students, and – hopefully – more successful students. (For further comments on these issues, see section 5 below.)

In certain legal fields, a particular challenge exists on the postgraduate teaching level due to the fact that European students normally will already have a firm basis on which they can build, whilst other students as of yet know little to nothing about a given subject. This concerns European Union law in particular, for which there is at present no basic module at the LLM level. Whilst the students appreciate the fact that the School last year offered a series of lectures on EU law at the start of the first term (apparently without ECTS), the formula where these lectures function simultaneously as introductory sessions for non-EU students and as revision sessions for EU students is perhaps not fully satisfactory (i.e., on the one hand, not enough for one part of the class and, on the other hand, too much). *We recommend that the School consider how its teaching of European Union law might be improved to meet the learning needs of all students on the postgraduate programme. Consideration might be given to the introduction of a module with ECTS in two streams, e.g. with introductory classes for the beginners and, as an alternative, participation of the truly advanced students in the European Law Moot Court Competition (<https://www.europeanlawmootcourt.eu/>).*

We recognise that the School believes that the focus of its programme should be on offering a concentration of more advanced modules, rather than introductory modules allowing the students to plug perceived gaps in their undergraduate education. However, since a sizeable number of the advanced modules relate to special aspects of EU law, these will not in fact be accessible to students without previous knowledge of the basics of this field.

Finally, it is important to avoid unrealistic expectations of the students with respect to the style of teaching, as frustrated expectations may lead to an overall disillusion with the programme. For example, student feedback shows that it needs to be made clearer that, at the postgraduate level, the College does not operate on a tutorial approach. Here as in other contexts, good and where necessary repeated communication is of the essence.

ii. Dissertation

The dissertation is a pivotal element of the postgraduate study programmes. We agree with the approach that, on the postgraduate level, the dissertation should be compulsory, given that it affords students an opportunity to practice legal writing, which is a skill that is fundamental for academic and professional legal life. However, according to the School, the dissertation is an element that prompts particular concern

on the level of the postgraduate programmes, more specifically with respect to the weighting of the dissertation, the submission deadline and the necessity for one-to-one supervision and possible alternative supervision models (see e.g. the SAR).

As for the issue of supervision, the School has opted to give the students freedom of choice of their topic. The students are generally satisfied with the supervision offered to them, though they note that it may be difficult or even impossible to find a supervisor who specialises in the chosen field. *We recommend that the School better explain to the students the practical consequences of the freedom of choice that they are given over their dissertation topic. Students in fact have two options: either to choose a topic for which there is a specialist at the School (and to do so in good time in order to secure that person's supervision); or consciously to choose a different topic, knowing that there may or may not be a specialist available for supervision (depending on the chosen topic).*

We note that the School follows a model where the person who eventually grades the dissertation is different from the supervisor. However, this means that in even more cases than in the context of the supervision the person grading the work may not be a specialist in the field. Also, this person will typically not be aware of the discussions between the supervisor and the student regarding the scope and focus of the work, or about feedback (and how it has been addressed and incorporated into the final work). *In our view, the School might consider moving towards a system (which is consistent with at least some other approaches of which we are aware) whereby the supervisor grades the LLM dissertation and the grade is then reviewed by a second examiner who would conduct a (considerably lighter) second reading in order to ensure consistency of grading.* Conversely, we do not feel that for the postgraduate thesis there needs to be more than one supervisor who engages with the student during the research phase.

The weighting of the thesis is 30 ECTS, which corresponds to one third of the weighting for the award of the degree. Whilst some students consider that the thesis is weighed too heavily, the School believes that this concern is misplaced (see e.g. the SAR). Among the reviewers, opinions are divided on whether or not the thesis should be given less weight. According to one opinion, given the amount of work, the dissertation should be kept at at least 1/3 of the overall value of the degree (i.e. leave it as is). According to another opinion, the School might consider a lowering of the ECTS, in line with the practice of universities in certain other European countries. The third reviewer does not have a fixed opinion on the matter. We therefore feel that we cannot make a final recommendation on this issue.

Finally, in the past years the School has been experimenting with the submission deadline, which was at different moments towards the end of the second term and now is the 30th of June (see the SAR). According to the students, this is far too early even though the thesis topic is defined during the first term. We believe that a balance must be struck here between encouraging students to undertake different tasks simultaneously such as focusing on teaching modules and dissertation research (a skill also needed in professional life), while at the same time giving the students sufficient time where to focus on their dissertation in the last phase of writing. *The School might give consideration to an approach whereby the students are asked to hand in a first*

completed draft of their dissertation by the end of June, whereupon they receive comments until mid-July with a deadline for completion by the end of August. Those who choose not to take advantage of the June comment period should not be penalised (in terms of a penalty grade); however, they will lose the benefit of receiving feedback (which will likely negatively impact the quality of their work and, as a result, the overall final grade on the dissertation). If this approach were adopted, clear advance communication would be required, so as to maintain clear expectations (and to avoid after-the-fact complaints about unfairness).

c) Co-Curricular Activities

According to the postgraduate students, and in particular the foreign students, co-curricular activities at the College tend to focus on Irish undergraduate students. The postgraduate students would appreciate opportunities in this respect. *We recommend that the School look again at the scope and availability of meaningful co-curricular activities – at all levels (mentoring, careers, academic and non-academic supports, wellness, social, athletic, etc.) – that are available for foreign students (ideally with the strong input of student representatives in this discussion).*

d) Resources

The postgraduate students appreciate the fact that the College gives them a special reading room, though they feel that the size and quality of this room could be better. As external reviewers, we are aware of the fact this issue is linked to the School's financial resources, which are outside the scope of our recommendations. The same is true for the teaching rooms, for which both students and teachers wish a better standard and more technical possibilities (see further below, section 5).

In relation to the limited number of teaching staff, we note that in the case of some modules the student numbers are very small (e.g. 5 students in the International Criminal Evidence module, as opposed to 29 in the EU Banking and Securities Law module). It might be argued that such small classes bind too many resources. These kinds of choices need to be made by the School. To the extent that the School reserves the right to cancel under-subscribed modules (e.g. less than 6), it must continue to ensure that such a policy is well-communicated in advance (ideally beyond the means used at present – i.e. the School's website and the LLM handbook – as part of the application process and certainly as part of the course selection process). Further, in the event of cancellations, they must be done early and with adequate supports for students looking to find alternative modules. Expectation management and communication are key in these circumstances.

e) Strategic Development and Planning

We note that the School wishes to achieve a broader representation of students, presumably on the postgraduate level, from Ireland and the EU. We also note that the School wishes to recruit more third country, full fee paying students (see e.g. its Strategic Plan and the SAR). In this latter context, we first refer back to what we said above about the particular value of the third country postgraduate students, who are already enrolled, as ambassadors of their programmes. Also from this perspective, it

is crucial that for these students their year of study at Trinity is a success. This is all the more so in a situation where there is, not least for financial reasons, a lack of an evidence-based, funded and focused marketing or aggressive recruitment strategy (see e.g. the SAR).

We do not necessarily believe that the creation of new LLM streams on their own will attract more students (see e.g. the SAR), unless both the topic and the teaching style are of cutting edge. We note that one aim mentioned in the School's Strategic Plan in this context, namely the creation of masters programme in IP/IT law has already been reached.

We recommend that the School now focus on the quality of all its current postgraduate programmes in terms of teaching, facilities, etc., before adding new programmes (which will inevitably stretch current resources further).

Finally, with respect to joint master programmes with other institutions, this may be an interesting option from an academic point of view (see e.g. the SAR), although on a practical level it appears to us particularly demanding. *As such, our recommendation – as above – is to focus on the quality of the School's current programmes before embarking on new initiatives, and only then with adequate support and facilities.*

4. Current Programmes and Future Directions: Postgraduate Research (PhD)

The School's PhD programme is notably successful (see e.g. the SAR). At present, there are 47 postgraduate research students at the Law School, 41 of which are PhD students. In our onsite visit, we only met PhD students. The following comments focus on the PhD programme.

a) Curriculum (Programme Structure and Syllabus) and Student Experience

The PhD students with whom we spoke were strongly motivated and very satisfied with the supervision of their work by dedicated academic staff, including in particular the usually very speedy feedback on draft work. It appears that the single supervisor model works; nobody suggested that there should be a second supervisor as a matter of principle, as is the practice at certain other universities.

The School's PhD students are also satisfied with the programme structure, expressing, however, a wish that more interdisciplinary modules could be taken in the framework of the taught modules that form part of the PhD studies. However, we understand that students can always apply for special permission in respect of a module that is not on an official list.

Further, we note that, in the recent past, the research seminar has undergone a transition that was experienced as positive by the students. Students appreciate that under the new formula they learn about research methods and about how to define the content and structure of their thesis. Students also appreciated the fact that having this mandatory module provided a common place for meeting and communal engagement

(in what can often be an isolating doctoral journey for many PhD students around the world).

The only general source of uneasiness mentioned by the PhD students surrounded the official confirmation process, which in some instances occurred only towards the end of the actual writing of the thesis. *We recommend that attention be paid to whether the official confirmation of PhD status be brought forward in terms of scheduling.*

We note that the School has recently established five research groups, and that it plans to increasingly focus on these areas when recruiting new academics and PhD students. We believe that doing so could help foster more informal research relationships between scholars working in the same area and therefore support such an approach.

b) Resources

In terms of infrastructure, PhD students appreciate their individual study spaces, some of which are very special (namely those in the interdisciplinary environment of the Long Room Hub, though these are available only for a small number of students). With respect to the financial side of the PhD programme, we heard that, as result of the financial crisis, certain scholarships have been limited in terms of time to a period of two years only, leaving the students concerned worrying whether they will be able to conclude their work in this time or find additional funds. We note that the School considers that there are insufficient scholarships to attract the best PhD students to the School (see e.g. the SAR). We are aware of the fact that finding funds for additional scholarships is difficult in the present economic context. At the same time, scholarships provide a possibility for philanthropy that not only helps students but also creates visibility for the donor (e.g. by naming the scholarship after the donor). *We recommend that the School further investigate funding possibilities for additional PhD scholarships where at all possible.*

c) Strategic Development and Planning

With respect to the School's Strategic Plan in relation to postgraduate research, the School's aim is to create a vibrant community of postgraduate research students (see e.g. the SAR). Given the very positive statements of the students, it seems to us that this aim is indeed already being successfully achieved.

In terms of further improvements, the School wants to introduce a compulsory module for all first-year postgraduate students and it plans to consider the further development of the structured component of the PhD programme. As we understand it, PhD students are already obliged to take at least one module of 10 ECTS. In practice, this is usually the research seminar. In addition, PhD students can take taught modules of up to 30 ECTS under the present system. *While we recommend continuing with the mandatory research seminar and recognise that certain PhD students may benefit from taking further taught modules, we are not convinced that further compulsory modules are needed.*

Finally, as a measurable target for reaching the above-mentioned aim of creating a vibrant community of postgraduate research students, the School mentions the

reduction of the number of postgraduate students to below 40 by the year 2020 (see e.g. the School's Strategic Plan; the SAR). As far as we understand, this is already more or less the reality. We do not see how the setting of a firm target figure might immediately be related to the quality of the research community where different directions of research lead in any case to the division into certain subgroups that will, by nature, be limited in number. Overall, we do not see the case for decreasing the number of students further (subject, of course, to the School's overall ability to support and sustain all of its programmes across the various degree opportunities).

5. Overall Teaching and Learning Experience

The comments in this section are provided as general observations and recommendations that apply across most or all aspects of the School's undergraduate and graduate level programmes. As such, we have separated them out here. Having said that, we recognise that in some cases they map on to or overlap with some comments made earlier in this report.

a) Student Assessment

i. Multiple Forms

It is increasingly well accepted (although not universally adopted) that final exams are not always the best way of testing the critical, applied and reflective knowledge of all students. Further, as the content and methods of teaching are diversified so too must forms of assessment – in order to map onto the corresponding learning objectives of new content and methods of delivery. It was clear to the reviewers that the School's faculty and students are aware of the importance of multiple forms of assessment, and further, that many instructors are making efforts in this regard (see e.g. the SAR; the School's Strategic Plan). These efforts should be encouraged. Having said that, based on a review of the materials and hearing from students, there is scope to continue to diversify. Increasing opportunities for reflection (blogs, posts, reflective journals, peer discussion groups, oral presentations, in-class moots and debates, etc.), critical writing (notes and essays), as well as exams will cater to a diversity of teaching approaches as well as the educational needs and strengths of an increasingly diverse and modern student population. As such, *we recommend that modes of assessment at the School be reviewed and expanded where possible/appropriate.*

We also encourage the School to introduce elements of peer review, which we consider particularly appropriate for oral presentations, provided that the students are given an evaluation scheme in advance (which will also serve as a guideline for preparing their own presentation). An example of such a guideline is included as Appendix B to this report.

Finally, where traditional exams are being held, we support the aim of the Strategic Plan to materially increase the proportion of open-book exams. In particular, *we recommend that open-book examinations become the rule at least at the postgraduate level.*

ii. Formative/Summative

As summative forms of assessment, final exams and essays provide little opportunity for students to learn from those assessment tools and apply that knowledge to a subsequent evaluation opportunity within the *same* module (if anything, there may be some value for a *subsequent* module). As such, *we recommend that an increasing number of formative assessment opportunities be provided where possible and appropriate*. Doing so is in line with sound modern pedagogical practices, and further, will assist in the development of more critically engaged and professionally reflective students. While doing so is especially important at the undergraduate level, we heard from LLM students that they too would like more opportunities for a diversity of evaluation methods and opportunities to improve through formative moments of assessment.

b) Quality Assurance: Teaching Evaluation (Evaluating Instructors)

Evaluation of instructors, modules and programmes is necessary and it is clearly happening at the School (see e.g. the SAR). However, our sense from the various student groups was that evaluation of instructors and the modules could be improved. We noticed that – by and large – it is mostly being done at the end of a module (summative evaluation by the students themselves). Of course, this is somewhat helpful for future module offerings (assuming students will take the time to provide meaningful feedback during the rush of end-of-term studies). While we were told about some formative – in-term – opportunities for students to evaluate their instructors and modules, they were largely provided on the assumption that students would contact professors with any complaints (either directly or through student representatives). Although informal communication is always encouraged, we are of the view that it is not realistic to expect students to provide formative feedback directly to a faculty member (either at all and certainly not while that faculty member is still teaching the student and assessment is still pending). There are often too many power dynamics at play for that realistically to happen across the board. *Alternatively, we encourage the use of in-term (potentially informal although still anonymous) course evaluations* (e.g. through a short in-class handout several weeks into term, etc.). Doing so would provide students with a meaningful opportunity to have an input on anything that potentially can be changed, clarified or improved (before the end of term, which is too late). This would bring students further into the ownership of their learning environment and, if properly attended to (with brief although responsive feed-back from the instructor), should also increase student buy-in and overall satisfaction. In the end, the more the School expects from its students, the more it should be open to hearing back from them in terms of whether it is meeting their needs and expectations.

In addition to evaluation by the students of the teaching carried out at the School, *we believe that the School should also consider a certain degree of evaluation by the director of a given study programme and/or by teaching colleagues*. This could happen through informal visits in class in the form of peer observation, as also mentioned in the Strategic Plan. In this manner, instructors can learn from each other and provide each other with feedback. In addition, such an approach would allow the director of a given study programme to check whether a given professor follows the instructions given for teaching. From what we heard from the students, it is not

enough to make information, guidelines and instruction available to teaching staff, including in particular adjunct lecturers. Rather, there should be a certain degree of supervision, mentoring and feedback with respect to the style of teaching as well as the instruction and feedback given with respect to assignments in particular. We heard that some of this is already happening. We are also aware of the retreat-like sessions already held by the faculty regarding teaching and learning, which we strongly commend. Having said all of that, in light of what we heard from various student groups at different degree levels, it is clear that even more could be done to ensure quality and a degree of consistency across the teaching team. Additionally, communication about expectations (to academic staff and to students) is also key (see our comments on these points above).

c) Technology

Technology did not play a significant part of the review process (it was not a standalone topic of conversation). In our view, it should be. Several points should be made here.

First, to the extent that the School is interested in engaging in any form of distance learning (developing opportunities for continuing professional education to lawyers, accessing students who are not able to attend classes at the School for various work related, family related or disability related reasons, accessing more international students, etc.) – all in ways that may replace or combine with some in-class learning – technology needs to be a topic of serious conversation (see e.g. the School’s Strategic Plan; the SAR).

Second, and perhaps more immediately important, technology can be used to enhance the in-class experience. Although of course there is still a place for traditional lectures, learning through passive listening is not an effective way for students to consume and retain significant amounts of material. Students can read materials and listen to/watch lectures ahead of class on their own (through the use of Blackboard, YouTube, etc.), leaving much more time for experiential and critically engaged learning in the classroom. Modern best-practices in legal pedagogy are moving toward an increased attention to “blended” and “flipped” classrooms. Ideally, modules would be set up and classrooms would be equipped as far as possible with various options to bring modern technology into the learning experience. We were certainly made aware of many efforts to diversify the learning environment (through the use of power point slides, Blackboard, etc.), and we noticed – in our facilities tour – that computer technology was available in some classroom spaces (although not all – and particularly not the smaller spaces). It is our view that the School, at least as far as it was represented to us, could further focus on this aspect of its programme offerings, thereby enhancing the learning experience. *We therefore applaud the goal stated in the Strategic Plan of exploring the many benefits and possibilities of the increased use of online teaching (both beyond and within the classroom).*

d) Active Learning and Experiential Education

It is our view that, where possible and appropriate, the delivery of modules should include significant opportunities for active learning (leaving more passive tasks –

reading and the consumption of basic background information – to time allocated for such tasks outside of the classroom). Providing students with meaningful opportunities to engage with theory, practice (application) and reflection will help them to develop through the active learning cycle on the path to becoming more capable and critically engaged professionals (and citizens). Some of this is already happening at the School (through in-class discussions, the drafting of bills and parliamentary debates, moots, etc.) (see e.g. the School's Strategic Plan). However, we were also told of an unwillingness on the part of some instructors to deviate from the traditional form of passive information delivery (lectures). Conversely, some instructors complained that students are unwilling to engage in an active discussion. However, comments of other instructors showed that, with persistent 'nudging', students can be encouraged to more actively engage and participate. *We therefore think that instructors should be urged to encourage active student engagement and participation, wherever possible.* With all of this we are not suggesting that all classes will be amenable to radical changes along these lines. Having said that, given what we were told by many students and certainly some faculty, there is a palpable desire on the part of the School to move in this progressive and active-learning direction.

Areas of particular attention include the CLE module, and potentially the co-curricular mooting programmes. As far as the CLE module is concerned, this programme seems to be progressing extremely well. As discussed earlier, we met with external stakeholders, all of whom were universally complimentary of the way the School – the students and the faculty representative – are approaching these initiatives. The School should be commended for recognising the importance of appointing a full-time faculty member in this area, and for continuing to develop this important aspect of its programmes. Having said all of that, there is likely room for further expansion (with more students and more partner organisations). Building these kinds of experiential education opportunities into the education plans of more students would spread the benefits of these types of opportunities to more students. Further, finding ways to directly link on-the-job (or other experiential) learning opportunities back into the classroom (either through the CLE module or other modules) would increase opportunities for active and reflective learning for more students. For example, there is potentially no reason why opportunities to partner with financial institutions could not be added to some of the business law offerings (either through actual placements or through mock/simulated experiential opportunities that are already in existence or that could be developed within the School).

As also discussed earlier, another area for potential support and development is the mooting programme, which we understand – at least at the moment – is mainly done voluntarily and through co-curricular programs and competitions. Encouraging students to do more engaged advocacy may require further faculty support (perhaps – as mentioned earlier – through a dedicated Advocacy module that could potentially be offered, in support of all moot competitions, for credit). While this may not be a requirement for all students, international experience certainly indicates a broad interest on behalf of students for more advocacy opportunities. These kinds of offerings help with the goal of increasing opportunities for experiential education. They are also a good way of bringing alumni – members of the local Bar, etc. – into the School to assist with these programs (which is often good for alumni relations and fundraising) (see e.g. the School's Strategic Plan).

In the end, the more students ‘do’ (both on their own time and in the classroom), the more they will take on. Students are asking for these kinds of opportunities, and best pedagogical practices are often demanding them.

e) Facilities

The School has expressed a clear interest in looking at the possibility of acquiring a new facility (either a new building or at least more dedicated space) (see e.g. the SAR; the School’s Strategic Plan). While we feel that this issue pushes the bounds of our ToR (as programme reviewers), we are aware of the challenges that the current and any future programmes do and will put on the School’s current facilities, and as such, we are providing some reflections here in this report.

We are certainly conscious of the financial resources that such initiatives require, and further, we are also aware of the space constraints present at the College. Further, we are also aware that the current facilities, however inadequate in many respects (as reported to us and as we observed through our tour of the facilities), do continue to have a significant amount of appeal in terms of location and historical significance (which was reported to us by some students and faculty). As such, there is a careful balance to be struck when looking to renovate, re-build or relocate.

Having said that, we do note that in order to accomplish many of the goals set out in the Strategic Plans of the School and the College, more flexible and accessible space is likely to be necessary (or at least would be helpful) (see further the SAR). In particular, many of the classrooms – which we were shown – that are available to the School are designed for passive, lecture based learning and are not conducive to break-out group discussion, mock mediations, etc. Further, as mentioned above, modern (and flexible) technology would be useful in all classroom spaces (to be able to access the Internet, audio/video opportunities, etc.). More space for casual student discussion, co-curricular activities, peer-based meetings, etc., would also enhance the overall learning environment at the School. And to the extent that the College and School are seeking to bring in more international students, at significant tuition rates, adequate research and study space is required not only for PhD students (who are given their own, specific study places) but for all students. Finally, particular attention would need to be paid to the learning needs of all students (including those with special needs and accommodations), so that learning spaces – ideally through universal design principles – are welcoming to everyone and will, in the end, support the academic success of all students. With respect to students with special challenges, we saw that the library does provide for some special study space.

Overall, although beyond the specific scope of our ToR (and subject to the very real challenges of the current fiscal climate), *we are of the view that a new building, or at least significantly expanded and modernised teaching, study and communal spaces, would greatly enhance the School’s ability not only to maintain its current programme offerings, but also to improve what it currently does offer as well as to pursue future and different directions (as identified in its Strategic Plan)*. Having said that, given the many advantages of being co-located with other College departments on campus, we would be cautious in recommending the relocation of the School to a

remote location, which might risk losing some of the benefits that were reported to us of being located at such a wonderful, historic and central location. As with most things, a balance will need to be found.

6. Conclusion

Overall, we were extremely impressed with the students and staff at the School. Further, we came away with a very favourable impression of the School's current programme offerings (see e.g. the SAR) as well as its stated strategic goals (see e.g. the School's Strategic Plan). Put simply, great things are happening and are planned at the School.

To the extent that constructive feedback, criticism and recommendations have been included by us in this report, we must say that none of it surprised (or overly concerned) us. These are the kinds of issues and challenges that are being faced by most, if not all, law schools around the world. There is a palpable move to modernise legal education – moving it away from a passive activity to a much more actively engaged and critically reflective exercise. The current state of law and legal practice demands this shift. Essentially, all of our suggestions can be seen as part of this overall context. Further, in light of the demands being placed on institutions of higher learning by today's students, increased demands are being placed on academic, administrative and management staff to support students in their learning journeys. Doing so brings immediate and lasting benefits. However, there are clearly costs in terms of human and financial resources. In our view, these costs are typically worth the investment.

We were delighted to see that the School is conscious of these current demands and is open to the further exploration of international best practices in modern legal pedagogy. We strongly commend the School's openness and encourage it to explore all of these issues further through this current process of programme review, reflection and critical engagement.

7. Summary of Recommendations for Improvement

The Core LLB

- 1. We recommend that thought be given as to how third and fourth year students who are anxious to pursue a particular module which is not offered in a particular year be facilitated by being allowed to take it a year earlier or later than they should in terms of progression.*
- 2. We would encourage the School to maintain its policy of involving senior academic staff in the teaching of foundation subjects.*
- 3. We recommend that adequate feedback be provided whenever possible (ideally in formative ways that allow students to learn from the feedback and apply it in the context of subsequent moments of evaluation). We also recommend that when resources allow, consideration be given to employing (even on a part-time basis) a legal skills adviser who would be available to lead classes on*

examination and essay writing techniques and sessions on feedback. Further, feedback could be an ongoing subject of one of the School's teaching and learning faculty retreat sessions.

- 4. We recommend that consideration be given to putting in place more formal quality review procedures in order to ensure that students continue to benefit educationally from the year abroad. Aspects of this review would include both programme content as well as programme administration (communication, evaluation, etc.).*
- 5. We recommend that the School give consideration to CLE service providers being given more feedback on the student experience of placements and more opportunities to meet students, staff and other providers. Further, we recommend, as far as possible, expanding the opportunities for clinical and experiential education, so as to accommodate all students who would like to have these opportunities. Such increased opportunities could come through an expanded pool of partner service providers. Other opportunities could come through an increase in experiential learning opportunities being provided in connection with current and future curricular offerings (in addition to the CLE module).*
- 6. While the compulsory dissertation is a welcome development, we recommend that it be carefully planned so that it does not stretch existing resources and that the supervision and assessment procedures are clearly communicated to students well in advance of its introduction.*
- 7. We would encourage the School to continue to diversify its forms of learning and teaching by providing more opportunities for mooting, oral presentations and experiential learning.*
- 8. We would encourage the College and School to continue to explore the proposal that certain current law modules which adopt a cross-disciplinary approach be considered as 'approved' modules so as to maximise choice and to keep as many professional pathways open as possible. As the School continues to expand the number of new modules it offers, we recommend that it consider how a cross-disciplinary component might be introduced to some of those that are offered so that they are suitable for classification as 'approved modules' – always being careful, as far as possible, to stay true to the interdisciplinary and liberal arts goals of the TEP. We also recommend that active consideration be given to 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 programmes.*

Joint Programmes

Law and Business/Law and Political Science

- 9. We recommend that further thought be given as to how issues of inconsistency and communication might be improved so that the joint programmes are*

better integrated, with one coordinator being appointed who would have overall responsibility for the programme and who would act as a single point of contact for students.

Law and French/Law and German

- 10. We recommend that if the Law and French programme continues, sufficient French language support be re-introduced into the programme. We also recommend that if the programme continues the School of Law address the issue of the programme's long term sustainability and establish proper oversight and quality assurance into the delivery of the programme.*
- 11. We recommend that consideration be given to appointing one single programme coordinator for each programme (French and German) who would have overall responsibility for the delivery of the programme and who could act as a single point of contact for students.*
- 12. We also recommend that consideration be given to establishing a distinct coordinating committee for each of the separate law and language programmes that would consist of representatives from the School of Law and the French or German Departments, which would be chaired by the programme coordinator and which would report to the Directors of Undergraduate Teaching and Learning in both the School of Law and the School of Languages, Literatures & Cultural Studies.*

Co-curriculum

- 13. We recommend that the School considers ways in which students might be further encouraged to engage in mooting and advocacy for credit. For example, in addition to adding mooting opportunities in current modules, a for-credit Advocacy module could be added (for students who are enrolled in competitive mooting and lawyering competitions during a given year).*
- 14. We recommend that the School consider how the 'gradlink' programme might be integrated more formally into the curriculum as part of its drive to increase opportunities for experiential education.*
- 15. We recommend, as part of its strategic planning process, that the School should pay particular attention to issues of student wellness.*

Postgraduate Teaching (LLM)

- 16. We recommend that the challenges of the international classroom, including an appreciation of the different starting points of students in terms of their previous education, be taken seriously by all of the teaching staff.*
- 17. We recommend that the School better support some of its adjunct teaching faculty (and indeed any member of faculty who is seeking support) in terms of teaching and learning skills (course delivery, assessment as well as content).*

Further, we recommend that the School better communicate with the students about some of its teaching and learning expectations, as well as some of its available materials and supports for student learning.

- 18. We recommend that the School consider how its teaching of European Union law might be improved to meet the learning needs of all students on the postgraduate programme. Consideration might be given to the introduction of a module with ECTS in two streams, e.g. with introductory classes for the beginners and, as an alternative, participation of the truly advanced students in the European Law Moot Court Competition (<https://www.europeanlawmootcourt.eu/>).*
- 19. We recommend that the School better explain to the students the practical consequences of the freedom of choice that they are given over their dissertation topic. Students in fact have two options: either to choose a topic for which there is a specialist at the School (and to do so in good time in order to secure that person's supervision); or consciously to choose a different topic, knowing that there may or may not be a specialist available for supervision (depending on the chosen topic).*
- 20. In our view, the School might consider moving towards a system (which is consistent with at least some other approaches of which we are aware) whereby the supervisor grades the LLM dissertation and the grade is then reviewed by a second examiner who would conduct a (considerably lighter) second reading in order to ensure consistency of grading.*
- 21. The School might give consideration to an approach whereby students are asked to hand in a first completed draft of their dissertation by the end of June, whereupon they receive comments until mid-July with a deadline for completion by the end of August.*
- 22. We recommend that the School look again at the scope and availability of meaningful co-curricular activities – at all levels (mentoring, careers, academic and non-academic supports, wellness, social, athletic, etc.) – that are available for foreign students (ideally with the strong input of student representatives in this discussion).*
- 23. We recommend that the School now focus on the quality of its current programmes and other programmes in terms of teaching, facilities, etc., before adding new programmes (which will inevitably stretch current resources further) or embarking on new initiatives, and only then with adequate support and facilities.*

Postgraduate Research (PhD)

- 24. We recommend that attention be paid to whether the official confirmation of PhD status be brought forward in terms of scheduling.*

25. *We recommend that the School further investigate funding possibilities for additional PhD scholarships where at all possible.*
26. *While we recommend continuing with the mandatory research seminar and recognise that certain PhD students may benefit from taking further taught modules, we are not convinced that further compulsory modules are needed.*

Overall Teaching and Learning Experience

27. *We recommend that modes of assessment at the School be reviewed and expanded where possible/appropriate.*
28. *We recommend that open-book examinations become the rule at least at the postgraduate level.*
29. *We recommend that an increasing number of formative assessment opportunities be provided where possible and appropriate.*
30. *We encourage the use of in-term (potentially informal although still anonymous) course evaluations.*
31. *We believe that the School should also consider a certain degree of evaluation by the director of a given study programme and/or by teaching colleagues.*
32. *We applaud the goal stated in the Strategic Plan of exploring the many benefits and possibilities of the increased use of online teaching (both beyond and within the classroom).*
33. *It is our view that, where possible and appropriate, the delivery of modules should include significant opportunities for active learning and instructors should be urged to encourage active student engagement and participation, wherever possible.*
34. *We are of the view that a new building, or at least significantly expanded and modernised teaching, study and communal spaces, would greatly enhance the School's ability not only to maintain its current programme offerings, but also to improve what it currently does offer as well as to pursue future and different directions (as identified in its Strategic Plan).*

Appendix A

Selected Materials

Materials provided to the reviewers included the following documents (among others):

- Terms of Reference for the Quality Review of the Law Programmes
- Quality Review of Law School Educational Programmes – Issues
- Briefing Document for External Reviewers – School Reviews (November, 2016)
- Programme Review Procedure
- General Procedures for Quality Reviews
- Law School Review 2008 – Report of External Reviewers (11-12 December 2008)
- School Finances 2011-2012 / 2016-2017
- Undergraduate Programmes in Law
- Master in Laws (LLM)
- Adjunct Teaching – Law
- School of Law Educational Programmes – Quality Review Self-Assessment Report
- Trinity College Strategic Plan 2014-2019
- School of Law Strategic Plan 2015-2020

Appendix B:

Form for Peer Review of Oral Presentations

Names: _____ Total Points: _____ / 100

Content Knowledge			
Exceptional (25) Presenters demonstrate full knowledge with explanations and elaboration.	Very good (20) Presenters are at ease with content, but fail to elaborate.	Adequate (15) Presenters are uncomfortable with information and are able to answer only rudimentary questions.	Poor (10) Presenters do not have grasp of information and cannot answer questions about subject.

Coherence & Organization			
Exceptional (25) Information is presented in logical, interesting sequence which audience can follow.	Very good (20) Information is presented in logical sequence which audience can follow.	Adequate (15) Audience has difficulty following presentation.	Poor (10) Audience cannot understand presentation because there is no sequence of information.

Public Speaking			
Exceptional (25) Poised, clear articulation; proper volume; steady rate; good posture and eye contact; enthusiasm; confidence. Presenters seldom return to notes, maintain eye contact with audience throughout the presentation.	Very good (20) Clear articulation but not as polished; presenters maintain eye contact with audience most of the time, but frequently returns to notes.	Adequate (15) Some mumbling; little eye contact; uneven rate; presenters read most of report, but occasionally make eye contact with audience.	Poor (10) Inaudible or too loud; rate too slow/fast; speaker seemed uninterested; presenters read entire report, making no eye contact with audience.

Quality of Presentation Slides & Handout			
Exceptional (25) Presentation has a professional look with an overall graphical theme that appeals to the audience and complements the topic; information presented on slides is understandable, readable and free of spelling errors; presentation including all material/media is working properly.	Very good (20) Presentation has a professional look but is hard to understand at times; presentation has only 1-2 spelling errors; presentation, including all material and media is working properly.	Adequate (15) Presentation does not follow visual guidelines and is hard to read or understand, but presentation, including all material and media is working nearly without errors.	Poor (10) Presentation does not appear to be of any professional standard; information on slides is hard to read and hard to understand; presentation including all material and media is running with interruptions through technical errors.

Comments

Point out at least **two things you thought were positive** and **two things that you thought need improvement** (if any). Give reasons **why** and suggest **how** they can be improved.

Positive:

Improvement needed:

2. Responses to the Recommendations of the Quality Review of the Educational Programmes Provided by the School of Law

The Law School and its partner disciplines have benefited from this Quality Review process. It has allowed us to identify strengths and weaknesses in our programmes and to plan changes for the future. In particular, we welcome the overall conclusion of the Quality Reviewers:

Overall, we were extremely impressed with the students and staff at the School. Further, we came away with a very favourable impression of the School's current programme offerings (see e.g. the SAR) as well as its stated strategic goals (see e.g. the School's Strategic Plan). Put simply, great things are happening and are planned at the School.

To the extent that constructive feedback, criticism and recommendations have been included by us in this report, we must say that none of it surprised (or overly concerned) us. These are the kinds of issues and challenges that are being faced by most, if not all, law schools around the world. There is a palpable move to modernise legal education – moving it away from a passive activity to a much more actively engaged and critically reflective exercise. The current state of law and legal practice demands this shift. Essentially, all of our suggestions can be seen as part of this overall context. Further, in light of the demands being placed on institutions of higher learning by today's students, increased demands are being placed on academic, administrative and management staff to support students in their learning journeys. Doing so brings immediate and lasting benefits. However, there are clearly costs in terms of human and financial resources. In our view, these costs are typically worth the investment.

We were delighted to see that the School is conscious of these current demands and is open to the further exploration of international best practices in modern legal pedagogy. We strongly commend the School's openness and encourage it to explore all of these issues further through this current process of programme review, reflection and critical engagement.

The Schools have considered in detail the recommendations of the Quality Reviewers. In all respects, these recommendations identify issues of concern. In some cases, however, we do not consider it appropriate to implement the particular recommendation. The responses below were approved by the Law School Committee. The response to recommendation 9 was discussed with representatives of Business and Political Science, whose views are integrated into the response. The responses to recommendations 10-12 were provided to the School of Languages, Literatures and Cultural Studies (SLCS), which has provided a separate response. There is a great deal of common ground in the responses of the two Schools but there remains some divergence of views.

Undergraduate

1. We recommend that thought be given as to how third and fourth year students who are anxious to pursue a particular module which is not offered in a particular year be facilitated by being allowed to take it a year earlier or later than they should in terms of progression.

Response: This recommendation cannot be achieved without abandoning the differentiation of junior and senior sophister modules. It would require that modules would have to be pitched at a level equally appropriate for junior and senior sophister students so that both cohorts could take the module. The net effect of this would be the elimination of advanced, specialist modules that ensure a distinctive senior sophister year. The School has greatly increased the range of modules available in the sophister years. This is only possible if modules can be scheduled at the same time. The only way in which we could ensure that students could take every module is by reducing the number of modules available, with a concomitant increase in class size in each module. In the School's view, this would be a retrograde step.

2. We would encourage the School to maintain its policy of involving senior academic staff in the teaching of foundation subjects.

Response: This is a core policy commitment for the School. We accept the recommendation.

3. We recommend that adequate feedback be provided whenever possible (ideally in formative ways that allow students to learn from the feedback and apply it in the context of subsequent moments of evaluation). We also recommend that when resources allow, consideration be given to employing (even on a part-time basis) a legal skills adviser who would be available to lead classes on examination and essay writing techniques and sessions on feedback. Further, feedback could be an ongoing subject of one of the School's teaching and learning faculty retreat sessions.

Response: The School provides legal skills tutorials in the first semester of first year. Our view is that thereafter it is better to integrate such skills into the teaching of other modules, although we accept that more can be done on this front. In particular, the work that the School is currently doing in mapping assessment techniques across all modules will facilitate a renewed focus on skills. The School has organised a Teaching & Learning forum with the Trinity Education Project Fellow, Dr Nick Johnson, on formative assessment and feedback strategies. Dr Johnson has considerable expertise in this area of pedagogy.

4. We recommend that consideration be given to putting in place more formal quality review procedures in order to ensure that students continue to benefit educationally from the year abroad. Aspects of this review would include both programme content as well as programme administration (communication, evaluation, etc.).

Response: The School accepts this recommendation and will liaise with the quality office to design a quality review of year abroad. In the School's view, this recommendation is equally

applicable to all undergraduate study-abroad programmes and should be led at college-level.

5. We recommend that the School give consideration to CLE service providers being given more feedback on the student experience of placements and more opportunities to meet students, staff and other providers. Further, we recommend, as far as possible, expanding the opportunities for clinical and experiential education, so as to accommodate all students who would like to have these opportunities. Such increased opportunities could come through an expanded pool of partner service providers. Other opportunities could come through an increase in experiential learning opportunities being provided in connection with current and future curricular offerings (in addition to the CLE module).

Response: While student feedback on placements needs to be handled with some care, we will consult CLE partners about the best way of providing feedback on the student experience. Some partners already conduct a feedback meeting at the end of the placement for this purpose. We have organised events for CLE partners and students in previous years (reception, Commons, etc.) and will consider ways of bringing together the School, partners and students in future years. The School continues to expand the number of CLE partners on a sustainable basis. It remains to be seen whether the changes to the Sophister curriculum (and in particular the capstone module) will affect demand for CLE placements. Consideration will be given to developing further clinical or experiential opportunities, including in the context of the capstone module. This term we have run a Streetlaw programme on a trial basis and, once this is complete, consideration may be given to incorporating a Streetlaw module into the curriculum in future years. There may be scope for developing a 'clinic' providing research or other support to NGOs and other organisations in Ireland and internationally.

6. While the compulsory dissertation is a welcome development, we recommend that it be carefully planned so that it does not stretch existing resources and that the supervision and assessment procedures are clearly communicated to students well in advance of its introduction.

Response: The new Research Project module was discussed in detail by staff and students at the School's Undergraduate Studies Committee on 22 March 2017 and brought to the main School committee in early April. The group supervision model is designed specifically to manage the resources while fostering student group work and peer learning, among other things. This module will be fully designed by the end of the current academic year, so that there is an 18 month lead-in time before the module commences. This time will be used to ensure full communication with students. The introduction of the module will be on the basis of no net change to pre-existing staff workloads. This will be achieved through the reduction in individual supervision requirements (at PGR, LLM and LLB level), the recruitment of new staff (seven additional staff members have been recruited in the last two years) and possibly through the removal of some existing modules.

7. We would encourage the School to continue to diversify its forms of learning and teaching by providing more opportunities for mooting, oral presentations and experiential learning.

Response: As part of its response to TEP, the School has commenced a mapping project of all assessments in all modules. These will then be reviewed to ensure that all graduate attributes are met.

8. We would encourage the College and School to continue to explore the proposal that certain current law modules which adopt a cross-disciplinary approach be considered as 'approved' modules so as to maximise choice and to keep as many professional pathways open as possible. As the School continues to expand the number of new modules it offers, we recommend that it consider how a cross-disciplinary component might be introduced to some of those that are offered so that they are suitable for classification as 'approved modules' – always being careful, as far as possible, to stay true to the interdisciplinary and liberal arts goals of the TEP. We also recommend that active consideration be given to 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 programmes.

Response: The School is enthusiastic about working with the College on these issues. As this recommendation is directed also to the College, we must await the College's response. The School is keen to develop interdisciplinary modules but this may have to wait until the TEP creates an incentive for other schools to do so as well. However, the School is planning a legal history module for 2018-19 which would have scope to be interdisciplinary in the future. TEP discussions and the guidance of the TEP Fellow indicates exciting possibilities for interdisciplinary learning within single honours degrees and academic collaboration across disciplines.

Joint Programmes

Law and Business/Law and Political Science

9. We recommend that further thought be given as to how issues of inconsistency and communication might be improved so that the joint programmes are better integrated, with one coordinator being appointed who would have overall responsibility for the programme and who would act as a single point of contact for students.

Response: The School of Law recognises the issues of consistency and communication that were raised in the Quality Review. However, we do not consider that it is appropriate to have a single coordinator. The subject coordinator is an important point of contact between the two disciplines as well as between the students and all the administrative supports in each discipline. A coordinator from the Law School would not be well placed to address student concerns that arose in relation to a partner discipline, and vice versa. In the view of the Schools and Departments, programme committees with student representation are a better way to address the issues of consistency and communication. It will be clearly identified to students that they can communicate issues to the coordinators individually or jointly.

Law and French/Law and German

10. We recommend that if the Law and French programme continues, sufficient French language support be re-introduced into the programme. We also recommend that if the programme continues the School of Law address the issue of the programme's long term sustainability and establish proper oversight and quality assurance into the delivery of the programme.

Response: The provision of French language support is a matter for the French Department. The Law School's view is that there should be a programme review of all undergraduate programmes every five years. The long-term sustainability of the programme may depend on the appointment of two permanent lecturers in French law. This is the only way in which the College can ensure the continuation of the programme in the event of one French law lecturer going on sick leave, maternity leave or sabbatical leave. In the view of the Law School, this would be a disproportionate expenditure that would seriously prejudice all other plans for the development of the Law School. The same reasoning applies in respect to the Law and German programme.

Response of SLLCS: SLLCS agrees that French language provision is a matter for the French department and is, in consultation with the Law School, in the process of strengthening French language provision in line with the recommendations of the School review. Staffing in the Law School is of course ultimately a matter for the School of Law. SLLCS would welcome the appointment of a second lecturer in French Law resources permitting. It would also commit to work with the Law School to find a less costly way to secure sufficient expertise in French Law. It would be opposed to a discontinuation of the Law and French programme.

SLLCS does not share the view that the same issues arise in respect of the provision of German Law, as specialist teaching is provided by German Law specialists on fixed term contracts supported by the German Academic Exchange Service so that sabbatical and maternity provisions do not arise in the same way.

11. We recommend that consideration be given to appointing one single programme coordinator for each programme (French and German) who would have overall responsibility for the delivery of the programme and who could act as a single point of contact for students.

Response: The same reasons as the response to Recommendation 9 apply.

Response of SLLCS: SLLCS agrees with the views of the Law School in this respect.

12. We also recommend that consideration be given to establishing a distinct coordinating committee for each of the separate law and language programmes that would consist of representatives from the School of Law and the French or German Departments, which would be chaired by the programme coordinator and which would report to the Directors of Undergraduate Teaching and Learning in both the School of Law and the School of Languages, Literatures & Cultural Studies.

Response: The School of Law considers that a joint coordinating committee for these two degrees is valuable. Many of the problems with the degrees, as identified in the Self Assessment Report, arise from the way in which each degree programme has departed from a common model. A single coordinating committee would help to ensure that this does not recur. The committee should report to the Undergraduate Studies Committee in the Law School and to an equivalent committee in the School of Languages Literatures and Cultural Studies.

Response of SLLCS: SLLCS agrees with the Law School's view that a joint coordinating committee would be both useful and appropriate.

Co-curriculum

13. We recommend that the School considers ways in which students might be further encouraged to engage in mooting and advocacy for credit. For example, in addition to adding mooting opportunities in current modules, a for-credit Advocacy module could be added (for students who are enrolled in competitive mooting and lawyering competitions during a given year).

Response: The TEP provides an ideal way of addressing this recommendation. As part of TEP discussions, the 'enhanced transcript', where co-curricular achievements and participation are listed on the academic transcript but do not alter the formal academic results, is gaining respect as a way of embracing the co-curriculum without undermining the formal academic curriculum or the voluntary, self-directed aspect of the extra-curriculum. The Law School supports this approach.

14. We recommend that the School consider how the 'gradlink' programme might be integrated more formally into the curriculum as part of its drive to increase opportunities for experiential education.

Response: The Gradlink programme is a College-wide initiative. It depends on alumni being prepared to meet students for three hours during the year to offer advice. Any formal integration of the programme into the curriculum would be difficult to achieve, would eliminate the participation of alumni working in non-law careers, would discourage alumni from volunteering, and would undermine the opportunity for students to get informal and friendly advice without direct oversight and quality control from the School. Nevertheless, the School will develop the informal network of alumni that Gradlink provides with a view to identifying possibilities for a clinical component to law modules.

15. We recommend, as part of its strategic planning process, that the School should pay particular attention to issues of student wellness.

Response: The Law School will appoint a student wellness officer and in 2017-18 will add a new section to its Strategic Plan 2016-2021 to address issues of student wellness.

Postgraduate Teaching (LLM)

16. We recommend that the challenges of the international classroom, including an appreciation of the different starting points of students in terms of their previous education, be taken seriously by all of the teaching staff.

Response: A Teaching & Learning forum will be organised for all LLM lecturers (full time and part time) to discuss the challenges of teaching international students from different legal backgrounds and with differing levels of knowledge of particular subject areas. Possible responses to the challenge might include providing background reading on-line before the start of term to provide a necessary introduction and specifying pre-requisite modules or qualifications. The forum will allow for the sharing of experience and responses and could be facilitated by an external legal academic with expertise in this particular field.

17. We recommend that the School better support some of its adjunct teaching faculty (and indeed any member of faculty who is seeking support) in terms of teaching and learning skills (course delivery, assessment as well as content). Further, we recommend that the School better communicate with the students about some of its teaching and learning expectations, as well as some of its available materials and supports for student learning.

Response: Adjunct staff will be included in Teaching & Learning sessions and training offered by the College and School. A review will be undertaken of all the modules offered on the LLM Programmes to ensure a greater level of consistency in terms of marks available for different forms of assessment taking into account word length requirements and submission dates. Decisions as to modes of assessment will continue to be left to the discretion of lecturers. Module descriptors are available but in addition, all lecturers will now provide module specific information on Blackboard at least one week before the start of term on the following: the syllabus, learning outcomes, any mandatory texts (and where they are available for purchase) and the forms of assessment (including submission dates for coursework). During the term lecturers may provide further reading, materials etc in hard copies or on Blackboard. In addition to ensure that students are aware of their own roles and responsibilities to engage with their lecturers and the modules chosen, the LLM Director and Head of School will address this issue at the start of the first term. The LLM Director will ensure that feedback from students (generally through student evaluation forms but also through meetings) and from external examiners is anonymised and made available to all academic staff when it becomes available.

18. We recommend that the School consider how its teaching of European Union law might be improved to meet the learning needs of all students on the postgraduate programme. Consideration might be given to the introduction of a module with ECTS in two streams, e.g. with introductory classes for the beginners and, as an alternative, participation of the truly advanced students in the European Law Moot Court Competition (<https://www.europeanlawmootcourt.eu/>).

Response: Subject to resources, the School will introduce an introductory EU law module to the LLM programme. This will be a full module offered in the first term and available only to

students who have not taken EU Law before. It will be taught at a postgraduate level. (The existing optional series of lectures (circa four hours) providing a very brief introduction to EU Law and the Common Law will continue to run.) The prospect of offering a European Law Court Competition with ECTS in the second term will be explored.

19. We recommend that the School better explain to the students the practical consequences of the freedom of choice that they are given over their dissertation topic. Students in fact have two options: either to choose a topic for which there is a specialist at the School (and to do so in good time in order to secure that person's supervision); or consciously to choose a different topic, knowing that there may or may not be a specialist available for supervision (depending on the chosen topic).
20. In our view, the School might consider moving towards a system (which is consistent with at least some other approaches of which we are aware) whereby the supervisor grades the LLM dissertation and the grade is then reviewed by a second examiner who would conduct a (considerably lighter) second reading in order to ensure consistency of grading.
21. The School might give consideration to an approach whereby students are asked to hand in a first completed draft of their dissertation by the end of June, whereupon they receive comments until mid-July with a deadline for completion by the end of August.

Response to recommendations 19-21: The Law School considers that the role of the dissertation in the degree programme requires a more holistic review, in the context of which these specific recommendations will be considered. The Law School will establish a working group to recommend a new approach to the dissertation component, in light of the reviewers' recommendations and the issues that arose in the self-assessment report. The working group will report to the School Committee in June with a view to proposals being adopted for the academic year 2018-19. In particular, the Group will consider the following:

- the range of career trajectories of our LLM graduates;
- the graduate attributes for LLM graduates;
- the dissertation model that can best assist in the development of those attributes;
- the resource implications, including staff time and finance;
- the respective merits of individual and group supervision;
- the responsibilities of supervisors under the different models;
- the timeline for completion, taking account of the fact that the LLM programme requires a workload that is 50% higher than each year of the LLB programmes and that LLM students have 33% fewer class contact hours each year than LLB students;
- the appropriate role for adjunct lecturers;
- the role of examiners.

This is a non-exhaustive list.

Membership of the Group will be the Head of School, Director of LLM programmes, Assistant Director of LLM programmes, incoming Director of LLM programmes, LLM administrator. The Group will consult widely with current staff and students by email and through holding an open forum for interested staff.

22. We recommend that the School look again at the scope and availability of meaningful co-curricular activities – at all levels (mentoring, careers, academic and non-academic supports, wellness, social, athletic, etc.) – that are available for foreign students (ideally with the strong input of student representatives in this discussion).

Response: As the Self Assessment Report indicated, College resources are available to postgraduate students. Students are informed of these resources in the LLM Handbook and through various presentations during the year. Students could certainly benefit from further academic support in terms of research, active learning etc. This is offered generally to students in the School by way of general presentations but individual academic advisors would be preferable. (Supervisors deal with some of these issues but this may take place late in the first term and students' experience varies in this respect.) As resources are limited within the School, it is proposed that an additional number of lectures could be put on to focus on legal writing for non-native English speakers, plagiarism etc. The remit of the Student Wellness Officer will specifically include LLM students. LLM student representatives will be invited to join the School's Alumni and Development Committee. This Committee has representatives of all Law School student societies and organisations. This will help to ensure integration of LLM students into existing student organisations.

23. We recommend that the School now focus on the quality of its current programmes and other programmes in terms of teaching, facilities, etc., before adding new programmes (which will inevitably stretch current resources further) or embarking on new initiatives, and only then with adequate support and facilities.

Response: The Law School is already in discussions with the School of Business to develop a Law and Finance masters. However, the School accepts the recommendation not to develop any further streams at present.

Postgraduate Research (PhD)

24. We recommend that attention be paid to whether the official confirmation of PhD status be brought forward in terms of scheduling.

Response: The Law School is subject to College rules in this regard. However, moves to full semesterisation across College may open up a window of opportunity for this process to be moved to January, thus providing more time for unsuccessful applicants to submit for the award of M.Litt. The School will keep this under review.

25. We recommend that the School further investigate funding possibilities for additional PhD scholarships where at all possible.

Response: This is a priority for the School. There are other possible opportunities under review at College level, such as the proposal to increase the amount awarded to 1592 scholars, and the school will play a full part in these, as well as other external, developments.

26. While we recommend continuing with the mandatory research seminar and recognise that certain PhD students may benefit from taking further taught modules, we are not convinced that further compulsory modules are needed.

Response: The School accepts this recommendation, but still considers that greater encouragement for auditing of modules would be helpful.

Overall Teaching and Learning Experience

27. We recommend that modes of assessment at the School be reviewed and expanded where possible/appropriate.

Response: This process is underway. The message continues to be emphasised via individual meetings and other communications that terminal summative assessments in the form of exams will be best reduced in light of pedagogical best practice and the expansion of graduate attributes. It is intended that exams will be replaced with diverse assessments that avoid over-assessment for students and inappropriate administrative burdens for staff. Three undergrad modules are in the process of discontinuing exams. Much diversification has happened in recent year – blog posts, group and individual presentations, discussion boards, in-class tests, response papers - and renewed drive and encouragement is appropriate.

28. We recommend that open-book examinations become the rule at least at the postgraduate level.

Response: The School has already introduced open book exams in many modules and will continue to encourage staff to make this development, particularly at postgraduate level. However, some caution is appropriate. For open book exams to be a success, the examiner needs to be particularly skilled at drafting nuanced exam questions, whether essays or problems. Open book exams need to be developed as part of a thoroughgoing commitment to a different method of assessment, aligned with a different approach to teaching and learning.

29. We recommend that an increasing number of formative assessment opportunities be provided where possible and appropriate.

Response: As noted, one of the School's upcoming T&L forums with our TEP Fellow is to be on formative assessment and feedback strategies.

30. We encourage the use of in-term (potentially informal although still anonymous) course evaluations.

Response: The School considers that an online evaluation after three weeks is appropriate. This evaluation would not be shared with the DUTL or the Head of School but would rather be an in-module management tool. A trial mid-module evaluation was conducted in the 2nd semester, 2016-17 (in the Legal Philosophy module). The experience led to the drafting of new survey questions by the DUTL specifically for early or mid-module evaluation, which were then discussed at the Law School's Undergraduate Studies Committee on 22 March 2017. Discussion led to refinement of the draft questions and the recommendation that the survey could be conducted via email/online rather than in-class. The questionnaire includes an element of student reflection where students evaluate their own participation in the module to date. A template for an online survey tool will be available for lecturers to use, if they wish, for 2017-18. This survey is not intended to replace the existing practice of in-class paper surveys at the end of every module (though there may be refinement of the questionnaire).

31. We believe that the School should also consider a certain degree of evaluation by the director of a given study programme and/or by teaching colleagues.

Response: The School will conduct a formal review of each educational programme every five years. The DUTL, Deputy DUTL and LLM Director will continue to meet module lecturers to reflection on student feedback and lecturer experience of individual modules. Voluntary peer-observed teaching method to continue to be encouraged and practised. However, formal evaluation of teaching beyond these approaches might raise human resources and industrial relations issues. Such evaluation is beyond the remit of the School to introduce.

32. We applaud the goal stated in the Strategic Plan of exploring the many benefits and possibilities of the increased use of online teaching (both beyond and within the classroom).

Response: The School has commenced discussions with Trinity Online about the development of online material that would serve both CPD programmes and existing modules.

33. It is our view that, where possible and appropriate, the delivery of modules should include significant opportunities for active learning and instructors should be urged to encourage active student engagement and participation, wherever possible.

Response: Active student learning was the focus of T&L forums previously but recent times have seen different focus as the active learning message seems to be widely understood. However, the School will return to topics such as active learning in large group lectures in future T&L sessions.

34. We are of the view that a new building, or at least significantly expanded and modernised teaching, study and communal spaces, would greatly enhance the School's ability not only to maintain its current programme offerings, but also to improve what it currently does offer as well as to pursue future and different directions (as identified in its Strategic Plan).

Response: Plans for the development of a new Law School are currently under active consideration.

3. Response from the Faculty Dean

MEMORANDUM

TO: Quality Office
FROM: Professor Darryl Jones, Dean AHSS
DATE: 12 May 2017
SUBJECT: School of Law Programmes review– Dean’s response

I would like to begin by thanking the reviewers, Professors Trevor Farrow, John Jackson, and Christa Tobler, for their impressively detailed, constructive, and positive review. As the Head of School’s response makes clear, this is a very helpful document, which will clarify and in many cases guide the School’s thinking on its various degree programmes for many years to come. It is particularly gratifying to read the Review’s assertion that ‘The School of Law, situated in an internationally leading university, is a world class institution – consistently ranking in the top 100 law schools in the world’ (p. 3). Also gratifying is the reviewers’ sense that the Law School is facing ‘the kinds of issues and challenges that are being faced by most, if not all, law schools around the world’ (p. 25).

This is an unusual review for me to assess from a Faculty Dean’s perspective. As a Quality Review of academic programmes, much of what it deals with are matters of the internal and pedagogical business of the School of Law. The Head of School’s admirably full response demonstrates the degree of seriousness with which he and his colleagues take the Review’s findings, and I am very happy to endorse all of the Head of School’s suggestions on matters specific to Law alone.

I would, however, note one area of concern, which is in the provision of staff for the Law and French degree in particular. The Law School is concerned about the ‘disproportionate expenditure’ of a second post in Law and French, and worries about the sustainability of the programme. I will work with the Heads of Law and LLCS to try to resolve this problem.



An tOllamh Darryl Jones
Déan

Dámh na nEalaíon, na nDaonnachtaí agus na
nEolaíochtaí Sóisialta,
Coláiste na Tríonóide,
Baile Átha Cliath 2, Éire

Professor Darryl Jones
Dean

Faculty of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences,
Trinity College,
Dublin 2, Ireland

T + 353 (0)1 896 1200

artshss@tcd.ie
<http://ahss.tcd.ie/>