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

Quality Review of Trinity Business School

15-17 October 2024

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Organisation and terms of reference

The Quality Review Group (QRG) would like to warmly thank the School for a well-managed visit. Our special thanks go to Professor Laurent Muzellec, Dean of TBS; Professor Orla Sheils, Vice Provost, Professor Carmel O'Sullivan Dean AHSS, Professor Aideen Long as a wonderful facilitator and to Mr. David Byrne, Director of Accreditation and Quality Assurance. The QRG would also like to thank the faculty, staff, students, alumni and members of the corporate world who contributed to the discussions during our visit. Overall, the interactions with the School were very open and were characterised by a high degree of professionalism. We very much appreciated that all representatives of the School (without exception) were willing to discuss the various opportunities and challenges faced by the School as it works towards delivering the goals set out in its current TBS Strategic Plan.

The panel has specifically been asked to focus on:

1. The School Strategy including if it is fit for purpose and aligned with mission and values
2. The effectiveness of the school's internal governance, management and administrative structures in delivering and supporting the strategy and mission
3. The quality of the School's teaching and learning provision, learning resources and learning environment that underpin the delivery of:
   - UG teaching
   - PG taught
   - PG Research
   - Executive Education
4. The Quality of the School's Research
5. The best use and adequacy of the School's existing resources to deliver its academic mission

Recommendations

Strategic Planning

The School's Transforming Business for Good Strategy was published in April 2022, and updated in July 2024 after the appointment of a new School Dean (Prof. Laurent Muzellec) in July 2023. Implementation of the School Strategy is enabled via a suite of sub-strategies (Undergraduate Teaching & Learning, Postgraduate Teaching & Learning, Executive Education, and Research) which include specific activities and projects/actions. The School's Strategic Implementation Plan – which will include mappings of actions and KPIs to the Strategic Objectives for each area of operations is currently being finalised and will provide a consolidated dashboard with which the Dean and School Executive Committee can monitor all KPIs. There are real opportunities for further embedding the revised strategic implementation plan and engaging all colleagues to deliver strategic priorities. We recommend that a communication plan is developed and implemented so all staff and stakeholders understand the school's strategic priorities, have a clear vision of what success is, as well as the linkages and synergies with the new university strategy (once developed). The implementation plans should have clearly delineated timelines, roles and responsibilities, resourcing plans and measures of success.

Enhanced communications of promotion and support

Trinity College has an established promotion system at the University and AHSS faculty level. However, some academic staff do not appear to be aware of the criteria required for promotion and expressed concerns about the difficulties of getting promoted internally. There are opportunities for using annual objective setting and support meetings with academics to ensure a better understanding of the promotion system, linking objectives to strategic priorities and supporting academics on their promotion journey. In addition, the new subject area coordinator may contribute to support the director of the faculty in that developmental role.

Trinity Business School Brand

Trinity College has a strong brand that is internationally recognised and aligned with the Trinity Business School brand. Students and alumni acknowledge the strength of the Trinity brand as among the reasons for their choice and sense of identity. When working on the Trinity Business School brand, the school may gain from building on the Trinity brand rather than working on the TBS brand as a separate element.

Executive Education and on-line

The panel recommends that a comprehensive strategy for Executive Education – underpinned by detailed plans for budget, investment, organisation and market strategy is developed. The business school is moving from a strategy of growth in UG and PG provision to consolidation and quality. The school is expanding its executive education offerings and hybrid/online provision which can capitalise on Dublin's strong business base, alumni and the excellent work taking place in the Executive Education arena.

Executive Education can be timetabled outside normal UG and PG teaching hours. ‒ While this can enhance the utilisation of space, it is resource intensive. Discussions with alumni, academics and industry experts highlighted opportunities for enhancing the business school brand by ensuring that students enrolled in online courses spend some time in Dublin. They also highlighted a need for more agility and speed (while maintaining robustness) when developing new accredited executive academic programmes and modules. There was significant constructive debate on the School's mission to transform business for good and sustainability with some students describing that this a major driver

for them to study at the business schools and others suggesting it was not important for them.

The flexible (on-line) model should include time spent in Dublin to maintain student experience and the sense of belonging of the students and alumni. Regarding Executive Education, the start is very promising and the scale up requires careful strategic and organisational analysis.

Strategy definition and implementation

This section addresses the review of chapters 1, 2, 3 and 8 of the "School Review of Trinity Business School" (SAR), presented to the QRG in July 2024, which inform the two first points of the terms of reference: The school strategy and the effectiveness of the school's internal governance, management and administrative structure. Discussions mostly took place in sessions 1, 2, 3 and 4.

After a period of rapid growth since the "growth and development strategy" in 2016 which has been very successful, a new strategy has been defined in 2022 "Transforming Business for Good" and slightly amended with the arrival of the new Dean Laurent Muzellec.

The mission of TBS "Transform Business for Good" has three main pillars: Ethical, Impactful and Sustainable. The definition of the strategic objectives is high level: Enhance international reputation, centrality of responsible leadership and sustainability principles, technology (AI) to efficiently transform business for good, inclusivity and diversity, staff empowerment and flexible postgraduate programmes as well as executive education.

The university is revising its strategy for the next strategic five years 26-30. The business school strategy is aligned with the current formulation of the university strategy. High level discussions are continuing to take place to ensure continued alignment with the new University Strategy 26-30. We were reassured that the School's mission, vision and values will continue to align very much with the university strategy and with the expectations of a modern, responsible business school providing ethical, impactful and sustainable business education and business research.

The TBS strategy focuses on consolidation of the organisation and positioning of the school, anticipating a stabilisation of the number of students at around 2,800 (1,800 FTE) but includes an ambition to increase executive education and on-line classes. The consolidation phase slows down the increase of the student number on campus as well as the recruitment of new faculty. The Dean pointed out that the growth in faculty and staff in recent years has had a positive impact on the environment and level of engagement. Going forward focus will be on – with less recruitment - collegiality and commitment from the Executive Committee. This commitment will be an important way to maintain the engagement of academic faculty and professional service teams.

The school's strategic plan has just been "recalibrated" and the relevantly recent appointment of the new Dean, means implementation plans are still in progress. Thus, each unit (as represented in the Executive Committee) is developing a strategic implementation plan. All the executive committee members will share operational objectives and targets for the next 5 years. At this time, the strategy has not been translated into budget, investment and organisation.

Regarding the two main sources of future development i.e. executive education and on-line education, investment has been made and organisation seems to be in place. However, the review team notes that, one of the biggest challenges for executive education in general is the incorporation and collaboration with the rest of the school, the usual tendency being to emphasise the uniqueness and specificity of Executive education as opposed to the rest of the School activities. This may be something to be aware of going forward.

The SAR emphasises that the commitment to transform for good combines two dimensions: sustainability and climate change on the one hand and social/societal impact on the other hand. It is important to challenge "Transforming business for Good" including linking to SDGs in a systemic way.

Impact is usually defined according to the different audiences of the school: students, academia, companies, public authorities and society at large. For education and pedagogy, it seems that implementation of the strategy is already on-going, with systematic inclusion of SDGs within classes. It has also been infusing research through centres, like the Centre for Social Innovation, the Centre for Digital Business & Analytics and The Corporate Government Lab. Centres reflect the expertise of TBS faculty and its ability to conduct multidisciplinary, problem-solving research. The SAR mentions very little about the collaboration with companies. Most of the external funding comes from government or EU while companies remain on shadow. TBS can surf on the Trinity brand name to establish itself and the success of Executive education (mirrored in the FT ranking) is very promising for a systematic approach and collaboration with the world of business.

Governance: Staff and scholars have been emphasising collegiality as a leitmotiv of governance. The size of the school impacts also positively on informal coordination and adjustment.

KPIs remain to be defined at the school level and by direction.

Undergraduate programmes

Undergraduate programmes, curriculum and graduate attributes

The School has an undergraduate population of 1,808 and offers 5 undergraduate programmes:
(1) Global Business, (2) Business, Economics & Social Studies, (3) Computer Science & Business, (4) Law & Business, and (5) Business studies and a language. The undergraduate programmes are mainly targeted at Irish students who constitute 76% of the undergraduate student population. Global Business is the School's single honours while the remaining 4 programmes are offered in combination with other Schools at the University.

Entry requirements are high (CAO points for School programmes are among the highest for business programmes in Ireland) and only 13% of the students applying are offered a place.

After years of immense growth (primarily in the postgraduate programmes), the School's strategy is now one of consolidation and a cap on non-EU students in the Global Business and BESS programmes have recently been introduced, which means that the capacity for growth is limited at undergraduate level. Instead, the focus is on consolidation and collegiality – making sure that faculty and staff are committed and engaged in running the School activities and working closely together to produce the best offerings possible.

The majority of the undergraduate modules are shared across most or all of the programmes, apart from Global Business for which some modules are taught exclusively.

The advantage of this approach is that all students (irrespective of programme) acquire the same skill sets. The disadvantage may be class sizes and lack of sense of belonging (1st and 2nd year classes may be up to 500 students in one module). This is, however, addressed by breaking large classes up into tutorials, and in 3rd and 4th year, the choice of modules increases, and class sizes get smaller. The curriculum design also means that some students need to engage with up to three different subject partners and – in the joint honours – with a completely different discipline. However, when asked, both faculty and students confirm that they can manage the level of complexity and different subject fields and benefit from the cross-cutting courses and collaboration with other disciplines in other`

schools. Though some UG students complain about the shuffling of modules and crammed and intense weeks as a result.

The interdisciplinarity obtained through this collaboration is regarded by faculty and staff as a huge asset where not only students but also faculty learn from each other.

At the same time, common skill sets allow for a thorough implementation of the "Transforming Business for Good" strategy which places responsible leadership and sustainable principles at the heart of the teaching activities.

Strategy of UG programmes

The "strategy for undergraduate teaching and learning (2023-28)" which has been developed to realize the Business School's strategy at undergraduate level focusses on sustainability and ethics in business education, interactive learning, integration of technological advancements into pedagogy, inclusivity for socio-economically disadvantaged students, and the enhancement of students' lifecycle experience.

From the interview sessions it appears that faculty and staff are very committed to the delivery of the Transforming Business for Good strategy in the design of the individual course modules and in the recruitment of faculty (e.g. a professor in responsible leadership) who can develop the field even further. Also, the advisory board and industry representatives accentuate how the strategy feeds into the curriculum (with core modules on sustainability), through research-led teaching, and the entire student experience (buildings, facilities, etc.).

However, when talking to the undergraduate students, the focus on sustainability in their programmes was appreciated but not regarded as a key element of their education (apart from one student from BESS). This may be due to the fact that we mostly talked to 3rd and 4th year students who began their studies when the strategy was under development. Rather the students highlighted the FT ranking, the Trinity brand, the focus on entrepreneurship as examples of reasons why they had applied to Trinity Business School.

Now one year into the strategy for undergraduate teaching and learning, the embedding of sustainability in the UG curriculum is going extremely well. In terms of AI, there are still lots of discussions both at school and college level about the way forward and there may be a tendency to go "in circles" as one interviewee said. However, a policy seems now in place at college level. The school is also encouraging module leaders to try out new things locally and asks module leaders to consider the use and integration of AI in the teaching and assessment of modules

As for inclusivity for the socio-economically disadvantaged, there is a potential for doing more and faculty state that they have not shown as much progress as they would have liked in the Pathways to Business programme. Since it is an explicit strategic ambition, it may be relevant for the school to develop targets relating to how much of the student body should come from a different socio-economic background if they are not already in place.

Teaching and learning quality

The SAR states several parameters used to assess the quality of the programmes (such as triple crown accreditation, student ratings, Annual Programme Review Reports, retention, teaching awards, external examiners' reports, national student survey etc.).

It follows also from our conversation with faculty and staff that the Director of undergraduate programmes keeps a close eye on module evaluations and engages with module leaders. If scores are low, they encourage peer learning support, share best practices, or discuss redesigning a course, substituting lecturers or other support. This face-to-fact dialogue is important to assess whether the teacher needs extra support. The external examiners' report is also an important measure of quality assessment which is also complimented by a meeting where the report is elaborated on.

The response rate of student evaluations is, however, very low though different measures have been taken to encourage a higher response rate. (e.g. QR code in the lecture room, reducing the number of questions, etc.). But the surveys do not stand alone, and the programme directors also meet with class representatives on a regular basis, and this dialogue is a rich source for feedback at programme level.

From our conversations with UG students it appears that students don't feel incentivized to comment on a course at the end of the term when they won't benefit from the changes proposed. They suggest mid-term evaluations instead – which have been tried out with success in some programmes. The students also suggested that the teaching assistants should focus more on their pedagogic skills rather than their grades only. They would also like to see more practice- oriented and interactive teaching.

Discussions in the advisory board are also concerned with the quality of the programmes – including the competences and skills of the future graduates. The advisory board goes through metrics to assess how much of the education has transitioned to content on sustainability. The advisory board also provide input into the AI aspect of the strategy including the impact of AI on learning and assessment and how to we balance the positive and negative aspects of AI.

Conclusion

There is a strong sense of commitment and engagement among faculty and staff who are pleased with their brilliant students (incl exchange students), the huge demand for their business programmes, and the reimagining of the undergraduate curriculum with focus on sustainability and responsible business.

The UG students are very pleased with the admin support they get, they appreciate the learning environment and the quality of education, the many student organizations and events outside the classroom, and are in general very happy with their studies. They reiterate that housing *is* a problem, while most have managed to find a place to stay either in Dublin City or in the suburban areas some are forced to travel long distances to campus.

Postgraduate programmes

This section of the report is linked to chapter 5 of the SAR.

Postgraduate programme, curriculum and graduate attributes

The school has 17 PG programmes (please note the strategy document suggests 18 which is different than the SAR) including a full time, part time and flexible MBAs, a PhD Programme),
12 master programmes and open and custom professional development programmes. Approximately 79% of the PG student body is international (38% EU and 62% non- EU) with student numbers from any country on each cohort capped at 30% to ensure diversity. The SAR reports that this diversity adds a range of new perspectives and opinions, thereby enriching discussions and topics.

Strategy of PG programmes

The PG strategy is closely aligned with the School's and University's mission and values. It involves redefining education through innovative teaching methods and dynamic learning environments and championing lifelong learning opportunities. Sustainability is a cornerstone of the strategy. The five strategic objectives are clearly presented with a strategic priority table clearly defining timelines and roles and responsibilities. The school has clearly defined metrics for evaluating the student experience and evaluating teaching quality which were discussed and are not presented in the strategy. As the School further develops its plan, it will be important to consider what it defines as success in relationship to all 5 strategic objectives.

Teaching and Learning Quality

Triple Crown Accreditation and excellent rankings in many University league tables provide evidence of the excellence in teaching and learning quality and a strong educational culture. It includes quality control process, quality control for assessment, selectivity in PG recruitment, good admission processes and generous scholarships, and teaching and learning quality control systems. Evidence of positive feedback from external examiners and students was shared with the QRG. The postgraduate renewal process and mechanisms for assessing the student experience were clearly presented and of a high quality.   Like any other business or management school, AI is presenting challenges as well as significant opportunities which the school is aware of.

Staff were engaged and enthusiastic about existing and future programmes as well as the opportunities to link their research into their teaching. Students and alumni commented on the high levels of overall support, positive student experience and strong academic and professional service support. In particular, external speakers and guest lectures were described as excellent. Two students that we interviewed expressed a desire to learn more about the dissertations, the support provided in completing the dissertations and company projects as close to the start of the semester as possible. Others described how there may be opportunities for more training and support when using the various software applications provided by the School, such as Bloomberg, in the future.

Feedback on dissertation supervision was in general very positive, but as in any large business school there are opportunities to explore additional ways of ensuring that there is a consistent approach to supervisor engagement and support. Alumni also indicated that some tutors were less experienced than others and there may be opportunities for additional support and training for tutors, including with presentation/communication skills. Some alumni suggested there were times when assessment and coursework spiked. The timing of assessments and their

impact of the student journey and experience should continue to be reviewed at programme committee meetings and if necessary, the PG Committee.

Faculty and research

This section about faculty and research addresses two dimensions of the terms of reference, the quality of the school's research (including its area of expertise in terms of social innovation and digital business and analytics) and the best use and adequacy of the school's existing resources. It is based on chapters 3, 7, 8 and 10 of the SAR. Discussions during sessions 3, 4, 8 and 13 nurture the analysis.

Faculty organisation

The school has 63 core faculty, 94 adjunct faculty and 60 professional staff in 2023-24 versus 33 core faculty and 25 professional staff in 2016. The core faculty of the school consists of 5 chair professors, 5 professors, 23 associate professors and 21 assistant professors, one research fellow and 8 teaching assistants.

With 27 females and 36 males, the faculty is gender balanced. About 50% of the faculty is international, bringing diversity in the faculty. The intense recruitment policy means approximately 50% of the faculty is under 45.

Sufficiency ratio staff/student is 1:24 when including adjunct faculty and 1:29 with core faculty. The ratio has improved notably during the last 5 years.

The university has been supporting the development of the school, opening an adequate number of positions to accompany the increasing number of students as well as the emergence of new expertise such as social innovation, digital business and analytics and Corporate governance.

All in all, the recruitment of talent and the distribution of roles seem satisfactory for both the university and the school, however, the promotion system (and lack of career framework locally) seems to be seizing up, leading to departures or possible disengagement.

The promotion criteria are defined at the university level, integrating three essential elements, teaching, research and commitment to the institution. The weighting of these criteria as well as the level required in each of the university's components is an element of debate within the faculty. However, discussions with faculty highlighted expectations and standards for promotions that sometimes differ slightly between the university and the school, which could generate questions within the faculty.

The workload allocation model for faculty is a traditional one, 40% of the time dedicated to teaching, 40% dedicated to research and 20% dedicated to management/service/engagement. The individual workload is updated annually by the director of faculty. While the model applies to all faculty, adaptation can be made, based on leadership role in programs or in service to academia (editorship).

With the growth of the school, and to better articulate programmes and faculty, subject area coordinators have been introduced in 2024-25. Their mission is to enhance faculty cohesion and to coordinate pedagogical progression by discipline, to avoid potential overlap and ensure that classes address all the required competences

Faculty considers its organisation to be in transition to accommodate its growth, the necessary evolution of the promotion system (at least from assistant to associate) and the articulation between faculty and programmes.

Research and impact

The research strategy at Trinity School of Business aligns with the global strategy of the school published in 2022 "Transforming Business for Good". Research groups are in place (Trinity Centre for social innovation; Trinity Centre for digital business & analytics and Trinity corporate governance lab) which articulate scientific discussion and production, interaction with stakeholders and students. The different centres are multidisciplinary and seek to address grand challenges through engagement with stakeholders.

Most faculty are affiliated with one of the Trinity centres. However, some are conducting research outside centres. Following the growth in the number of scholars, the research output has been growing accordingly and the proportion of ABS 4 and 4* journals increases. The school leadership prioritises peer reviewed journals (ABS 3 and above), thought leadership output, pedagogical output and executive education as dissemination channels of research. The huge majority of the faculty is research active (Scholarly academic according to the AACSB wording).

PhD students participate in the delivery of the scientific output and the research strategy. They acknowledge academic guidance by PhD supervisors. However, they would value financial support for conferences to better connect with the scientific community and build up networks. From the interviews it also appears that there is lack of clarity in terms of career moves especially if a PhD-student wants to pursue an academic career. The PhD-students may benefit from a change from one PhD supervisor to panel supervision which may encourage them to participate in different projects and co-author articles, and to learn from different perspectives.

Funded research projects, mostly by government, agencies and EU have been increasing over the 5 past years as a way to impact policy makers.

The research organisation and objectives are in transition towards impact. For the moment, the transitioning model focuses on testing different processes to stimulate impact on companies and on the society. After careful evaluation, processes will be assessed. Objectives and KPIs will be further defined.

Regarding impact, different channels to foster the business school impact are described in chapter 10, including impact within university generating more interdisciplinary approaches and education, in international organisations and within the scientific community (editorship). Even if executive education has been growing fast during the last years, it seems that systematic interactions (research contract, research chair funded by industry) between research and companies remain to be seen.

Executive Education

The Quality Review Group (QRG) commend the Executive Education Team for their internal and external engagement programmes; the diversity of their offerings and the impressive FT ranking.

The QRG supports the School's ambitions for the Executive Education function – including the enhancement of its strategic importance in implementing Strategy 2030. Our overarching comments regarding the shaping and implementation of strategy are particularly relevant for Executive Education. In light of the high profile obtained by the Executive Education function and excellent rankings at such an early stage of its evolution it is likely to face even more intense competition locally and globally.

A comprehensive strategy for Executive Education – underpinned by detailed plans for budget, investment, organisation and market strategy is required. The School Advisory Board should prove an invaluable resource in framing this Strategy. In debating the Strategy, it is recommended that consideration be given to closer integration with the wider School and opportunities for cross-collaboration with the School's undergraduate, postgraduate and research functions.

Also, in light of the competitive landscape referred to above, the School should carry out a comprehensive benchmarking of the Executive Education function with reference to key competitors.

Stakeholder alliances: There are opportunities to prioritise key alliances that present greater potential to realise the School's strategic ambitions – these might include IDA Ireland, Ibec and the American Chamber of Commerce Ireland.

School Advisory Board (SAB): The SAB is an invaluable resource to enable the Executive Education Team to widen and deepen their engagement with existing and potential corporate clients/partners.

The QRG notes the emerging positive impact of reforms in the composition of the SAB and its positioning in the School's governance structure. We see the SAB and the significant set of industry relationships as key enablers in the successful implementation of the 2030 Strategy.

Prioritisation of growth opportunities: Noting the School's focus on Postgraduate and the Executive Education programmes as key areas of opportunity, the SAB brings its considerable collective corporate experience to bear in assisting the School in prioritising areas of opportunity.

The School should continue to prioritise investment in technology platforms that will transform student, faculty and professional staff experience – including removing existing bureaucratic logjams – enable more powerful codification of knowledge and empower global education reach through implementation of a fit for purpose Virtual Learning Environment (VLE). A resourcing plan was not shared with the panel.

The School reports administration delays and logjams in areas including the payment of external faculty/examiners/contributors and the payment of fees by overseas students. To the extent these can be fixed within the School, this should be prioritised; to the extent it is due to

wider national policy/administration approaches (e.g. registrations for PPSN's) the case for change should be clearly made to the relevant decision-makers.

Appropriate allocation of resources and review/reform of governance structures are necessary to allow for greater sharing of knowledge, market intelligence and growth opportunities between the Executive Education and Postgraduate functions. By way of example, it is likely that as the Executive Education function expands the range of customised programmes it offers, it will generate a rich source of material (subject to IP and confidentiality considerations) for Postgraduate programmes.

The School has identified the Irish diaspora in the U.S. as a key lever of growth, coupled with the very significant clusters of multinational operations, in every sector, in Dublin and across Ireland. The QRG sees this as a potential source of transformative growth and innovation for the School – partly enabled by closer linkages with the stakeholders mentioned above including IDA Ireland and the SAB.

There appears to be opportunities for deepening linkages with appropriate Business Schools in the U.S. to further this objective.

The QRG recognises the merits of pursuing a theme-led strategy for the Executive Education offerings – with a particular focus being placed on sustainability. We recommend that this is not done to the exclusion of role-based programmes including for those aspiring to or already arrived at C-Suite level.

In light of the School's ambitions for Executive Education and the scale of the areas of opportunity, the QRG recommends the appropriate approval of a detailed resourcing and investment plan to include faculty/personnel succession planning and investment in technology.

Accreditation agility: An agile and certain accreditation process is of great importance for the entire school. It is particularly so for the Executive Education market who expect agility and responsiveness from their valued partners. The QRG recommends developing a strategy for implementing reforms to the existing process and consideration of the potential value of a "Special Purpose Vehicle" for the Executive Education Unit.

Postgraduate research: We recommend that consideration be given to how the postgraduate research conducted within the school and those carrying out the research can contribute appropriately to the content and delivery of the Executive Education offerings.

The QRG recommends more intensive awareness raising and marketing of the Executive Education offerings to both the alumni community and to existing students (particularly postgraduate) as they approach the end of their current progremmes

Resources- Finance

The QRG commends the School for the rigour of their Finance Function and the strong financial governance both within the School and how the School reports to the University.

As the University is currently finalising its next strategic plan, the QRG believes that this is the appropriate time for the Business School to finalise its investment/resource allocation plan that will ensure successful delivery of its Strategy 2030.

The QRG recommends that a review is carried out of the Risk Register to ensure it is capturing all material financial risks – this will also inform revisions to the SWOT analyses.

Another area that merits early consideration by the School from a risk perspective is cyber security

strategy. We recognise that overall strategy is set at College level but believe that the unique nature of the School's stakeholders and the current and planned investment in IT infrastructure merits a School specific cyber strategy.

The Business School building is excellently utilised during "business hours" but less so in the evening, at weekends and outside of College term-times. We recommend this unutilised space is appropriately harnessed – particularly for Postgraduate and Executive Education programmes and lifelong learning offerings.

Alumni community

The College and School benefit from a loyal and proud alumni network who want to give back – many already are, others are searching for the best means of doing so.

Build on the very strong current programme of networking and promotion and devise an impactful campaign that communicates to alumni all that the School has to offer. Ideally, alumni should see the College and School as a key source for lifelong learning.

Global Reach: Roll out a programme of engagements with alumni in key global locations that are likely to bring growth and support for the School.

Build on the mentoring: There is an opportunity to expand on the utilisation of alumni to provide career mentoring and support for current students. This should include mentoring on global career opportunities and not solely those in Ireland.

Trinity Business Forum: This event – and similar ones – could be re-branded as Global in nature and attract global leaders – including from within the alumni network – as delegates and speakers. The events should be used as compelling showcases for the entirety of the School's offerings and its faculty and professional staff.

Summary of recommendations

In summary, the panel was impressed by the School which has:
- a strategy including if it is fit for purpose and aligned with mission and values
- effective internal governance, management and administrative structures to deliver and supporting the strategy and mission
- high quality teaching and learning provision, with learning resources and learning environment that underpin the delivery of: UG teaching; PG taught; PG Research; and Executive Education
- high quality research
- resources to deliver its academic mission

The panel recommends that in the near future the school:

- Further develops and embeds the revised strategic implementation plan including a communication plan that enables all staff and stakeholders understand the school's strategic priorities, have a clear vision of what success is, as well as the linkages and synergies with the new university strategy (once developed). The implementation plans should have clearly delineated timelines, roles and responsibilities, resourcing plans and measures of success.
- Continues to embed the Trinity College promotion system so that all academic staff are aware of the criteria required for promotion and expressed concerns about the difficulties of getting promoted internally. Annual objective setting and support meetings with academics should be considered which should help to ensure a better understanding of the promotion system, link objectives to strategic priorities and support academics on their promotion journey. The new subject area coordinator may contribute to support the director of the faculty in that developmental role.

- Builds the Trinity Business School brand in a manner that is aligned with and builds on the very strong Trinity college brand.

- Develops a comprehensive strategy for Executive Education – underpinned by detailed plans for budget, investment, organisation and a marketing strategy.

Dean of Trinity Business School Response to Reviewers' Report for Trinity Business School

Trinity Business School wishes to thank: the external reviewer team for their review and report; School stakeholders for their participation during the review; and University staff for their participation and assistance in the review process - particularly Quality Office staff, and Prof. Aideen Long for acting as Internal Facilitator during the review.

The following is the School's high-level response to the report. Over the coming months, the School will develop an implementation plan which will address the external review team's recommendations in detail.

The external review team's recommendations are very closely aligned with recommendations previously provided by the EQUIS Peer Review Team (PRT) following the 2023 EQUIS re-accreditation visit to the School, i.e. that the School:

- Develop a **Strategic Implementation Plan** to facilitate implementation of the School's 2022 'Transforming Business for Good' strategy. We note that the School shared its current progress on the development of its Strategic Implementation Plan with the external review team during the School Quality Review visit.

- Implement (and extend) its **Executive Education Strategy**, through a Strategic Implementation Plan which includes "detailed plans for budget, investment, organisation and market strategy".

- Consider the expansion of its **Hybrid/Online/Flexible programme provision**.

The external review team's recommendation concerning the School's **brand** also aligns with one of the School's EQUIS 'Development Objectives' which focuses on "building its brand and distinctiveness".
The School is actively working on the above initiatives and welcomes the external review team's recommendations in this regard – as endorsement of the appropriateness of the School's current plans and activities.
The School also welcomes the remaining recommendation from the external review team - that the School ensure that there is "a better understanding of the **promotion system**" among faculty members.

The external team provided a number of additional suggestions in the body of their report, which are welcomed by the School. These include:

- Investment in **technology platforms**, including a fit for purpose Virtual Learning Environment (VLE) – which would be particularly welcomed by the School's Executive Education unit.
- Raising the case for change in relation to the **payment of external faculty** with policymakers.
- Consideration of the potential value of a **"Special Purpose Vehicle" for the Executive Education Unit**.

- **Finalisation of the School's investment/resource/plan** to enable delivery of the School's strategy (which is currently in process).

In conclusion, the external review team's recommendations closely align with previous recommendations arising from the School's accreditation/re-accreditation reviews, and many are already in process. The School looks forward to the continued implementation of its 'Transforming Business for Good' strategy which will address the external review team's recommendations – supported by a detailed implementation plan addressing each of the external review team's recommendations will be developed in the coming months.

Dean Laurent Muzellec,
Trinity Business School,
Trinity College Dublin.

I welcome the Quality Review Group's insightful and constructive assessment of the Trinity Business School in November 2024. I wish to thank Professors Askehave, McLeay, Mangematin, and Mr Redmond for focusing on the terms of reference provided by the Quality Office, and providing a very positive and constructive report. I especially wish to thank the Dean of the Business School, Professor Muzellec, his colleagues and all of the team (staff, students, alumni and business stakeholders) for engaging professionally in this quality review. The review highlights the School's many strengths while providing a clear roadmap for areas requiring further development, aligning closely with recommendations from their recent EQUIS accreditation review. The review stands testament to the hard work and dedication of the School's staff and leadership team, and the Faculty is grateful for both the recognition of the School's strengths and the constructive feedback provided in the report.

The School's 2022 strategy, Transforming Business for Good, is commended for its focus on ethical leadership, sustainability, and societal impact. This vision is supported effectively by multidisciplinary centres like the Centre for Social Innovation, the Centre for Digital Business & Analytics and the Corporate Government Lab. Growth in core staffing, gender balance, and international representation are acknowledged. The School's impactful research output in high-quality journals and its alignment with societal challenges are acknowledged, alongside the contributions of its dedicated research centres. The reviewers commend the rapid success of Executive Education, including its strong FT rankings, diverse offerings, and strategic importance in advancing Strategy 2030, supported by the School Advisory Board. I was pleased to read that strong governance and financial management are noted as crucial enablers for the School's strategic goals. In addition, the School's strong alumni network, faculty commitment, and growing global reach are recognized as valuable assets for enhancing student support, mentorship, and outreach.

The reviewers identified several areas which will further strengthen TBS. These include the finalisation of a detailed Strategic Implementation Plan with clear KPIs, resource alignment, and operational milestones to facilitate the delivery of the School's strategic objectives. Strengthening integration the Executive Education Strategy and the School's postgraduate and research functions, alongside expanded hybrid and online offerings, will further support scalability and competitive positioning. Greater clarity on promotion processes and career pathways, alongside tailored PhD student support, were suggested as ways to encourage faculty and researcher engagement and retention. A limited number of operational and administrative challenges, such as external staff payments and overseas student registrations, were highlighted, as was a recommendation to consider accelerating investment in technology platforms to improve educational delivery and operational efficiency. Expanding alumni mentoring, global outreach events, and leveraging the Irish diaspora were suggested as possible ways to further strengthen the School's global profile and support transformative growth opportunities.

In acknowledging and welcoming the recommendations above, the Business School recognises that many of these closely align with its current initiatives and the recent EQUIS accreditation review objectives. Over the coming months, the School has committed to developing a detailed implementation plan addressing four overarching priorities which emerged from the review. The

review affirmed the School's strong foundation, strategic focus, and commitment to excellence, and by addressing these recommendations, Trinity Business School is well-positioned to maintain its leadership in ethical, sustainable business education and deliver on its transformative mission.

The Faculty remains committed to supporting the Trinity Business School as it addresses these priorities and I look forward to seeing the positive developments that will result from this review.

Professor Carmel O'Sullivan
Dean of the Faculty of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences