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

# Annual Report of
# Trinity Teaching and Learning

## 2019/2020

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Trinity Teaching and Learning

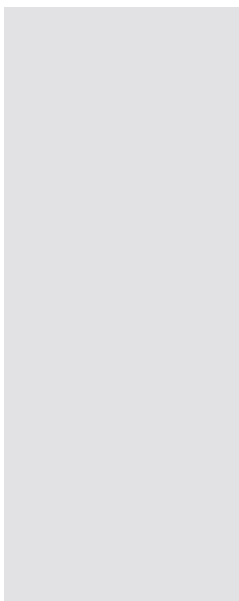| TT&L Divisions | Email for general enquiries | Telephone |
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**www.tcd.ie/teaching-learning/**

# a focus on creating a culture of quality that supports academic excellence and a positive student experience

# Introducing Trinity Teaching and Learning

Trinity Teaching and Learning, established in 2015/16, seeks to support, inform and guide the pedagogical practices, policies and structures that shape the educational experiences of undergraduate and postgraduate students at Trinity. Working closely with the Vice-Provost/Chief Academic Officer and Annual Academic Officers,  Trinity Teaching and Learning (TT&L) adopts a people-first approach, with a focus on creating a culture of quality that supports academic excellence and a positive student experience.

TT&L is led by the Academic Secretary and supported by a team of higher education professionals and support staff with considerable expertise across the span of the student academic lifecycle.

This is the third TT&L report and it provides an overview of activities across the five units of Academic Affairs; Academic Practice; Careers Service; Quality Office; and the Trinity Access Programmes (TAP), which includes the Mature Student Office.

The report presents the contribution made by the five units to the achievement of the University's strategic goals, particularly with respect to strengthening community, enhancing the student experience, renewing the Trinity education, activating talents, and building valuable partnerships.  It highlights some recent achievements and provides key figures for 2019/20.

**Patricia Callaghan**
**Academic Secretary**
**Head of Trinity Teaching & Learning**

## TT&L Core Functions and Activities

Underpin teaching and learning at Trinity with coherent, aligned **policies and processes**

Ensure the excellence of **academic practice and eLearning** central to teaching and learning at Trinity

Prepare students to succeed **beyond Trinity**

Foster **diversity and participation** in teaching and learning at Trinity

### The core functions of
### Trinity Teaching and Learning

Assure and contribute to the **enhancement of the quality** of teaching and learning at Trinity

Build valuable teaching and learning **partnerships**

## TT&L Core Functions and Activities

### Core Activities

**TT&L fulfils its core functions through the following activities:**

Development, revision, effective communication, and support of the implementation of academic policies, regulations, and frameworks

Enhancement of the pedagogical understandings and practices of academic staff and those who shape teaching practices across the University

Development, dissemination, and implementation of international best practice in quality assurance and enhancement

Provision of a comprehensive careers service for students, in collaboration with academic staff and employers

Linking with primary and post-primary schools and other education providers to ensure those from non-traditional backgrounds who demonstrate the potential to succeed in Trinity are supported to do so

Building partnerships with teaching and learning staff, education partners, policy makers and other stakeholders at institutional, national and international levels

Provision of advice and support to the University's academic committees and academic officers

Provision of advice and support to Schools in revising courses and developing new course proposals, and in reviewing and updating courses in response to national and international developments and emerging needs

# Assuring and Enhancing the Academic Quality of Teaching and Learning at Trinity

**At TT&L, we aim to foster a quality culture across the University. We build on quality assurance and enhancement structures to ensure that quality characterises every aspect of our students' university experience. Quality is the organising principle that expresses our identity and guides our actions.**

## Institutional Quality Review

2019/20 saw the initiation of preparations for the Institutional Quality Review. The review was scheduled for November 2020, but was rescheduled to March 2021 due to the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic.

In January 2020, the Institutional Self-Evaluation Team (ISET) was established. The Annual Institutional Quality Report and the Institutional Profile were submitted to QQI in February and April 2020, respectively.

In order to help engage the College community in the preparations for the review, a Communication Subcommittee was established in April 2020. A series of briefings have also been provided to principal and compliance committees of Council and Board.

Work continues on the preparation for the Institutional Self Evaluation Report (ISER) and on a series of Case Studies of Good Practice to be submitted to the QQI in 2020/21.

## Projects and Initiatives

Trinity and its partners in the European Universities Initiative **CHARM-EU** worked across a number of project groups, including the Quality and Accreditation Working Group, to deliver a model for the initial accreditation of a proposed CHARM- EU Masters Programme for consideration by Academic Committees in 2020/21. Trinity's partners in this initiative are the Universities of Barcelona, Utrecht, Montpelier and ELTE (Budapest).

In 2019/20, Trinity had its highest overall participation rate (34%) in the **National Student Survey** (formerly ISSE Survey) since its initiation in 2012/13. This represents an increase of 11% over 2018/19. It also saw the highest participation by PGT respondents (28%) since 2015. The Trinity Students' Unions were instrumental in supporting this level of response in March 2020 during the Covid-19 pandemic.

## Quality and Risk Management

Quality Compliance was subject to an Internal Audit by the Trinity Audit Office in 2019/20. The report was presented to the Audit Committee in March 2020 and included several recommendations. The Quality Office submitted its first status report on progress to address the recommendations in May 2020, with the next report due in November 2020.

The Quality Office submits an annual update to the Quality Risk Register to inform the College Risk Register.

Conscious of the importance of compliance with the EU-GDPR Regulations in respect of quality assurance activities, the Quality Office, working with the Office of the Data Protection Officer, undertook a review of its processing activities (Article 6 of the regulation). The Quality Office continues to work to improve processing of personal data in respect of, for example, the External Reviewers, to minimise risk of a breach in GDPR.

## COVID-19 Challenges

The impact of the Covid-19 pandemic caused serious disruption to the cycle of reviews. Two reviews proceeded prior to College closure in March 2020 - Quality Reviews of Financial Services Division and the School of Medicine. Four reviews were deferred, including the first review of a transnational programme - the B.Sc. in Physiotherapy jointly awarded with Singapore Institute of Technology.

Despite the challenges presented by the pandemic, the Quality Office had a number of achievements in 2019/20 including the revision of the Framework for Quality in Trinity, supporting Trinity's Linked Providers (RIAM and MIE) through the initial approval of their quality assurance policies and procedures under the QQI Act, and conducting the first evaluation of the Trinity Elective modules implemented under the Trinity Education Project.

## Key figures from 2019/20:

| | |
|---|---|
| **2** | quality reviews conducted with 4 deferred. |
| **4** | quality procedures updated/approved |
| **2** | responses submitted to QQI sectoral consultations |

# Underpinning Teaching and Learning at Trinity with Coherent, Aligned Policies and Processes

At TT&L we work to support and guide the efforts of academic committees, annual officers, and University staff as they plan and develop courses, academic structures, inter-institutional collaborations, and strategic initiatives in teaching and learning.

## Trinity Education Project

In 2019/20, TT&L staff within Academic Affairs provided support and guidance to the TEP Transitions, TEP Logistics and TEP Features work-streams and to the TEP Open Modules subgroup, which met monthly during the academic year. The Assistant Academic Secretary and the Education Support Officer were members of TEP Logistics and the Open Modules subgroup which approved seven Bespoke Open Modules for consideration by USC, five of which will be delivered in 2020/21. The Education Support Officer held responsibility for delivering work package 2.4 Enable Programme Flexibility of TEP Logistics, this included the identification of new minor subjects, ensuring

programmes aligned to programme architectures, and confirming open module offerings, as well as the preparation and provision of information to DT2 (information technology strand).

Eight workshops were delivered to Schools and College Tutors from September 2019 to February 2020 to raise awareness of the new common architecture and the pathways available to students.  Consultations were held with School Managers, course offices and students to support the development of resources on navigating the common architecture pathways and on Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs), which were developed for students in collaboration with the TEP Office.

| | Key figures from 2019/20: |
|---|---|
| **27** | postgraduate programmes approved |
| **13** | undergraduate programmes approved |
| **7** | new/updated policies and procedures approved |
| **6** | committees/subcommittees served with 34 individual meetings supported |
| **8** | workshops delivered to Schools and College Tutors on new common architecture and pathways |

# Underpinning Teaching and Learning at Trinity with Coherent, Aligned Policies and Processes

## Supporting University Committees and Annual Officers

TT&L works closely with the Registrar, Senior Lecturer/Dean of Undergraduate Studies and Dean of Graduate Studies and provides support to principal committees of the University Council and several education subcommittees. A range of academic policies developed by TT&L staff, in conjunction with the Annual Officers, are available on the TT&L website.

Examples of TT&L support and collaboration with the Annual Officers during 2019/20 include:

Support and advice provided to the **Registrar** in her role as overseer of Trinity's inter-institutional relationships with associated colleges of education - Marino Institute of Education (MIE) and the Royal Irish Academy of Music (RIAM).  Work was progressed on a memorandum of understanding with the Technological University of Dublin (TUD) with respect to the Bachelor in Music Education programme delivered by the Trinity School of Education with TUD and RIAM on alternate years. Support for the development of a jointly-delivered undergraduate certificate with the Church of Ireland Theological Institute.

Support provided to the **Senior Lecturer/ Dean of Undergraduate Studies** in the review of undergraduate course proposals, in the review of various undergraduate initiatives and practices across the University,

in the compilation of the Senior Lecturer's Annual Report 2018/19, in External Examiners nominations for Council approval, in the management of USC and WPG meetings, drafting memoranda and policies/procedures, conducting research, progressing work on course proposals and supporting the implementation of TEP. Support was provided on updating the Calendar Part II, updating derogations on the assessment and progression regulations, and working with Schools to ensure alignment of undergraduate programmes with the common architecture.

Support provided to the **Dean of Graduate Studies** in the day-to-day provision of guidance on the application of academic regulations and procedures to the College community, review of postgraduate course proposals, contribution to the Dean of Graduate Studies Annual Report 2018/19 and drafting the 2019/20 Calendar, Part III.  Several initiatives were also supported and implemented such as E-thesis submission for the examinable thesis in postgraduate research programmes, a pilot for a Ph.D. by Distance, a book of modules for the Structured Ph.D., introduction of the Ph.D. Viva Guide. From January 2020, Trinity held responsibility for managing the Irish Universities Association (IUA) Deans of Graduate Studies Group with the Dean of Graduate Studies chairing these meetings and the Education Support Officer acting as Secretary.  The meetings discussed topics of national importance in postgraduate research education.

## Underpinning Teaching and Learning at Trinity with Coherent, Aligned Policies and Processes

### Course Proposals and Inter-Institutional Frameworks

TT&L reviews course proposals for new programmes and those related to significant curriculum developments at undergraduate and postgraduate levels, providing extensive feedback and support to Schools throughout the approval process. All Trinity course proposals are developed and approved in line with the New Programme Design and Approval Policy, which ensures that the same standards are applied to all programmes, including course proposals submitted by Trinity's linked providers, Marino Institute of Education (MIE) and the Royal Irish Academy of Music (RIAM), and those developed under inter-institutional framework agreements/partnerships.

TT&L also reviews undergraduate course curriculum mapping documentation, due diligence forms and legal agreements concerning proposed articulation routes and for dual and joint degree programmes, for example, the articulation route into

Engineering and Engineering with Management courses, in partnership with the International Centre for Applied Sciences, Manipal University.

During 2019/20 TT&L undertook significant work on developing course proposal templates and guidelines to reflect the new undergraduate curriculum architecture and types of postgraduate awards. Information on new course developments is also now available from a designated webpage.

## Fostering Diversity and Participation in Teaching and Learning at Trinity

At TT&L we help to ensure Trinity achieves its strategic goals of strengthening the Trinity community and promoting student life. We foster diversity through our access programmes and through involving Trinity Alumni in the enhancement of teaching and learning. Further, we promote student participation and engagement through student partnership initiatives.

### Trinity Access Programmes

The Trinity Access Programmes (TAP) aim to increase participation in the Trinity education by students from non-traditional backgrounds, to address educational disadvantage and to create a university campus that mirrors the diverse composition of Irish society. Approximately 10,000 pupils, parents and teachers participate in developmental activities each year, across 40 DEIS schools and four further education colleges, and in 2019/20, 101 students registered on the preparatory foundation and university access courses. In 2019/20, 21% of new undergraduate entrants came from TAP.

The Trinity Access Foundation Course prepares students, both personally and academically, to study at degree level. Students come from communities in the Greater Dublin area that have relatively low rates of participation in higher education.

Many of the mature students were early school leavers, while the young adults come from schools that are linked to Trinity Access or other access offices and took part in outreach activities while in school.

Since the course began in 1997, 95% of graduates from the Foundation Course have progressed to degree level studies, 751 in total. 41 students completed the Foundation Course this year and 40 are progressing onto degree courses across all three faculties in Trinity College in 2020.

| | Key figures from 2019/20: |
|---|---|
| 223 | students entered Trinity through alternative access routes |
| 40 | primary and secondary DEIS schools linked |
| 192 | students in receipt of a TAP scholarship |
| 100 | teachers hosted for online staffroom chats on thestaffroom.ie |
| 120 | second level students received the Trinity Access Achievement Award |

## Fostering Diversity and Participation in Teaching and Learning at Trinity

### Tech2Students Programme

Educational disadvantage is part of systemic inequality, and the current health crisis has exacerbated the inequalities. The rapid move by schools from face-to-face to online teaching left many on the wrong side of the digital divide, with large numbers of students lacking suitable devices to engage with schooling.

In May 2020, TAP launched the Tech2Students programme in partnership with Camara Ireland and ESB - aimed at bridging the digital divide by providing devices to students in need. Individuals and companies supported the educational journey of Irish students by either donating devices, which we refurbished or making cash gifts, which allowed TAP to purchase refurbished devices. In just two months, over €300,000 was raised and over 1,600 digital devices secured for second-level students in need.

More than 70 organisations working with marginalised groups which could not access devices contacted TAP in the first phase of Tech2Students. Due to this demand, Tech2Students will begin a second phase in October 2020, and there are plans to scale the project nationwide in partnership with other organisations and educational institutions

### Pathways to Technology

Pathways to Technology is the new umbrella name for the various Bridge21 activities aimed at inspiring, and supporting, students from under-represented groups to become interested in careers in the technology sector.

The long running Bridge to College Transition Year workshop programme took a major leap forward through a new partnership with Citywise — an NGO based in Tallaght - with the programme now being offered in both locations. Over 1,200 students have now completed the Transition Year Computer Science Workshops run in conjunction with Trinity's School of Computer Science & Statistics.

CodePlus, which aims to attract more female students into the field of computing, reached its fifth birthday, celebrating a number of milestones, including reaching 20,000 hours of coding workshops for 1,000 girls.

During the year over 700 girls received a talk from a female professional working in the tech industry. Pathways to Technology was supported this year by Salesforce, the Workday Foundation and Science Foundation Ireland.

### Pathways to Law

Pathways to Law (PTL) is an innovative initiative which aims to inspire students interested in the law and give them the confidence, knowledge and tools to maximise their potential.

Now heading into its 11th year, PTL is delivered in collaboration with relevant stakeholders in the School of Law and within the legal profession, including law firms A&L Goodbody, Arthur Cox, Eugene F Collins, Linklaters, Maples Group, Mason Hayes & Curran, Matheson, McCann Fitzgerald, and William Fry.

Through the programme, more than 65 law undergraduates annually are provided with financial support and opportunities to participate in workshops and mentoring.

To date, 378 students have participated in over 30 annual activities. Over 310 legal professionals give their time and expertise to the programme and 134 students from the programme have graduated from law in Trinity. One of the PTL undergraduate law students was awarded the Denham Fellowship and will begin studying in the Honorable Society of King's Inns later this year.

This year, students participated in campus and school visits, mock trials, interactive street law workshops and we were delighted to welcome The Hon Ms Justice Marie Baker to our Legal Speed Meet.

### Pathways to Business

Modelled on the successful Pathways to Law initiative, and run in collaboration with the Trinity School of Business, this programme targets students from senior cycle in school through to university level and seeks to enhance their interest in the theoretical as well as practical application of Business Studies through a range of targeted interventions delivered in collaboration with programme partners.

Since its launch last year, Pathways to Business has grown from strength to strength. Business is now a standalone module on the Trinity Access Summer School and the Trinity Access Foundation Course.

Pathways to Business takes an active role in Community Mentoring and Outreach, supporting second level students. Trinity Business School opened the doors on its new state-of-theart building in 2019 and has made Pathways to Business a staple in their strategy for the coming years.

Several events took place throughout the past year across different areas of professional development for our undergraduate students.

In response to COVID19, TAP have put in place a contingency plan to support students in the coming year, 2020/21 including Trinity Advisor communications, technology support and additional academic supports.

## Preparing Students
## for Success Beyond Trinity

**At TT&L we work with students to help them identify and articulate how their learning experiences, both formal and informal, contribute to their intellectual and personal development and prepare them for global citizenship with the ability to contribute to the workplace of the future. The embedding of the Trinity Graduate Attributes in the curriculum and the nurturing of employer relationships have represented key developments in TT&L in recent years.**

### Employability

As part of a renewal of Trinity's undergraduate education, seven Features were developed to enable our students to broaden their experience and their perspective beyond their core subjects and to deepen their understanding of their subject. One of these features was Employability. The involvement of TT&L's Careers Service in the Trinity Education Project enabled us to lead on integrating employability in the curriculum through awards and scholarships, internships and work-based learning, global mobility and student reflection.

In order to achieve this strategic objective in 2019/20 the Careers Service delivered over 80 careers education sessions to students (credit and not-for-credit) including five Personal Development Programmes (PDPs) in Global Business, Physiology, Physics, Pharmacy and Political Science.

Careers Service staff explored new models of careers education sessions for delivery to class groups online including the use of MyCareer Pathways to guide student learning.

A common architecture to the Trinity Employability Award strands was introduced including a joint application process, a standardised assessment structure, and aligned timelines. This was received positively by students and employers and the strengthened core elements saw an increase in the quality of submissions at each Level of the Award, with students expressing a clear understanding of the benefits to their personal and professional skills from participating.

The Careers Service ran the Trinity Alumni Spring Week Internship Bursary selection process for students but this unfortunately could not be brought to completion due to COVID-19 travel restrictions to the UK.

### Digital Careers Fast Forward

While a move to some form of online careers service delivery was already under consideration as part of our Digital Careers Plan, we had to rapidly implement this plan as we successfully moved our service wholly online from March 2020 without disruption to service provision or availability. In order to achieve this the Careers Service

- Upskilled across the team to enable this transition and optimised the use of various technologies to suit our different stakeholder groups, i.e. students, graduates, employers, staff.

- Invested in new software to enhance our online service offering, e.g. Shortlist.me video interview software and Career Fair Plus virtual fair software.

- Developed a suite of student engagement reports to inform our decisions and actions during a time of rapid change in student behaviour and engagement.

- Carried out a review of services to ensure compliance with GDPR and IT security requirements.

- Undertook a detailed project to enhance MyCareer reporting functionality.

### Laidlaw Undergraduate Research and Leadership Programme

Introduced in 2017/18, the Laidlaw Undergraduate Research and Leadership Programme is an exciting scholarship opportunity for undergraduate students at Trinity. The scholarship is designed to assist and support self-motivated and ambitious undergraduate students to gain the knowledge and skills to become future leaders in their chosen fields.

During 2019/20, the inaugural cohort of 18 Laidlaw Scholars graduated at Trinity in October 2019 with a research showcase event attended by the Provost and the Dean of Research.

The Laidlaw Programme moved online for the 2019 and 2020 cohorts (44 Scholars in total). This included pivoting research projects to enable completion online, discussion groups, online webinars, peer-to-peer mentoring, and participation in a pilot leadership programme in conjunction with the Laidlaw Foundation aimed at creating actionable resources and supports for students, parents, and teachers to deal with difficulties of home learning during COVID-19.

TT&L successfully secured funding for a further three years of the Laidlaw Programme at Trinity (2021-2023).

## Preparing Students for Success Beyond Trinity

### Renewing Our Postgraduate Focus

Over the course of Trinity's Strategic Plan 2020-25, there will be a focus on enhancing the experience of our postgraduate students. This is also a priority for the Careers Service and in 19/20 we renewed our postgraduate focus as follows:

Secured funding from the National Forum for the Enhancement of Teaching and Learning to develop a new blended learning module on **Careers and Employability for PhD students to be delivered in partnership with employers.** This module will support PhD students with career planning, critical reflection and decision-making and will enable students to establish networks to help support their future careers. The project is progressing well and is on schedule for completion in March 2021.

Participated in the **Careers Beyond Academia** event for PhD students with the Trinity Long Room Hub. Some career-related topics emerging from this event for future discussion included Public jobs outside Universities and Research Institutes, Careers in Academia and in related fields, Practical guidance on using LinkedIn and how to conduct a job search (organised follow up session on LinkedIn for Graduate Students with LinkedIn), and Dealing with the emotional consequences of leaving academia.

Recruited and trained an additional 10 PhD students to work with our Service as CV Reviewers.

Delivered a CV, cover letter and interview webinar as part of Postgraduate Skills Development Summer School in June 2020.

Successfully ran the Planning and Managing your Research and your Career module for PhD students in partnership with Student Learning and Development for the ninth year.

As part of the AHECS Postgraduate Research Task Group, produced the report 'An Exploration of Career & Skills Development among Arts Humanities & Social Science (AHSS) Postgraduate Research Students in Ireland' in May 2020. This looked at data from the ISSE Postgraduate Research Students National Report 2019 through the prism of career and skills development to understand the experiences and perceptions of students to inform good practice in supporting the employability of AHSS PGRs.

| | **Key figures from 2019/20:** |
|---|---|
| **4** | careers fairs, attended by **162** employers and **2500** students |
| **682** | CV clinic attendees |
| **1004** | careers appointments |
| **530** | students participated in alumni mentoring |
| **22** | Laidlaw Scholars selected |

## Preparing Students for Success Beyond Trinity

### Enhancing Employer Engagement

While 19/20 was a challenging time for employer engagement due to the COVID-19 pandemic, we expanded our employer reach to include over 1600 organisations across 29 sectors, which are now registered on MyCareer. This resulted in a 71% increase in the number of employer events advertised to students and a 26% increase in employer events on campus in 19/20 when compared to 18/19.

Over 2300 job and postgraduate study opportunities were advertised on MyCareer, and the Careers Service held four Careers Fairs attended by 162 employers (17% increase on 18/19; 76% increase on 17/18) and 2500 students (56% increase on 18/19; 206% increase on 17/18);

In November 2019, Council approved the new Trinity Internships and Placements policy and the Careers Service worked with Schools to support its implementation.

Work was undertaken to create job opportunities specifically for recent Trinity graduates, e.g. Dublin City Council, and Careers Service staff moderated a TDA Webinar in August 2020 on Career Development in the COVID-19 World with representatives from IBEC and the Dublin Regional Skills Forum.

### Employability Rankings

Graduates from Trinity are among the most employable and successful in the world (QS World University Rankings for Graduate Employability 2019), with Trinity ranked first in Ireland for graduate employment rate and alumni outcomes.

This places Trinity among the top 18% universities in the world using the five key QS ranking metrics; employer reputation, alumni outcomes, partnerships with employers, employer-student connections and the graduate employment rate. Trinity's overall ranking in 2019/20 was 92nd up from 100-110 in the previous year. In terms of alumni outcomes, Trinity is ranked 32nd highest in the world, up from 39th in 2018/19, for producing highly successful and world-changing graduates, which is indicative of how Trinity values the careers of its graduates.

Trinity is also the only Irish university included in the top 250 worldwide for employability in the Times Higher Education 2019 Global University Employability Rankings with Trinity in 122nd place, up from 131st in 2018

# Ensuring the Excellence of Academic Practice Central to Teaching and Learning at Trinity

**At TT&L, we guide the College community in curriculum design, enhanced assessment practices and the optimal use of technology. Affirming the assertion in Trinity's Strategic Plan that transformations in modes of teaching and in expectations of learners require academics to work continuously to keep pace with new technologies and pedagogies, we provide structured professional development experiences which allow staff to learn from each other and to be exposed to good practice that can be applied to their individual contexts.**

## Students as Partners in Learning

The Head of Academic Practice continued to lead on TEP Assessment work and was a member of Students as Partners sub group.

Trinity's 2020-25 Strategic Plan commits to embedding the undergraduate education reform that was a central goal of the 2014-2019 Strategic Plan. A key feature of this reform is the examination and renewal of teaching and learning practices, with an emphasis on students as active participants in their learning.

Of particular note is the initiation of the development of ModuleM, a project sponsored by the Head of TT&L in collaboration with students from the School of Engineering and Professor Kevin Kelly. ModuleM is being developed to help achieve our goal of creating a partnership between academics and students. Having rapid

and intuitive access to the information in ModuleM will support our staff to develop a cohesive and coherent teaching environment and to empower our students to take control of their learning.

In light of the recent disruptions to face-to-face assessment, a new focus on online assessment practices became necessary in higher education. The **Students as Partners: Gateway to Assessment** Teaching & Learning initiative, funded by the National Forum for the Enhancement of Teaching and Learning, is developing an online programme and accompanying resources. 'Gateway to Assessment' is designed to develop assessment literacy in both staff and students with a focus on assessment in online environments.

# Ensuring the Excellence of Academic Practice Central to Teaching and Learning at Trinity

## Adapting our Teaching for Learning Online

Aligned with Trinity's strategic commitment to 21st century teaching and learning practices, in 2020 Academic Practice developed and launched a new online module for academic staff and those supporting teaching and learning at Trinity.

This evidence-based module contained a suite of resources and supports to assist teaching staff with making the transition to online and blended ('hybrid') teaching. 480 members of staff registered for the module in summer 2019/2020, with 481 participating in a series of live 'clinics' accompanying the asynchronous materials prepared for the module. The module has since been adapted further for inclusion as part of the suite of Special Purpose Cert programming and is available to staff on a for-credit basis as well as for professional development

## Learning to Learn Online

Recognising the need to prepare students for digital engagement in 2020, Academic Practice led the development of an online-only **'Learning to Learn Online in Trinity'.** Hosted within Blackboard, this module is designed to support students with learning and assessment in a hybrid environment. The resources available to students within the module recognises expertise drawn from Academic Practice, Student Learning Development, Disability Service, the Transition Officer and the IUA Enhancing Digital Capacity Project

Development, Disability Service, the Transition Officer and the IUA Enhancing Digital Capacity Project.

## Special Purpose Certificate in Academic Practice

TT&L delivers the Special Purpose Certificate in Academic Practice, a level-9, 15-ECTS award focused on enhancing the professional development of academic staff in Trinity. The Certificate is designed to be flexible, research-informed and practice-based.

81 staff members have graduated since June 2016, 35 of whom graduated in 2020.

# Ensuring the Excellence of Academic Practice Central to Teaching and Learning at Trinity

## Online Module for Graduate Teaching Assistants

The Academic Practice online module, 'Teaching and Supporting Learning as a Graduate Teaching Assistant' is targeted to the needs of graduate teaching assistants. Launched in 2018, TT&L staff support graduate teaching assistants to develop a scholarly perspective on teaching and to recognize the importance of evidence-based practice in supporting learning at Trinity. Graduate teaching assistants can now undertake the 5ECTS programme as part of Trinity's structured PhD programme. 40 graduate teaching assistants have been awarded the ECTS since beginning the programme in Hilary Term 2019, with 258 graduate students signing up to a not-for-credit version of the module since August 2018.

## Trinity Excellence in Teaching Awards

The purpose of the Trinity Excellence in Teaching Awards Scheme is to promote teaching as a scholarly activity and to reward those who have made an outstanding contribution to the pursuit of teaching excellence. Academic Practice leads the Award Scheme which recognises excellent teaching, and raises the profile and status of curriculum development, teaching, and learning and assessment as important activities in the University. There were five recipients of the 2019/20 Awards and seven shortlisted candidates.

## Enhancing Digital Capacity in Teaching and Learning

The **Enhancing Digital Capacity in Teaching and Learning in Irish Universities project (EDTL)** is a three year project, funded by the Higher Education Authority in Ireland and coordinated by the Irish Universities Association (IUA). The project aims to enhance the digital attributes and educational experiences of all Irish University graduates through the mainstreamed and integrated use of digital technologies. In order to achieve these aims the project also aims to enhance the digital skills of those who teach in Irish universities.

As part of the pilot phase of the EDTL project, Academic Practice developed an accredited module for teaching staff entitled **Technology Enhanced Learning in Higher Education**. This module is now offered within Trinity's Special Purpose Certificate in Academic Practice. The Trinity EDTL team also contributed to the Adapting Our Teaching for Learning Online, developed by Academic Practice, and to the Academic Practice-led online module for students: 'Learning to learn online in Trinity.'

Academic Practice and Trinity EDTL staff have contributed to the cross-sectoral IUA digital enhancement project, keynoting #IUADigEd webinars in areas such as programmatic approaches and assessment.

# Ensuring the Excellence of Academic Practice Central to Teaching and Learning at Trinity



| | Key figures from 2019/20: |
|---|---|
| 930 | Attendees across **50** academic practice events |
| 8 | modules delivered on Special Purpose Certificate in Academic Practice |
| 35 | staff members graduated with the Special Purpose Certificate in Academic Practice |
| 450 | attendees for the new online module - Adapting our Teaching for Learning Online |

# Building Valuable Teaching and Learning Partnerships

**Seeking out valuable partnerships with educational bodies and industry partners is crucial as Trinity aims to make a catalysing impact on local innovation and on addressing global challenges. At TT&L, we contribute to this effort through our partnership initiatives with schools, employers, and other higher education institutions at home and abroad.**

## Changing School Cultures

Since Trinity Access began, they have worked in partnership with schools to create strong college-going cultures - working with teachers and students to develop new ways of teaching that leave students better equipped to thrive in future careers.

TAP ran two major teacher events during the year. The first was in Oriel College in Oxford in September and the second was on campus in the Tangent space in the new Business School. Both were aimed at celebrating and sharing existing practice, encouraging teachers and school management to continue in their efforts and showcasing what is going on to potential new teachers and schools.

The February event included the launch of our teacher resource website TheStaffroom.ie, panel discussions on peer mentoring and engaging parents, and an inspiring talk from one of Trinity's alumni rising stars Jack Kavanagh on resilience.

This year also saw the launch of the **Trinity Access Teacher Fellow** programme. The fellows are teachers from our link schools who are seconded to work on the project to help embed Trinity Access core practices in schools. They also assist in the design and delivery of pilot initiatives helping to identify areas of growth based on research reports.

During the Covid-19 lockdown, we added and highlighted lesson plans suitable for remote teaching and learning to TheStaffroom.ie, and incorporated a section on tools for remote teaching and learning.

Our flagship teacher professional development programme, the Postgraduate Certificate in 21st Century Teaching and Learning, continued this year, equipping teachers with the knowledge and skills required to support an innovative learning culture in their schools.

# Building Valuable Teaching and Learning Partnerships



## Partnerships with Employers

TT&L has rich engagement with employers across all employment sectors, and continuously seeks employer views on 21st century skills and the changing needs of the workplace. TT&L staff work with employers to support the embedding of employability and career development opportunities in the curriculum; develop workplace internships, placements and exchanges; promote employer engagement; and to establish links between employers and academia.  TT&L facilitates Trinity students in connecting with Trinity's global network of alumni to support their learning and development.

TT&L is an active member of the Dublin Regional Skills Forum, which is a network that supports and promotes positive engagement between enterprise and education to identify and deliver skills outcomes.

## Partnership with Thapar Institute of Engineering & Technology (India)

Connecting with the partnerships theme of the Global Relations Strategy, TT&L continues its involvement with the Thapar Institute of Engineering & Technology (TIET), India. The ongoing collaboration focuses on developing TIET teaching staff expertise through the New Directions programme in Academic Practice.  This programme provides foundation-level exposure to University teaching and learning for all academic staff at TIET, including core and elective workshops, and the facilitation of communities of practice.  359 TIET staff have now completed the New Directions programme and a further 100 TIET staff are currently enrolled.

74 staff have also completed the Advanced Development programme and 12 TIET Teaching Fellows, who have been trained at TCD, are now working at TIET to sustain, support and develop ongoing academic practice there.

# Major Undertakings for 2020/21

### Supporting the Implementation of the Strategic Plan 2020-2025

TT&L will continue to align its strategic objectives and goals to the Trinity Strategic Plan (2020-2025) and will support the implementation of the Plan's goals and strategic objectives over the duration of the Plan.  Two areas which will require significant leadership and specialist input from TT&L include the reform of postgraduate education and the development of micro-credentialing opportunities.

There will also be a renewed focus on supporting student development through increased engagement with career and personal development activities and growing the capacity of student services in line with the growth of the student body and a more diverse student community.  TT&L will lead the development of a new Digital Learning Strategy and on establishing a Curriculum Hub to provide a centre for continuous pedagogical renewal.

### Micro-credentials Pilot Project

In 2020, Trinity was awarded €21 million in funding by the Higher Education Authority (HEA) to support over the next five years its innovative, skills-led teaching initiative 'Next Generation Teaching and Learning for the changing needs of society and enterprise' (Strategic Plan, 2020-25). The award, made available under Pillar 3 of the HEA's Human Capital Initiative (HCI), is designed to support reform and innovation in third level programme design and delivery.

Goal 1 of Trinity's Strategic Plan 2020-25 commits to fostering an even more diverse and inclusive student community. In support of this commitment, Trinity is deploying HCI Pillar 3 to deliver a cross-disciplinary pilot programme, under the leadership of the Academic Secretary and with support from TT&L, which will develop, test and implement a micro-credential offering from 2021.

Under a centre of excellence approach, the pilot MC programme will bring together four Schools who have expertise in designing and delivering innovative development pathways for undergraduate, postgraduate and professional learners. The four Schools involved (Engineering, Social Work and Social Policy, Business and Nursing & Midwifery) will draw upon existing portfolios as well as design new pathways that together make up a suite of industry-relevant modularised (micro-credentialed) learning pathways.

# Major Undertakings for 2020/21

### Renewal of Trinity's Postgraduate Education

In line with Trinity's Strategic Plan (2020 – 2025) the Postgraduate Renewal project aims to deliver a systematic renewal of Graduate Education across the university. The projected outcomes of this renewal will be:

- A flexible and agile framework for postgraduate education (across taught and research programmes), accommodating diverse structures and pathways

- A suite of new taught programmes linked to pioneering research activities, enabling an increase in postgraduate student recruitment to achieve the target set in the Strategic Plan, 2020-25 (i.e., 30% of the student body)

- An enriched Structured PhD framework, facilitating mobility, intersectoral engagement and interdisciplinary collaboration, delivering highly employable world class researchers prepared to meet the demands of a knowledge-based society

- An integrated, enhanced student-centred experience for all postgraduate students from application to alumnus, with seamless system interfaces

- Flexible supports and processes to enable Schools to achieve their objectives in postgraduate teaching and research and deliver on the College Strategic Plan 2020-2025 and beyond

- An adaptive digital infrastructure delivering next-generation teaching and learning in all aspects of postgraduate education and responsive to the emerging opportunities of short courses, micro-credentials and continuing professional development.

Subject to the approval of Council, the project team will begin a detailed consultative process with all stakeholders in the latter half of 2021 with a view to co creating a process to reach the projected outcomes.

## Major Undertakings for 2020/21

**National Forum for the Enhancement of Teaching and Learning Strategic Alignment of Funding in Higher Education Teaching & Learning Initiative**

The National Forum for the Enhancement of Teaching and Learning published a Call for Proposals on the 'Strategic Alignment of Teaching and Learning Enhancement (SATLE) Funding in Higher Education 2019 – Developing Disciplinary Excellence in Learning, Teaching and Assessment' in June 2019. The Call invited Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) to apply for funding to address the four key strategic priorities of the National Forum: the professional development of all those who teach; teaching and learning in a digital world; teaching and learning enhancement within and across disciplines; student success.

Supported by TT&L, Trinity successfully secured funding for seven projects under four initiative types, with the focus of the projects ranging from first year undergraduates to PhD students, and across disciplines such as Law, Biology, and the Health Sciences. There is also a focus on industry engagement for career-readiness; research integrity; and students as partners in their learning and assessment.

TT&L will continue to support the development of these projects during 2020/21 until their completion in May 2021, while also supporting the development of project proposals for the SATLE 2020/21 Funding call.

Further information on each of the SATLE 2019 projects can be found on the TT&L website.