

# ***Policy on Access to Trinity College Staff and Students for Research Purposes by External Organisations***

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0.2	Draft policy	Research Committee 15 <sup>th</sup> April
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0.4	Draft Policy	REPC 19 <sup>th</sup> May
0.5	Final draft Policy	Research Committee 27 <sup>th</sup> May
1.0	Accepted by Research Committee with minor amendments from v0.5. Accepted by Council on 11 <sup>th</sup> June 2014 (CL/13-14/193 (iii)) and Board on 25 <sup>th</sup> June 2014.	Council

## **Background**

From time to time external individuals or organisations approach Trinity College with a view to conducting research involving staff or students of the College as participants (not collaborators), either as small cohorts or as an entire student/staff body. Where appropriate the College is amenable to assisting this research provided the research is compliant with the criteria for ethical conduct of research of the College, and is not considered to be unduly burdensome on the College community. The following policy is in place to facilitate this process.

1. Requests from external researchers will be directed in the first instance to the Chair of the Research Ethics Policy Committee (REPC). If, in the Chair's opinion, the proposed research does not appear to comply with the criteria for ethical conduct of research of the College the application will be rejected at this stage.

2. If the research appears to fulfil the criteria for ethical conduct of research of the College, the Chair of the REPC will contact the relevant Head of School/Unit or Faculty Dean (if only one School/Unit or Faculty is being targeted) or the College Secretary (if a College-wide project is intended) to determine if they are in agreement that the research might be facilitated, subject to College research ethics approval. If the relevant Head of School/Unit, Faculty Dean or the College Secretary is agreeable in principle for access to College staff or students to be provided, they will communicate this to the Chair of the REPC. In that event the Chair of the REPC will refer the applicant(s) to the most appropriate College Research Ethics Committee (REC) for consideration. These actions should not be seen as an endorsement by the Chair of the REPC of the application and should in no way prejudice the deliberations of the REC. The applicants will be expected to submit all information and documentation as required by the local REC standard operating procedures along with the details of any research ethics approval from their home institution.

3. The Trinity REC has the power to reject, approve, or to approve the application subject to amendment and the results of the approval process will

be communicated to the REPC Chair and the relevant Head of School/Unit, Faculty Dean or College Secretary.

4. The Chair of the REPC will inform the external researchers of the outcome of the College research ethics review process. If Trinity REC approval is granted, final approval to access the specific student/staff cohort must be provided by the the relevant Head of School/Unit or Faculty Dean (in the case of a School/Unit- or Faculty-specific research project) or the College Secretary (in the case of a College-wide research project) who will facilitate contact between the researchers and the proposed participants.

5. The REPC Chair will maintain a repository of all cases where approval to access students or staff of the College has been granted. The final decision will be copied to the College Secretary.

6. On completion of the research project the external organisation conducting the research will be required to submit a report summarising the research methodology and findings to the REPC Chair who will forward this to the College Secretary for archiving purposes.

*Note:*

*Once research ethics approval has been obtained, the College Secretary or the relevant Head of School/Unit or Faculty Dean has the ultimate decision as to whether or not staff or students may be approached to consider participation in the study. In making that decision, they should consider the need to protect the privacy and personal information of staff and students. For example, contact details or personal details will generally not be given out to third parties and contacts by third parties with staff or students will be made via the appropriate College offices.*