

The University of Dublin

Trinity College

A meeting of the University Council was held on Wednesday 5 November 2008 at 11.15 am in the Board Room.

*Present* Vice-Provost/Chief Academic Officer (in the Chair), Registrar, Senior Lecturer, Senior Tutor, Dean of Graduate Studies, Dean of Research, Dean of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences, Dr C Laudet, Dr C MacMaolain, Dr C Morris, Professor J Wickham, Professor J Fitzpatrick, Dr V Kelly, Dr M Lyons, Dr D O'Sullivan, Dean of Health Sciences, Professor M Radomski, Dr K Johnson, Dr A O'Gara, Professor G Whyte, Mr H Sullivan, Ms C Ní Dhubhda, Mr F Hughes, Ms A Murphy, Mr D Kavanagh.

*Apologies* Provost, Dean of Engineering, Mathematics and Science, Dr D Brennan, Professor M McCarron, Mr D Walsh, Ms A Mc Gowan.

*In attendance* Librarian, Acting Secretary, Academic Secretary, Chief Operating Officer.

*Observer* Secretary to the Scholars (Ms N Cleary).

*By invitation* Professor J G Lunney (for Actum CL/08-09/028).

**Statutory Declaration** The Dean of Research, Dr David Lloyd, attending Council for the first time made the statutory declaration.

SECTION A

**CL/08-09/025 Minutes** The minutes of the meeting of the 8<sup>th</sup> October 2008 were approved subject to the following corrections:

- (i) Mr Feargal Hughes was present at the meeting;
- (ii) The Dean of Students is a member, not Chair, of the Student Services Committee as reported in Actum CL/08-09/008;
- (iii) The removal of the word 'permanent' from the sentence stating '*one Council member commented that the position of Dean of Students was a fulltime permanent senior position in other Irish Universities.*' (Actum CL/08-09/008);
- (iv) Appendix 3 to CL/08-09/020 (page 17): The title of the post to be held by Dr Paul Fearon was corrected to 'Clinical Professor'.

**CL/08-09/026 Matters Arising**

- (i) Referring to Actum CL/08-09/010, the Vice-Provost/Chief Academic Officer noted that Dr Laudet is Council's representative on the International Committee; the student representatives on this Committee are the President

of the Students' Union, Mr Cathal Reilly, and the Vice-President of the Graduate Students' Union, Ms Alexandra Murphy. He also noted that the Undergraduate Studies Committee met on the 4<sup>th</sup> November 2008 and that minutes of this Committee will go directly to Council.

- (ii) The Council approved the proposal from the Dean of Health Sciences that a representative of the Department of Public Health and Primary Care be added to the membership of the search committee for the Professorship in Population Health Medicine (Actum CL/08-09/021).

**CL/08-09/027 Provost's Report** The Vice-Provost/Chief Academic Officer informed Council that there were no further significant developments to report since the meeting of the 8<sup>th</sup> October 2008.

**CL/08-09/028 Review of the Scholarship Examination System** A final report on the review of the Scholarship Examination System dated 29<sup>th</sup> October 2008 was circulated with papers for the meeting. Professor Lunney, chair of the Working Group to review the Scholarship Examination System, attended Council for this item. Introducing the report, Professor Lunney expressed his gratitude to the members of the Working Group, Professor R Fuller, Dr N Kennedy, Dr V Politis, Professor H Rice, Mr D Rickard, Dr J Rochford, Dr M Smith, Professor R Stalley, and to Ms McMahon and Ms De Brunner for the administrative support provided.

Professor Lunney presented a brief overview of the history of Scholarship and its role in College, noting in particular that the competition for Scholarship has always involved a searching examination, the implication being that successful candidates had to be of exceptional ability. The concept of Scholarship is one of the most highly valued traditions of the College, and the Scholars' dinner forms one of the major events in the College calendar. A Scholarship at Trinity College remains the most prestigious undergraduate award in the country and helps to foster long-lasting links between many outstanding graduates and College.

Professor Lunney drew Council's attention to some major issues that have developed over time and which the Working Group considered when drawing up its recommendations. Staff and student familiarity with Scholarship and what it means appears to have diminished and this may have given rise to the inconsistencies across College in the organisation and setting of papers. There are variations in procedures resulting in major inequities in the way the examination is conducted. The variations include differences in the total number of papers and the range of material covered; the contribution of continuous assessment as part of the process in some disciplines; different levels of intellectual demand of questions and in some programmes the Senior Freshman annual examination and Scholarship examination papers are virtually indistinguishable from each other; some courses provide preparatory guidance and tuition. All students in good standing on the undergraduate degree register may compete for Scholarship, but in practice it is difficult for some potential candidates to enter the examination because of the structure of their degree programme. There is also an issue as to whether it is fair or appropriate to allow students with an extra year's experience in College to take an examination for which candidates are mostly Senior Freshman students.

Professor Lunney noted the relative success rates of Scholarship candidates across College and drew Council's attention to the variations between faculties in the proportion of candidates for the examination, in the proportion of successful

candidates and in the proportion of Scholars in each faculty. He commented on the failure to attract all the best students to take Scholarship examination noting that some outstanding candidates, including those who have subsequently been awarded a gold medal, did not enter the examination. There is evidence to suggest that the chief aim of some candidates who sit the Scholarship examination is to gain exemption from the annual examination. This could undermine the distinctiveness of Scholarship.

Turning to the recommendations, Professor Lunney informed Council that there has been extensive consultation over a protracted period of time. Comments on the interim report, which was published on the web, were received from recently awarded Scholars and Scholars from fifty years ago as well as from students and staff.

Council welcomed the report of the Review of the Scholarship Examination and commended Professor Lunney and the Working Group for a very comprehensive analysis of the issues involved. Council discussed the recommendations at length and considerable attention was given to the recommendation that "*Exemption from the annual SF examination should no longer apply, regardless of performance in the Scholarship examination.*" The Students' Union representatives argued that there was no evidence to suggest that Scholarship candidates take the examination in order to gain an exemption. All candidates put considerable effort into preparing for the Scholarship examination and only a very small number of students who are awarded an exemption withdraw from lectures and College for the remainder of the academic year. This problem could be addressed differently by, for example, making the examination questions more searching, raising the eligible grade for exemption or making the exemption conditional on completion of the year. Professor Lunney in response, noted that the high number of candidates and their overall performance would suggest that candidates sit the examination to attain an exemption. He further noted that this recommendation was supported by students and scholars who were uniformly opposed to awarding Scholarship on the basis of performance in an annual examination, and who stressed the importance of gaining Scholarship because it marked the extra effort involved. It was suggested that the achievement of candidates who do not obtain Scholarship could be noted on their transcripts.

In response to questions and comments from Council members, Professor Lunney confirmed that the Working Group considered the application of ECTS (European Credit Transfer System) and concluded that it would be difficult to continue with the practice of exemption and simultaneously adhere to College's policy on the application of ECTS and other Bologna-related activities. If the Fellows give their consent to the proposed new academic year structure, it is recommended that the Scholarship examination take place in a one or two week-period in early January, before the start of Hilary teaching term. In the new academic year, the gap between January and the annual examination in May would be too great to warrant an exemption from the annual examination. It was noted that students would not have covered sufficient course material in Senior Freshman if the Scholarship examination were scheduled in January.

Addressing the part recommendation "*...that an examination of 3-4 papers amounting to 8-9 hours of written examination, with no contribution from continuous assessment, may be sufficient,*" Council felt that there was merit in retaining provision for appropriate continuous assessment in specific disciplines as part of the Scholarship examination. Council further felt that it was important to define what is meant about 'exceptional ability' and supported the concept that Scholarship should confirm academic talent of exceptional ability.

*Incorporating any amendments approved at subsequent Council meetings*

Council approved the recommendations set out in the Review of the Scholarship Foundation Examination subject to the following changes: (i) not all undergraduates students are eligible to compete (recommendation iv), and (ii) retention of the provision of appropriate continuous assessment in specific disciplines (recommendation vi). The Students' Union Education Officer dissented from approving recommendation v and undertook to bring this matter back to the Students' Union Executive for discussion.

The recommendations approved, effective from 2009-10, are as follows:

- (i) A separate examination for the award of Scholarship rather than awarding Scholarship on the basis of performance in the annual SF examination should be retained.
- (ii) Under the new Academic Year Structure, the most appropriate time for a Scholarship examination would be in a 1 or 2 week period in early January, before the start of Hilary teaching term. Thus it would be possible to announce the new Scholars on Trinity Monday.
- (iii) At the start of each academic year, the Vice Provost's Office / Senior Lecturer's Office should issue a statement (via email) to undergraduates outlining the history and ethos of Scholarship and explaining the qualities to which potential candidates should aspire.
- (iv) The Scholarship examination should be primarily oriented towards Senior Freshman students, though open to undergraduate students, as before.
- (v) Exemption from the annual Senior Freshman examination should no longer apply, regardless of performance in the Scholarship examination.
- (vi) In the context of complete separation of the Scholarship and Senior Freshman annual examinations, the Scholarship examination should be significantly shorter than heretofore and still be a searching examination to choose students of exceptional ability. It seems that an examination of three to four papers amounting to eight to nine hours of written examination, with contribution from appropriate continuous assessment, may be sufficient. However, for each degree course it will be necessary to specify the Scholarship examination in terms of academic scope and taught courses covered, subject to an appropriate level of College oversight.
- (vii) There needs to be greater comparability, in terms of duration, level of difficulty, academic scope and stringency of assessment, of the Scholarship examination across disciplines. Those responsible for the Scholarship examination in each discipline/course of study should provide a statement explaining how their examination requirements succeed in identifying the qualities associated with Scholarship. The Central Scholarship Committee should have oversight of the Scholarship examination with the aim of maintaining comparability across College.

Professor Lunney commented that the implementation of these recommendations would require significant effort on three issues. Firstly, detailed specifications of a revised Scholarship examination will have to be drawn up for each degree course. This can be done by the Course Director in consultation with the Course Committee. Secondly, the Central Scholarship Committee should have oversight of these specifications to ensure parity across College. Thirdly, it will be necessary to make appropriate *Calendar* changes.

The Vice-Provost/Chief Academic Officer invited the Senior Lecturer and the Academic Secretary to oversee the implementation of the recommendations, and advised the Students' Union Education Officer to correspond directly with these Officers on this matter.

*Incorporating any amendments approved at subsequent Council meetings*

On behalf of Council, the Vice-Provost/Chief Academic Officer thanked Professor Lunney and the Working Group for their work and Report on the Scholarship Foundation Examination System.

**CL/08-09/029 Academic Appeals Committee** Minutes of the meetings of the Academic Appeals Committee dated 8<sup>th</sup>, 9<sup>th</sup>, 10<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup> October were circulated. Council noted and approved the recommendations therein.

**CL/08-09/030 Any other business**

- (i) Council noted and approved the request from the Senior Lecturer in a tabled memorandum dated 4<sup>th</sup> November 2008 that named students be permitted to repeat a year of their course.
- (ii) The Acting Secretary informed Council that a postgraduate student had lodged an appeal regarding his result to the Dean of graduate Studies, who, having considered this under the relevant regulation [*Calendar* Part 2, 1.23] decided there was no case to be referred to the Academic Appeals Committee for Graduate Students. The Council supported the Dean's decision.

#### SECTION B

**CL/08-09/031 Research Committee** Minutes of the meetings of the Research Committee dated 8<sup>th</sup> May and 19<sup>th</sup> June 2008 were circulated. In response to a query relating to Actum RS/07-08/43, the Dean of Research confirmed that a working group has been established to develop a policy on postdoctoral salaries and to ensure that there are no divergences in salary scales between teaching and research. A sub-group of the Personnel and Appointments Committee (PAC) is considering career and salary issues in College. The working group, which has a research staff representative on it, will liaise with the PAC sub-group and it is expected that recommendations will be made to Board in due course.

Responding to a query on Actum RS/07-08/41, the Dean of Research confirmed the minute referred to two policy documents on Trinity Research Institutes, and it was agreed that these policy documents would be circulated to Council members for their information.

Council noted and approved the minutes of the meetings of the Research Committee dated 8<sup>th</sup> May and the 19<sup>th</sup> June 2008

**CL/08-09/032 Student Services Committee** The Council noted and approved the recommendations as set out in the minutes of the Student Services Committee from its meeting of 16 September 2008, which had been circulated.

#### SECTION C

**CL/08-09/033 Higher Degrees—Reports of Examiners** The Council noted and approved the reports of examiners on candidates for higher degrees, noted by Board on 22 October 2008, which had been approved by the sub-committee of Board and Council on:

*Incorporating any amendments approved at subsequent Council meetings*

## (i) 30 September 2008

## (a) Professional Higher Degrees by Research Alone

MD Elaine Greene; Stephen O’Riordan.

## (b) Higher Degrees by Research Alone

PhD Deirdre Ahern; Gary Bargary; Gurcharn Singh Bhamra; Michael Brandon; Stephen Byrne; Fiona Catherine Cassidy; Yong Chen; Catherine Curtin; Katja Dahms; Martin Djiango; Karl Joseph Duffy; Rajiv Ganguly; Georgia Golfis; Stephen Hugh Harrison; Markus Hofmann; Eoghan Patrick Holohan; Giles Christopher Johnson; Saeid Kasiri Ghahi; Gareth Keeley; Anto Kerins; Nora Khaldi; Mary Lee Rhodes; Chang Liu; Grace Lordan; Berry Matijssen; Elizabeth McCarthy; Thomas John Johnston McCloughlin; Una Christine McCourt; Barry McCullagh; Kevin Andrew McGhee; Jolene Mc Monagle; Anthony Moraghan; Caitriona Murray; Lorraine Nolan; Domhnaill O’Brien; Simon Joseph O’Brien; Eavan Mary O’Brien; Barry Séamus O’Connell; Brendan Philip O’Connell; Donncha O’Rourke; Eoghan Seanan Ó Raghallaigh; Keith James Rochford; Gary James Ryan; Emma Caroline Siddall; Samantha Smith; Erin Sullivan; Mark Samuel Sweetnam; Isabel Mary Unwin; Antje Van Der Net; Martina White; Yidong Yang.

MSc Muhammad Yaseen Ali; Zenab Ambark Al Shatr; Barbara Blaznik Marc; Jacinta Byrne; Raymond Anthony Chambers; Matthew James Crofton; Keith Michael Dalton; Vivienne Marie Foley; Ronan Kane; Lucinda Longmore; Amy Louise Mc Carthy; Muireann Mc Cleary; Áine Sarah Celine Murray; Conor Noonan; Lisa Rose.

MLitt Rachel Barrett; Eoin Gleeson; James Carroll; Peter James Kearney; Peter Larsen; Charlotte Elizabeth Lary; Weiming Liu; Madeline Spiers.

MCh Francis D’Darcy.

## (ii) 14 October 2008

## Higher Degrees by Research Alone

PhD Ludmila Boublikova; Felicity Rosalind Cable; Karen Mary Cahill; Claire Coleman; Daisy May Grace Connon; Fionnuala Conway; Stephen Farrell; Justin Gregg; Eleanor Jones; Niall Keely; Daniel Kelleher; Sarah Katherine Mc Grath; Brid Michelle O’Farrell; Alexandre Pereda Banos; Audrey Catherine Tierney; Sixiang Zhou.

DChDent Abigail Katharine Frances Moore.

**MSc** Alan Dillane; Garrett Francis Gerard Egan; Gregory Martin  
McGurk; Vincent Michael O Shaughnessy; Paul David Watters.

**CL/08-09/034 Graduate Studies - Change of Title** The Council noted and approved the amendment of the title of 'P.Grad.Dip in Learning Support and Special Education Needs' to 'P.Grad.Dip in Learning Support and Special Educationala Needs'.

**CL/08-09/035 Graduate Studies Appeals Committee - Appointment of Pro-Dean** The Council noted and approved the nomination of Professor J Saeed as Pro-Dean of Graduate Studies to chair a meeting of the Graduate Studies Appeals Committee.

**CL/08-09/036 Accreditation of Doctorate in Clinical Psychology (D.Clin.Psych.)** The Council noted that the Psychological Society of Ireland's Accreditation Panel had recommended that accreditation be awarded in full to the D.Clin.Psych for three years from 31 May 2008 to 31 May 2011.

**CL/08-09/037 School Directors in Teaching and Learning (Postgraduate and Undergraduate) and Research** The Council noted and approved the following nominations:

- (i) **Computer Science and Statistics 2008-2010**  
Teaching and Learning (Postgraduate): Dr S Clarke.
- (ii) **Natural Sciences 2008-2010**  
Teaching and Learning (Undergraduate): Dr I Sanders;  
Teaching and Learning (Postgraduate): Dr P Murphy;  
Research: Professor C Holland.
- (iii) **Nursing and Midwifery 2008-2009**  
Teaching and Learning (Undergraduate): Dr F Timmins.

**CL/08-09/038 Headship/Acting Headships** The Council approved the following:  
(i) **Head of Botany** Professor F Mitchell, 13 July 2008-12 July 2011;  
(ii) **Acting Head of Geography** Dr A MacLaran, 17 May 2008 to 13 March 2009.

**CL/08-09/039 Working Party on Joint Degrees (see Actum CL/07-08/186 of 4 June 2008)** The Council noted a memorandum from the Registrar, circulated dated 28 October 2008, and approved the membership of the Working Party on Joint Degrees, as set out below:

Registrar (Chair)  
Senior Lecturer  
Dean of Graduate Studies  
Representative of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences: Professor D Singleton  
Representative of Engineering, Mathematics and Science: Dr P Carmody  
Representative of Health Sciences: (to be nominated)  
Ms A Anderson  
Ms L Coady (Secretary)

**CL/08-09/040 Co-ordinator - Bachelor in Theology** The Council noted the nomination of the Rev Dr M Elliott, in place of the Rev Dr A Empey.



CL/08-09/041 **Student Case** The Council noted and approved the request of the Senior Lecturer for a named student to repeat the SF year in 2008-2009 as a third attempt.

CL/08-09/042 **Council Membership** The Council noted that Ms A Mc Gowan (Faculty of Health Sciences) had been nominated by the Graduate Students' Union as an observer at meetings of the University Council.

**SECTION D**

**In compliance with the Data Protection Acts this information is restricted.**

Signed .....

Date .....