

The University of Dublin

Trinity College

A meeting of the University Council was held on Wednesday 6 May 2009 at 11.15 am
in the Board Room.

<i>Present</i>	Provost, Vice-Provost/Chief Academic Officer, Registrar, Senior Lecturer, Senior Tutor, Dean of Graduate Studies, Dean of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences, Dr C Laudet, Professor J Wickham, Professor J Fitzpatrick, Dr M Lyons, Dean of Health Sciences, Dr D Brennan, Professor M McCarron, Professor M Radomski, Dr K Johnson, Dr A O'Gara, Ms D Flynn, Professor G Whyte, Mr H Sullivan, Ms A Murphy.
<i>Apologies</i>	Dean of Research, Dr C MacMaolain, Dr C Morris, Dean of Engineering, Mathematics and Science, Dr V Kelly, Dr D O'Sullivan, Ms C Ní Dhubhda, Mr F Hughes, Mr D Walsh, Mr D Kavanagh, Ms A Mc Gowan, Librarian, Chief Operating Officer.
<i>In attendance</i>	Acting Secretary, Academic Secretary.
<i>Observer</i>	Secretary to the Scholars (Ms N Cleary).

SECTION A

CL/08-09/148 Minutes of the meeting of 8th April 2009 were approved.

CL/08-09/149 Matters Arising

- (i) Referring to Actum CL/08-09/125, the Academic Secretary noted arrangements agreed by the Schools of Dental Science, Nursing & Midwifery, Medicine and Education with respect to the Foundation Scholarship Examination. The School of Education has agreed not to schedule teaching in calendar weeks 19 and 20 hence facilitating students who wish to take the Foundation Scholarship examination in the new academic year structure. Council approved that the Schools of Dental Science, Nursing & Midwifery, and Medicine be permitted to schedule teaching and/or placement activities as normal in calendar weeks 19 and 20 on condition that special arrangements are made to accommodate those students who wish to present for the Foundation Scholarship examination.
- (ii) Referring to Actum CL/08-09/131, the Head of the School of Engineering informed Council that the Executive of the Faculty of Engineering, Mathematics and Science wished to have their dissatisfaction formally recorded in respect of Council's decision to hold Study Week in Week 7 and to hold Open Day in Week 11. The Vice-Provost/ Chief Academic Officer commented that the Faculty Dean was party to the recommendation that

Study Week be held in Week 7. The Provost noted that there was no consensus reached by the Schools in respect of the Undergraduate Open Day 2009 and that the Admissions Office was charged with harvesting the views of second-level Schools on the timing of Open Day in the future.

Council confirmed that there should be no undergraduate teaching scheduled to take place on Open Day.

CL/08-09/150 Provost's Report The Provost informed Council that the Irish Universities Association (IUA) has made a submission to the Higher Education Authority (HEA) on the employment moratorium and the proposed employment control framework referred to in Actum CL/08-09/126. The Universities are proposing that any employment control framework should be based on an oversight and monitoring model, and not on a micro-approval model. The HEA supports this approach in principle but the ultimate decision lies with the Department of Finance. In response to queries from Council members on the employment moratorium, the Provost noted that posts essential to delivering funded research projects (e.g. SFI, PRTL), projects funded through the Strategic Innovation Fund, and posts which are fully self funded may be filled. Posts funded from core funding cannot be filled unless approved by the HEA. The Provost stressed the importance of protecting the University's autonomy in the management of its affairs, and noted that College would not be seeking HEA approval for core-funded posts. The Executive Officers Group will give direction in relation to core-funded employment recruitment as soon as plans are in place for the operation of the employment control framework. In response to a query on how Schools should proceed with the recruitment process in progress for core-funded posts, the Provost confirmed that Schools should complete whatever part of the process they were in at the time of the announcement (27th March 2009): for example, if the School had invited candidates to interview, then they should complete that process. They should not, however, issue a contract to a successful candidate as this is a separate process.

Council noted the severity of the consequences of not being able to fill key academic and support positions on the delivery of core teaching and services.

CL/08-09/151 Postgraduate Course Proposal A course proposal leading to the award of M.Sc. in Cognitive Psychotherapy was withdrawn.

CL/08-09/152 Undergraduate Course Proposal A course proposal leading to the award of a Bachelor in Deaf Studies was circulated. The Senior Lecturer introducing this item informed Council that in accordance with procedures for consideration of undergraduate course proposals, the proposal for Bachelor in Deaf Studies was submitted to external review. The reviewer, Dr. Rachel Sutton-Spence of the School of Applied Community Health Studies, University of Bristol, commended the proposal and indicated that it would develop Deaf Studies as an academic discipline in Ireland, and produce well-qualified professionals for work within the Deaf community. The reviewer made a number of recommendations which have been incorporated into the final course proposal before Council.

The Bachelor in Deaf Studies will be delivered by the Centre for Deaf Studies, School of Linguistic, Speech and Communication Studies. It aims, among other things, to deliver skill competency in Irish Sign Language. The course proposal was approved by the Undergraduate Studies Committee at its meeting of the 28th April 2009.

Council noted and approved the course proposal leading to the award of a Bachelor in Deaf Studies.

CL/08-09/153 Diploma Supplement A progress report on the implementation of the Diploma Supplement dated 21st April 2009 was circulated. The Academic Secretary spoke to this item noting preparation for the introduction of the Diploma Supplement is extensive and probably one of the biggest curricular reform projects ever undertaken by College requiring considerable changes to existing practices, including:

- (i) Modularisation of courses, involving identifying and recording in database format the discrete components of all taught programmes up to and including the Masters' level, and assigning ECTS credit to components according to norms set down by the EU Commission.
- (ii) Recording of percentage marks at the module level for individual credit-bearing modules for all students in cycle 1 and 2 programmes, and retention of these data in a central database.
- (iii) Establishing an institutional marking scale.
- (iv) Establishing the type and level of College (Diploma) awards in accordance with the National Qualifications Framework.
- (v) Creating new banks of course-related data, including NOAI level, grading scheme, degree titles in English, language of instruction, professional status, ECTS volume at award level, statements on access requirements and progression opportunities, and information on study abroad.
- (vi) Rationalisation of commencement procedures (e.g. use of electronic signatures on parchments/diploma certificates, scheduling Masters' ceremonies for graduating cohorts).

By the end of 2007/08 all undergraduate and taught postgraduate programmes (with very few exceptions) had been modularised and the use of the ECTS had been refined, enabling the College to comply with the HEA's use of ECTS credit as a basic unit of measurement in the 2008 Recurrent Grant Allocation Model (RGAM) submission together with its request for detailed lists of credit-bearing modules. She noted some delays in the recording of percentage marks at the module level for individual credit-bearing modules for all students in cycle 1 and 2 programmes, and retention of these data in a central database. Subject to the achievement of a work-around technology solution, College will be in a position to issue 60% of the 2009 graduates with a Diploma Supplement.

In discussing progress on the implementation of the Diploma Supplement, the Provost commented on its scale and the importance of retaining the current momentum. The Academic Secretary, in response to a query, noted that the issuing of the Diploma Supplement will be routine when a new student administration system is implemented.

Council noted the progress report on the implementation of the Diploma Supplement.

CL/08-09/154 Access Plan 2009 -2013 A draft Access Plan 2009-2013 was circulated. The Senior Lecturer introduced this item noting that the HEA requires that third level institutions develop access plans, and a working group was established in Michaelmas Term 2008 to develop Trinity's Access Plan. The Plan includes College's policy on equity of access, an account of the College's present position regarding access, including the number of students enrolled from key access groups, existing resources and personnel dedicated either directly or indirectly to access issues, and an account of current

activities through which the admissions policy on access is implemented. Referring to the section on targets for enhanced access, she noted the range of specific sectoral targets by 2013 as set out in the National Plan for Equity of Access to Higher Education 2008-2013, and drew Council's attention to the Working Group's recommendations to enhance equity of access for underrepresented groups.

The Provost welcomed the Access Plan and commended the Senior Lecturer on a comprehensive assessment of the range of access activities at Trinity College. He noted his commitment to enhancing access for underrepresented groups in Irish society and felt that it was important for the University Council to affirm the College's commitment to equity of access to all its programmes. Trinity has exceeded its first target of 15% of underrepresented groups on undergraduate courses, and these students are achieving on par with their peers. The focus should be on attracting talented students and such students span across all social backgrounds.

In discussing the Access Plan Council considered at length the recommended targets. Among the concerns raised about implementing the targets were the unavailability of key academic and support resources, reduced budgets at College and School levels, reduced European Social Funds for individual students, and the paucity of the maintenance grants and allowances for underrepresented groups attending third-level education. The Senior Lecturer, responding to these concerns, commented that the achievement of the recommended Trinity targets is dependent on the resources being available. The National Plan for Equity of Access 2008-2013 highlights a range of provisions that will need to be in place by several government departments and agencies to support underrepresented groups access and progress through third-level education. Council queried whether the recommended targets could be delivered and the Academic Secretary noted that their delivery depended on other structures being in place. College could, for example, easily achieve a target of 22% in the Faculty of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences (AHSS) but unless proactive steps are taken to increase the number of underrepresented students in the Faculty of Engineering, Mathematics and Science (EMS) and to courses other than nursing in the Faculty of Health Sciences, it would not be possible to achieve targets without increasing numbers further in the Faculty of AHSS. The Dean of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences noted that the proposed target in the Faculty of EMS would not achieve an overall target of 22% across the College and cautioned against increasing in the AHSS to off-set the shortfall in EMS.

Council noted that the sectoral target set by the National Plan for Equity of Access to Higher Education 2008-2013 was 30% and queried why the working group recommended a 22% target for Trinity. The Senior Lecturer explained that the sectoral targets are set against national participation rates and reflect the different cultures of individual institutions. For example, some NUI Colleges have a strong focus on part-time undergraduate provision and this attracts a high proportion of mature students and other underrepresented groups. The Provost noted the importance of providing a rationale in the Access Plan for the specific targets agreed.

Referring to the recommendations relating to extra mural courses and life-long learning, it was argued that the provision of part-time courses requires additional resources and it was felt that Trinity College should focus on full-time provision and avoid the risk of spreading itself too thin. The view was expressed that the diversity of the student population requires the professionalisation of teaching, and that Trinity College should begin to seriously invest in facilitating this. The Senior Lecturer in response to a concern about the scant reference to postgraduate students, noted that the Access Plan is developed along the lines proposed by the National Access

Plan and that the focus of the latter is on new entrants to undergraduate programmes.

There was considerable discussion on the recommendation referring to the establishment of an Academic Liaison Officer (ALO) in each School. The Senior Lecturer noted that this recommendation was discussed at length by the Undergraduate Studies Committee (USC) and this committee proposed that the function of the ALO could be incorporated into the brief of an existing member of staff, for example, the Director of Teaching and Learning, (Undergraduate). There were several views expressed concerning the position of an ALO: some felt that the position added another layer of administration and it was proposed that the relevant access personnel be invited to the School committee to discuss access issues. It was argued that the additional administrative responsibilities of the role of ALO would put considerable strain on smaller Schools as it was already difficult to assign all the administrative-type functions in these Schools. Other views supported the function but felt that the School should determine how it is carried out.

Concluding the discussion on the Access Plan, the Provost stressed the importance of setting targets that are achievable. Council noted the Access Plan 2009-2013 and approved the following recommendations:

- (i) The College should continue to work with the HEA and with other third-level institutions to refine definitions of target groups and improve processes of Access Data Collection.
- (ii) The Access Data collection should be integrated into College's e-Strategy.
- (iii) *Pre-Entry Activities*: the collaborative initiatives, such as the Inner City Access Programme (ICAP), between TCD and DIT should be sustained and developed.
- (iv) *Progression - Alternative Admissions Routes*: College should enter into meaningful engagement with FETAC with a view to developing suitable courses to assist disadvantaged students to enter undergraduate courses in mathematics, engineering and science.
- (v) *Progression - Alternative Admissions Routes*: Research should be undertaken to look at the feasibility of reviewing Trinity College Dublin's admissions policy in terms of varying the matriculation requirements for undergraduate courses in mathematics, science and engineering, specifically for candidates who are eligible to apply to College through modified points schemes. Matriculation requirements for these candidates could be reduced to consist of the required grade in three or four leaving certificate subjects most directly pertinent to the area of study.
- (vi) Existing extra mural course offerings (part-time, evening and weekend) be considered as a starting point for the provision of accredited life-long learning with a view towards developing targets for such provision.
- (vii) New and existing extra mural courses should be considered in the context of community outreach in line with College's commitment for greater engagement with society.
- (viii) College should consolidate existing on-line supports and undertake an investigation of the possible provision of additional on-line supports.
- (ix) College should demonstrate the importance attached to access by facilitating its inclusion as an acknowledged element in staff training and development.
- (x) Schools should make provision for the role of an academic access liaison contact within the School. This role can be in the creation of a post of Academic Liaison Officer or by adding the functions to the responsibilities of an existing post holder in the School (e.g. the Director of Teaching and Learning or Head of Discipline). The staff member with this responsibility

should sit on the School Executive. The functions of the Academic Liaison Officer or staff member responsible for the role include:

- Raising awareness of access issues and activities
- Providing a clear point of contact within academic units for those working in the access area
- Bringing perspectives relating to access to Schools' considerations of curricular reform.

Facilitating access to third-level education involves a process of partnership between government and third-level institutions. The meeting of institutional targets is dependent on the meeting by Government of the commitments made in the *National Plan for Equity of Access*. Council approved the following targets subject to adequate resources being available at both an institutional level and at a student level.

Given these factors the following institutional targets for 2013 are recommended:

- 22% entrance rates according to key access criteria
- 13% new entrance rates by under-represented socio-economic groups
- 11% new entrants in Engineering, Mathematics and Science
- 10% increase in students with a disability (excluding specific learning difficulties)

CL/08-09/155 Quality Assurance An Implementation Plan dated 20th April 2009 arising from the quality review of the School of Education was circulated. The Dean of the Faculty of Arts, Humanities and Social Science spoke to this item and informed Council that the School has already implemented many of the review report recommendations. The School has made plans to implement thirteen other recommendations, and the Dean drew Council's attention to the seven recommendations that the School feels cannot be implemented. Due to budget restrictions, the School cannot (i) create an academic travel fund to support the presentation of papers at conferences, (ii) support the centres of excellence that exist within the School with a funded research fellowship, or (iii) improve accommodation for B.Mus. Ed students. The Dean noted that the recommendation relating to space can only be addressed when sufficient space becomes available within the College. He drew Council's attention to the final recommendation that the School is unwilling to implement. The Reviewers recommended that the School should explore ways of bridging the theory-practice divide in the curriculum and in initial teacher education programme. The School strongly values the provision of foundation disciplines as part of the curriculum and note that this is the model in place in all other Irish teacher education institutions. It is also a model favoured by many other mainland European countries. The School is, however, committed to reviewing all taught courses as part of its five year plan.

In discussing the Implementation Plan of the School of Education Council noted the School's position in respect of the provision of foundation disciplines as part of the curriculum. The Vice-Provost/Chief Academic Officer informed Council, in response to a query, that preparatory meetings with the Associated Colleges of Education and with key staff in Trinity's School of Education have taken place, and a schedule of meetings is now being arranged to commence discussions on the relationship between Trinity College and the Associated Colleges of Education.

Council noted the Implementation Plan of the School of Education and commended the School on actions taken to address key recommendations arising from the quality review report.

Incorporating any amendments approved at subsequent Council meetings

CL/08-09/156 Undergraduate Admissions A memorandum from the Admissions Officer dated 27th April 2009 was circulated. The Academic Secretary introduced this item and informed Council of a change in the timetable for the publication of Leaving Certificate and A Level results in 2009. Normally results for both of these examinations are published within 24 hours of each other thus allowing all applicants to be considered for a place in the Round One allocation of offers in mid August. In 2009 the results for these examinations will not be published simultaneously. Leaving Certificate results will be published on Wednesday 12th August, 2009 and A Level results will be published on Thursday 20th August, 2009. As a result the A Level results will not be available for inclusion in the CAO Round One Allocation which is scheduled to take place on Friday 14th August, 2009. This will have a major impact on the allocation of places on undergraduate courses and the filling of quotas, and it is proposed to reserve a proportion of places for qualified A Level applicants to be issued in Round Two on 27th August, 2009. The number of places on each undergraduate course reserved for A Level applicants will be based on application and offer data (in respect of A Level candidates) from previous years. She noted that there is a risk of over or under filling a course quota, especially courses in Medicine, Dental Science, Law, English and History.

Council discussed the proposal and the risks outlined, and the Academic Secretary confirmed that it is current practice to allocate undergraduate places based on different types of eligible applications. Referring to the CAO (Central Applications Office) process, she noted that the making of offers and filling of quotas is not an exact science and even small changes in acceptance rates can result in courses over or under filling. She confirmed that the delay in the publication of A level examination results will have a greater effect on Trinity College's admissions procedures than on those of other Irish universities because of the high demand from A Level applicants for our undergraduate courses.

Council noted the proposed 2009 admissions procedures to manage the risks associated with the delay in the publication of A Level examination results.

CL/08-09/157 Any other business

- (i) **Council Membership** A memorandum from the Senior Lecturer dated 5th May 2009 was tabled. Council noted that following the resignation of Dr K Johnson, elected research representative for the 2008-09 and 2009-10 academic years, that Dr Fiona Walsh, Research Fellow, Clinical Microbiology, is deemed elected to represent the research community on Council until the end of the 2009-10 academic year.
- (ii) **Academic Freedom** A memorandum from the Vice-Provost/Chief Academic Officer dated 5th May 2009 was tabled. The Vice-Provost/Chief Academic Officer proposed that Council establish a Working Group to develop a College policy on academic freedom. He noted that as part of on-going discussions with the academic community on matters relating to modularisation and the new academic year structure, it was felt that a policy on academic freedom was necessary. Council approved the establishment of a Working Group on academic freedom with membership as follows:

Vice-Provost/Chief Academic Officer (Chair)

Two representatives from the Irish Federation of University Teachers (to be confirmed)

Incorporating any amendments approved at subsequent Council meetings

Registrar
Senior Lecturer
Professor Mary McCarron (Council member)
Dr Vincent Kelly (Council member)
President Graduate Students' Union
Academic Secretary (Secretary)

SECTION B

- CL/08-09/158 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 24 February 2009, which had been circulated.
- CL/08-09/159 Information Policy Committee** The Council noted and approved the recommendations as set out in the minutes of the Information Policy Committee from its meetings of 24 February and 7 April 2009, which had been circulated.
- CL/08-09/160 Research Committee** The Council noted and approved the recommendations as set out in the minutes of the Research Committee from its meetings of 6 and 23 April 2009, which had been circulated.

SECTION C

- CL/08-09/161 Council Membership - Observer** The Council noted that Mr B Devlin has succeeded Ms N Cleary as Secretary to the Scholars, in attendance as an observer at meetings of the University Council, with effect from Trinity Monday, 11 May 2009.
- CL/08-09/162 Schedule of Board and Council Meetings 2009-2010** The Council noted and approved a memorandum from the Acting Secretary, circulated, dated 9 April 2009.
- CL/08-09/163 Meeting of Council to interview for Chair of Theology (1980)**
- (i) The Council noted that it would meet to interview for appointment to the Chair of Theology (1980) on Thursday 7 May 2009 at 2 pm;
 - (ii) The Council noted and approved the appointment of Professor N M McGowan, Pro-Dean of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences as a member of the search committee.
- CL/08-09/164 Higher Degrees** The Council noted and approved the reports of examiners on candidates for higher degrees, approved by the sub-committee of Board and Council on 8 April and noted by Board on 22 April 2009.
- (i) **Reports of Examiners - Higher Degrees by Research Alone**

PhD Damien Byrne; Ricardo José Loureiro Coelho; Aoife Cullen; Gareth Cooke; Edmond James Cussen; Dara Patricia Downey; Shiera Sharafuddin El-Malik; John Frain; Timothy David Harding; Matthew Haugh; Patrick Joseph Hester; Laura Catherine Kelly; Stuart Kinsella; Xue Li; Ciaran Mac An Bhaird; Catherine McCabe; Vyacheslav Mikhaylov; Gareth John Moss; Liam Nestor; Orla Ní Ógáin; Cornelius O'Connor; Ian Edward O'Connor; Ioanna Stamouli; Jayne Telford; Aidan Anthony McNamara; Sorcha Ní Fhlainn; Manfred Karl Weltecke.

MSc Darren Carty; Antoinette Mary Copley; Brian Whelan.

MLitt Geoffrey McEvoy.

MCh Omer Raheem.

- (ii) **Change of Supervisor** The Council noted a correction of supervisor name from Dr E Mahon to Dr J Dillon for Mr J-P Faulkner, notified to Council on 4 March 2009 (CL/08-09/116).

CL/08-09/165 Consolidated List of External Examiners 2009-2010 The Council noted and approved a memorandum from the Senior Lecturer, circulated, dated 24 April 2009.

CL/08-09/166 Headships of Discipline/Departments The Council noted the following nominations:

- (i) **Economics** Professor P Lane, three years from 31 August 2009;
- (ii) **Zoology** Dr J G Wilson, 2009-2010, from 1 October 2009.

SECTION D

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

Signed

Date