

*Incorporating any amendments approved at subsequent Council meetings*

The University of Dublin

Trinity College

A meeting of the University Council was held on Wednesday 26 September 2012 at 11.15 am in the Board Room.

<i>Present</i>	Provost, Vice-Provost/Chief Academic Officer, Registrar, Senior Lecturer, Senior Tutor, Dean of Research, Dean of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences, Professor E O'Dell, Professor M Junker-Kenny, Professor D Faas, Professor J Walsh, Dean of Engineering, Mathematics and Science, Professor G Watson, Professor J P Labrador, Professor A McNabola, Dean of Health Sciences, Professor D Brennan, Professor S Smith, Professor J Nunn, Dr S Bloomfield, Ms D Jones, Dr A O'Gara, Professor J Ohlmeyer, Professor A Piesse, Mr D Ferrick, Mr A McEwan.
<i>Apologies</i>	Dean of Graduate Studies, Professor T Connor, Ms S Leydon, Mr E Tebay, Mr S Maguire, Mr T O'Connor.
<i>In attendance</i>	Librarian, Secretary to the College, Academic Secretary (for item CL12-13/005(i)), Chief Operating Officer, Mr J Coman, Assistant Academic Secretary.
<i>By invitation</i>	Professor B Singleton (for CL/12-13/006).

SECTION A

The Provost opened this first meeting of Council for the 2012/2013 year by introducing new members: Professor Wickham, Dean of the Faculty of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences, Professor Junker-Kenny, Professor Faas and Professor Walsh representing the Faculty of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences, Dr Bloomfield representing research staff and Mr McEwan, Vice-President of the Graduate Students' Union. The Provost welcomed Mr John Coman in attendance for this meeting of Council. Mr Coman takes up his position as College Secretary on 18 October 2012.

**CL/12-13/003 Minutes**

Minutes of the meetings of 14 June 2012 and 5 September 2012 were approved and signed. Minutes of the meeting of 13 June 2012 were approved and signed, following correction of the School affiliations for Cairiona Russell (delete Church of Ireland Theological Institute) and Katie Heffelfinger (delete Religions Theology and Ecumenics) in Appendix 1 to Actum CL/11-12/215.

**CL/12-13/004 Matters Arising:**

CL/11-12/191 (ii) The Vice-Provost/Chief Academic Officer reminded Council of the publication of the Hyland discussion paper on 'Entry to Higher Education in the 21st Century' dealing with the suitability of the points system for admission to third level

education, on the undergraduate curriculum particularly in the first year and on the transition from second to third level education. Since the last Council meeting debate has continued in the public domain on these issues. As a result of the significant increase in admission points in 2012, the Department of Education and Skills is now considering reducing the granularity of the points system which would increase the number of applicants subject to random selection for programmes. [Based on the 2012 intake this would mean a change from 350 students admitted under random selection to 1,400 students admitted in this way.] Further there is also a perception in the Department that the large number of course codes in Trinity, more than appears to be available in other institutions, is exacerbating the inflation in points. A member of Council suggested that the additional 25 points awarded to honours Maths in the Leaving Cert was more significant than the number of course codes offered in Trinity. College is looking very closely at how it should respond to these pressures. Council will be aware [CL/11/12-100] that the Senior Lecturer/Dean of Undergraduate Studies is simultaneously developing a proposal that our admissions policy should measure student performance and ability through more than one metric. The Vice-Provost/Chief Academic Officer then invited the Senior Lecturer/Dean of Undergraduate Studies to provide more details. He informed Council that discussions are taking place with a small number of Schools about participating in a feasibility study on a limited basis which would take a broader view of academic ability. Following approval by the Undergraduate Studies Committee, it is the intention to bring to Council details of the study which he believes will provide a fairer way to admit students. It is likely that this feasibility study, to be carried out on behalf of the university sector, will involve approximately three degree programmes. Only a very small proportion of the intake, plus those admitted under random selection, will be assessed on the additional criteria. College is committed to considering alternative, more appropriate, admission policies and this fits with the wish of the Minister for Education and Skills to identify new alternatives to the current admissions system.

A Council member, although supportive of the initiative, expressed concern about the manner in which the proposal for a feasibility study was being presented in the public domain. From coverage it appeared that the proposal was considerably more developed than Council had been informed and he felt that the proper role of Board and Council was not being respected. The Provost noted that it is necessary to consult and to formulate proposals before final proposals are brought to Council and that it is unfortunate if draft proposals are presented by the press as being more advanced than they in fact are. The Senior Lecturer/Dean of Undergraduate Studies emphasised that it had never been his intention to bypass Council and that the final proposal is still under development.

In considering the first year curriculum and the transition of students from second to third-level, it was noted that the large common entry courses such as Science and BESS could be described as already having generic first years. Experience from the *fora* on assessment held last term would indicate that there is scope for innovation in assessment methods for freshman students. Members of Council suggested that it would be appropriate to consider mechanisms to facilitate the transition from second-level to third-level education and the Dean of Students reported that she has been charged with responsibility for the orientation of students, including facilitating that transition.

Council looks forward to a discussion of the Senior Lecturer/Dean of Undergraduate Studies' proposal at the next meeting.

CL/11-12/198 The Vice-Provost/Chief Academic Officer reported that Professor Donal O'Donovan, Professor Sarah Smyth and Professor Kevin Devine had agreed to be

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members of the working group to consider the issues involved in developing a fixed teaching timetable. Other members, including student representatives, will be invited to join the working group as it develops its terms of reference.

**BD-CL12-13/002** The Registrar reported that following the decision of Board and Council the degree of Doctor in Laws had been awarded jointly with the other universities on the island of Ireland on Mr Feeney at a moving ceremony on 6 September 2012. Council joined the Provost in extending its thanks to all those who made this unique ceremony possible.

**CL/12-13/005 Provost's Report**

(i) The GeneSIS project is working to introduce a new Student Information System and the start of Michaelmas Term marked an important milestone in its implementation. The Provost informed Council that he had recently visited the GeneSIS team and had observed first hand their tremendous commitment to bringing forward this major change project. He invited the Academic Secretary, as Project Sponsor, to provide an update on the current position. The Academic Secretary emphasised that this is a massive project which is bringing about fundamental change to College's long-established practices and processes to ensure a more efficient service for students and a more satisfying work programme for staff. The team has been working closely with Schools and the Students' Union as part of its communication strategy. She highlighted some major achievements to date. As of 24 September 2012, 10,782 students have registered online, compared to 4,670 who would have registered physically at the same time last year. Over €30m has been paid in online fees. Postgraduate applications are being dealt with through both SITS and PAC and over 3,000 places have been accepted. A particular concern had been whether SITS would successfully interface with existing systems and this has been successfully completed for 20 core systems. In any transformational project unanticipated problems will arise and not all new entrants have yet been allocated a tutor. The Academic Secretary informed Council that a solution is being tested and the Senior Tutor thanked those members of the team who had been working on the problem and communicating regularly with her office. While course timetables are prepared in CMIS rather than SITS there have been some problems with the migration of data from CMIS to SITS. An upgrade to CMIS this year has not been as effective as it should have been - it was unable to cope with the very complex timetabling arrangements in some areas. There has been ongoing work over the summer to resolve these issues. Students have been issued with timetables and the intention is that they will also be available online by next week. The Provost thanked the Academic Secretary for her report and Council recorded its support for those involved in this major project.

(ii) **Towards a Future Higher Education Landscape**  
At the request of Council members the Provost dealt with this item as part of his report rather than as item C8. As notified at previous Council meetings (CL/11-12, 069, 096, 115, 137, 166, 191) the HEA had requested that institutions report on how they envisage consolidating and collaborating with other institutions in their region, as suggested by the HEA document 'Towards a Future Higher Education Landscape, February 2012, to meet the objectives of the National Strategy for Higher Education to 2030. Trinity's 'Landscape'

document was circulated with the Council papers. It makes clear that while fully committed to collaborating with like-minded institutions in the city, Trinity is not a regional university. It emphasises our singular position among Irish institutions and our strengths in research. No feedback has yet been received from the HEA although it is understood that an international review panel has reported on how the Irish third-level system can be improved. The HEA has, however, clarified that recent press reports suggesting that the recommendations include a merger of TCD and UCD is not in accordance with government policy. Clearly the education sector is in an uncertain climate and the Provost restated his commitment to protect College's interests and safeguard our existing provisions. He drew Council's particular attention to the statement on page 35 of the document: 'While the complex issues of funding higher education noted in the Review of Funding Model for Higher Education Institutions Consultation Document, July 2012 remains unresolved it is not possible to commit to any significant increase in undergraduate EU students.' Although it is clear that the government wants to increase undergraduate numbers to respond to changing demographics it is impossible for any increase to be sustained without a corresponding increase in staff numbers. Our staff:student ratio is already double that of comparable universities in the UK and the Provost noted that while visiting Rwanda during the summer he learnt that the University of Rwanda's staff:student ratio is 1:15, compared to 1:25 for some areas of College.

A member of Council recognised the importance of this institutional response but considered it a muted response and argued that College should have argued more forcibly against consolidation and collaboration. Another Council member argued that it is unfortunate that the IUA has not taken a more critical approach to the HEA document which seems to promote the role of the HEA itself and to view rationalisation as a remedy for inadequate funding. The Vice-Provost/Chief Academic Officer reminded Council that the 'Landscape' document should be seen in the context of College's regular engagement with the HEA about funding, sustainability and constantly changing priorities. Council may be assured that every opportunity is taken to make College's priorities and views clear to the HEA.

The Provost drew Council's attention to the Report of the International Review Panel on the Structure of Initial Teacher Education Provision in Ireland (item C9 of the agenda). He welcomed the recommendations although the details are yet to be worked out. Trinity remains committed to its relationship with Marino Institute of Education and respected the view of the Church of Ireland College of Education that its interests lay elsewhere. At the invitation of the Provost, Dr O'Gara confirmed that Marino Institute of Education looks forward to working with College in moving the proposals forward. She noted with satisfaction the Report's emphasis on research underpinning teacher education. A Council member noted with regret that the report does not address the areas of continuing professional development or postgraduate education of teachers, particular areas of expertise in the School of Education and suggested that some of the recommendations, such as a single location, may merit revisiting.

The Provost concluded the discussion by informing Council that College's 'Landscape' document will be published on the College's website later that day.

**CL/12-13/006 Proposal for Royal Irish Academy of Music to become an Associated College**

The Provost invited Professor Brian Singleton, Head of the School of Drama, Film and Music to Council to present the proposal, 17 September 2012, circulated, that the Royal Irish Academy of Music become an Associated College. Council's views will then be conveyed to Board which will decide on the proposal. Professor Singleton informed Council that this proposal has widespread support in the School. Closer collaboration with the RIAM will strengthen what is already an emerging critical mass in music composition in the department of music. It will serve to broaden and deepen the relationship between composers and interpretative artists. The RIAM is already actively pursuing an ongoing relationship with The Lir National Academy of Dramatic Art in the areas of stage management, reading musical scores and acting for opera. In summary, the working group to develop the proposal sees this collaboration as the ideal mechanism to link conservatoire training in music and drama with theoretical study allowing both the institutions to compete internationally. The Faculty Dean endorsed the proposal which he views as a significant cultural development for the city of Dublin and nationally and an example of the growing interaction between research and practice, an important role for leading universities. The Dean of Research concurred with this view and welcomed the proposal. In response to a query Professor Singleton confirmed that this new relationship will respect both the importance of the study of musicology and of composers. It was confirmed that arrangements for the accreditation of the RIAM's degrees, including the professional doctorate in music, would come before Council in due course. The Dean of Students welcomed this enrichment of the study body and noted the range of student services that would be available to RIAM students, dependent on the level of contribution made.

Council views positively the academic grounds of the proposal that the RIAM become an Associated College.

**CL/12-13/007 Implementation of the Recommendations from the Institutional Review**

The Vice-Provost/Chief Academic Officer's memo, 18 September 2012, circulated, outlined the proposed membership of a Working Group to look at the key recommendations from the Report of the Institutional Review, received in June 2012. These recommendations include reviewing the remit of the quality committee, a complete overhaul of student evaluation, reviewing the scope of quality reviews of Schools. There is a significant work plan to be carried out and the role of the Working Group will be to oversee implementation of those recommendations that have merit. The Vice-Provost/Chief Academic Officer emphasised that the Working Group would set up subgroups, drawing on membership from Schools and Council, to look at discrete themes and report back to the Working Group. The Dean of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences has agreed to serve and the Council representative will be Professor McNabola. Mr McEwan will represent the Graduate Students' Union and Mr Ferrick the Students' Union. Other members of Council who would be prepared to serve on the subgroups are invited to contact the Vice-Provost/Chief Academic Officer. In response to comments from Council members that the proposed membership did not provide sufficient representation from Schools or from junior

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staff members and that these omissions would militate against implementation of any resulting recommendations, the Vice-Provost/Chief Academic Officer gave an assurance that the subgroups would include representatives from these groups. Acknowledging that the membership of the Working Group should be in a position to provide leadership on implementation of the recommendations from the Institutional Review, Council accepted the membership as proposed.

#### CL/12-13/008 Quality Reviews

- (i) **Implementation Plan - School of Biochemistry and Immunology**

The Faculty Dean brought Council's attention through the School's implementation plan, 14 September 2012, circulated. In summary, many of the recommendations have been implemented, some are in train and others extend beyond the remit of the School. He concentrated his oral report on those recommendations which have yet to be implemented. Despite the School's move to new space in the Biomedical Sciences Institute the reviewers suggest that the School make a case for additional space. While the School believes it has a clear case this is a problem that will be familiar to many Heads of School. The School decided to prioritise the appointment of a new lecturer post above that of a Chief Technician, as recommended by the reviewers. The appointment of a Chief Technician may be revisited in future staffing plans, dependent on resources. This new lecturer goes some way to increasing the critical mass in metabolism as recommended. Council noted the implementation plan for the School of Biochemistry and Immunology.
- (ii) **Progress Report - School of Psychology**

The Faculty Dean noted that Council approved the implementation plan for Psychology in Michaelmas term 2011. This progress report deals with two recommendations that have not been implemented and should be seen in the context of the reviewers' concerns about support for research activity. The School does already routinely provide support for research. It is already quite active in public engagement and does not see that a formal committee would enhance that engagement. The Vice-Provost/Chief Academic Officer noted that the report does not refer to new initiatives such as the Research Proposal and Awards Management Solution (RPAMS) or the Faculty appointment of a Director of Strategic Projects which were relevant to the reviewers' recommendations and which would provide support for the School in implementing key recommendations of the Review. The Faculty Dean undertook to bring them to the School's attention. Council noted the progress report from the School of Psychology.

#### CL/12-13/009 Any Other Urgent Business

The College Secretary updated Council on progress in the production of the 2012/2013 College Calendar. Due to extensive changes required by the adoption of the Harmonisation of Assessment and Progression Regulations (CL11-12/168) not all course entries are yet complete. Those that are finalised have been posted to the website. Entries are still outstanding from Schools and there is still a considerable amount of checking and proofing to be completed before the Calendar can be printed. In the meantime, sections are uploaded on to the website as they become available. The Senior Tutor expressed concern that the new regulations may not be contained in

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course handbooks which have already been produced and that there would then be conflict between the University Calendar and handbooks. The Vice-Provost/Chief Academic Officer noted that there had been very extensive engagement with Schools on this issue so as to avoid such a situation.

## SECTION B

### CL/12-13/010 Undergraduate Studies Committee

Draft Minutes of the meeting of the Undergraduate Studies Committee on 11 September 2012 were circulated. The Senior Lecturer/Dean of Undergraduate Studies drew Council's attention to the work programme for 2012/2013 (USC/12/13/004) which will concentrate on 'defining, articulating and finding policies to support the concept of the Trinity Education in the undergraduate curriculum.' The Committee is clear that this challenging work programme should lead to something concrete and not another set of principles which are not fully implemented. He thanked the Dean of Students for her role in chairing a group charged with considering cases of some students returning from off-books (USC12/-13/007) which had improved the decision-making process. Council noted the Draft Minutes of the Undergraduate Studies Committee, 11 September 2012.

## SECTION C

### CL/12-13/011 University Council - Membership 2012-2013

The Council noted the membership for 2012-2013, as circulated.

### CL/12-13/012 Administrative Arrangements in the Summer Session

The Council noted and approved a memorandum from the Secretary to the College, circulated, dated 18 September 2012.

### CL/12-13/013 Higher Degrees—Reports of Examiners

The Council noted and approved the reports of examiners on candidates for higher degrees, approved by the sub-committee of Board and Council on 13 June 2012 and noted by Board on 27 June 2012.

(i) **Professional Higher Degree by Research Alone**

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(ii) **Higher Degrees by Research Alone**

PhD Aoife Catriona Daly; Brian Kevin Donohoe; Marian Forde; Cormac Hampson; Tora Sun Leong; Wulf Lüdicke; Philip McConway; Clare Morgan; Eve Morrison; Roderic Peter O'Gorman; Marita O'Sullivan; Susan Rose Power; Aliaksandra Rakovich; Sean Reilly; Sharon Sheehan; Rebecca Rose Wall; David Walsh.

**MSc** Deirdre Ann Carroll; Joseph Anthony Donohue; Brian William John Gervais; Miriam Frances Holohan; Michelle Marie Leech.

**CL/12-13/014 Heads of School**

The Council noted that the Board has approved the following nominations:

- (i) **Aspirant Religions, Theology and Ecumenics**  
Professor M Junker-Kenny (Professor in Theology), 2012-2013;
- (ii) **Social Sciences and Philosophy**  
Professor P Simons (Professor of Moral Philosophy (1837)), 2012-2015.

**CL/12-13/015 School Directors**

The Council noted the following nominations:

- (i) **Directors of Teaching and Learning (Undergraduate)**
  - (a) Biochemistry and Immunology, 2012-2014: Professor K H Mok
  - (b) Psychology, Michaelmas Term 2012: Professor J Quigley.
- (ii) **Director of Teaching and Learning (Postgraduate)**  
Social Sciences and Philosophy, 2012-2013: Professor T Hicks.

**CL/12-13/016 Trinity College Institute of Neuroscience (TCIN)**

The Council noted that Professor S O'Mara has been appointed as Director of the TCIN, 2012-2015.

**CL/12-13/017 Seamus Heaney Professorship of Irish Writing**

The Provost noted with pleasure the creation of an endowed Professorship of Irish Writing name in honour of Seamus Heaney. The Professor will build on existing strengths in the School of English and will enrich the teaching of Irish writing in English at all levels. He acknowledged the contribution of the Vice-Provost for Global Relations and the Trinity Foundation in making this possible. The Faculty Dean, too, welcomed this initiative.

**CL/12-13/018 Report of the International Review Panel on the Structure of Initial Teacher Education Provision in Ireland**

The Council noted a memorandum from the Provost, circulated, dated 18 September 2012.

**SECTION D**

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

Signed .....

Date .....

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