The University of Dublin

Trinity College

A meeting of the University Council was held on Wednesday 12 March 2014 at 11.15 am in the Board Room.

Present	Provost, Vice-Provost/Chief Academic Officer, Registrar, Senior Lecturer/Dean of Undergraduate Studies, Senior Tutor, Dean of Graduate Studies, Dean of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences, Dean of Students, Professor M Junker-Kenny, Professor D Faas, Professor J Walsh, Professor G Watson, Professor G Davey, Professor R Dahyot, Professor I Donohue, Professor D Brennan, Professor S Smith, Professor J Nunn, Professor A-M Healy, Dr S Bloomfield, Dr A O'Gara, Ms D Alexander, Mr J Leahy, Ms H Hughes, Mr I Mooney, Ms S G Smith.
Apologies	Vice-President for Global Relations, Dean of Research, Dean of Engineering, Mathematics and Science, Professor E O'Dell, Dean of Health Sciences, Mr D McGlacken-Byrne, Mr N Slater, Secretary to the Scholars (Ms A P Worrall), Interim Chief Operating Officer.
In attendance	Acting Librarian, Secretary to the College, Academic Secretary, Ms S De Brunner.
Observers	Ms J Chaisson (GSU).

SECTION A

The Provost requested that Council members declare any potential conflicts of interest in relation to the agenda items. None was declared.

CL/13-14/117 Minutes
The minutes of 12 February 2014 were approved and signed subject to the following corrections to Actum CL/13-14/095(ii):

(i)   The rewording of the last sentence of the first paragraph to read, 'The Provost commented that it was unfortunate that the memorandum from the Standing Committee had been provided to a student newspaper prior to receiving it himself, to which Professor O'Dell responded that the student journalists were entitled to their sources and that the memorandum was publically available.'

(ii)   The removal of the word 'new' in the penultimate paragraph.

CL/13-14/118   Matters Arising:

(i)   CL/13-14/097: The Vice-Provost/Chief Academic Officer advised that there would be a substantial strategic planning item for discussion at a future meeting of Council related to the profile of the institution and the reference documents from the pillar groups.

(ii)   CL/13-14/098: The Vice-Provost/Chief Academic Officer noted that the working group to oversee the external review of College research themes has been convened and is developing a framework for the review process.

(iii)   CL/13-14/100: The Dean of Students reported that the questionnaire phase of the Irish Survey of Student Engagement had closed and that Trinity's response rate was 12% which was better than that achieved in 2013. A 12% response rate means that the results could not be considered statistically representative. He noted that the survey findings would be available in April.

(iv)   CL/13-14/095(i): The Senior Tutor noted that she and the Academic Secretary had discussed how to capture data on students who are unable to afford the student contribution and who additionally could not access a bank loan. She advised that there was no straightforward way to gather this information and it would take some time to gather details from a variety of sources. The Academic Secretary noted that comparative data would be necessary, but that this would be difficult to compile. Following a brief discussion it was noted that the Students' Union and the Graduate Students' Union could assist in the data gathering exercise.

CL/13-14/119   Provost's Report

(i)   Referring to the College's financial situation, the Provost drew the attention of Council to the current situation whereby actual student numbers, particularly in postgraduate taught and research categories, have fallen short of projected student numbers. This is a cause for serious concern since these projections were used to drive financial forecasts for College and were a significant factor in determining budget allocations for Schools. As a result, additional capacity has been created in College which is not being met. He noted that this matter is being discussed and monitored by the Planning Group.

Responding to a comment about Information System problems leading to delays in processing postgraduate applications for admission, the Provost voiced his opinion that he too has concerns in this regard, but noted that devolved decision making at the School level can be slow and is also having an adverse impact on filling places. He queried the rationale behind the current decision making process and suggested that admissions decisions concerning qualified applicants could be made centrally.

The Vice-Provost/Chief Academic Officer advised that the Planning Group has discussed this matter and is considering the imposition of a policy that decisions are made centrally if they are not made locally within the two-week deadline. She outlined the significant investment College has made in the recruitment of academic staff and the imperative to increase student numbers to cover these costs, especially given the decline in State funding. Other universities in

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Ireland have managed to increase their student numbers at undergraduate, postgraduate taught and research levels and, as such, it might be necessary to reconsider the type of courses we offer and the modes of delivery. The Provost commented that since other universities have grown their numbers, it is unlikely that postgraduate fees and the absence of a more comprehensive student loan scheme are significant factors affecting student enrolment at Trinity.

During the discussion of this matter the following topics were discussed: the difficulty in directing and creating capacity at a local level where it is needed; the cross-subsidisation of many courses that habitually do not meet their quotas; comparatively slow response times for international applications; the decision making process for applications to postgraduate taught courses and the reluctance to transfer this to a central office; the reluctance at School level to increase quotas on some high demand postgraduate courses; the need for flexible course delivery mechanisms, for example, on a module-by-module basis; and flexibility in the scaffolding of awards.

The Provost advised that the Vice-Provost/Chief Academic Officer and the Faculty Deans will work together to address this problem and the Vice-Provost/Chief Academic Officer advised that Directors of Teaching and Learning (Postgraduate) would be invited to the ABC budgetary meetings with the Schools to apprise them of the seriousness of the current situation.

(ii)   The Provost commented that a second Global Relations Strategy is currently being developed and will draw on learnings from the last two and a half years. It is likely that the new strategy will contain recommendations in relation to joint degrees, the 2+2 model of degree course completion and the possibility of locating further substantive Trinity activities abroad such as in the case of the collaboration with the Singapore Institute of Technology. He advised that the revised strategy would be discussed at future meetings of both Board and Council.

(iii)   The Provost summarised the work and the direction being taken by the Mission, Vision and Values Working Group under the strategic planning process. In relation to key institutional values, it is likely that they will be enumerated in the plan and accompanied by a narrative to contextualise these. Speaking about the vision, it is currently stated in somewhat limited terms as it refers to being an institution of global consequence without explaining why this is important or stating the benefits of being so. In relation to the mission of the University it is thought that this should be more distinctive to Trinity; the current mission statement could refer to any number of institutions. The outputs of this working group will be presented to a future meeting of Council.

(iv)   The Provost highlighted a number of capital development projects and noted that Board recently approved plans to proceed with the Business and Innovation Hub development on the current Luce Hall site, which will also involve the demolition of the Simon Perry Building and the refurbishment of a number of Georgian buildings along Pearse Street. Progress is being made on the E3 project and plans are being developed to convert Oisín House into student accommodation.

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CL/13-14/120   Postgraduate Course Proposals

(i)   **Proposal for the validation of the proposal for a Professional Masters in Education (Primary Teaching)**
A memorandum from the Dean of Graduate Studies dated, 3 March 2014, was circulated along with a proposal for the validation of a Professional Masters in Education (Primary Teaching), for delivery in the Marino Institute of Education (MIE).

The Dean of Graduate Studies introduced the proposal and noted that it has been developed to meet requirements set down by the Teaching Council. It is a two-year full time course which carries 120 ECTS and contains provision for a postgraduate diploma as an exit award. Its modules are organised into three main areas of study:

(a)   foundation studies, which includes a substantial research component;
(b)   curriculum studies; and
(c)   school placement/professional studies.

The new course will provide a greater level of research-led teaching and should provide students with a strong basis for continuing professional development throughout their careers. She stated that Professor Marco Snoek, of the Amsterdam Institute of Education, has reviewed the proposal and has provided very positive and constructive feedback. She noted that quality assurance of the validated course will be overseen by the Associated Colleges Degree Committee.

It was noted during the discussion of the proposed course that demand for courses in education, both in Trinity and in MIE, has remained strong and that the course fits well into the collaborative framework for initial teacher education.

Dr O'Gara, President of MIE, acknowledged the amount of work put into the course proposal and commented on the high level of support offered by the School of Education, the Dean of Graduate Studies and the Bologna Desk.

Council approved the validation of the new course delivered by MIE leading to the award of Professional Masters in Education (Primary Teaching), with provision for an exit Postgraduate Diploma, and noted that it is due to commence in September 2014.

(ii)   **Proposal for a Postgraduate Certificate in Implementation Science**
A memorandum from the Dean of Graduate Studies, dated 3 March 2014, was circulated along with a proposal for a new course leading to the award of a Postgraduate Certificate in Implementation Science.

The Dean of Graduate Studies spoke to the proposal and explained that the course carries 30 ECTS and would be delivered on a part-time basis over one academic year. The proposal has been developed by the Department of Public Health and Primary Care, in the School of Medicine, and concerns the conversion of data/evidence into practice in the fields of health and social

care. The course comprises five modules, each of which is assessed by a written assignment and two of which are shared with the M.Sc. in Health Services Management. The proposal was very positively reviewed by Professor L Fixsen, of the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, an expert in the area of implementation science.

Following a question concerning the use of written assignments as the sole form of assessment and the attendant risks of plagiarism, the Dean of Graduate Studies responded that this had been raised at the Graduate Studies Committee and directly with the proposers, however, since entrants are likely to be in employment whilst registered to the course, this was seen as the most appropriate method. The Provost commented that there is nothing inherently wrong with assessment by coursework alone, provided that appropriate mechanisms are put in place to prevent acts of plagiarism. The Dean of Graduate Studies confirmed that she would contact the proposers in this regard.

Council approved the proposal for a one-year part-time course leading to the award of Postgraduate Certificate in Implementation Science and noted that it is due to start in September 2014.

CL/13-14/121   Discussion Paper on New Admission Mechanism for TSM
A memorandum from the Senior Lecturer/Dean of Undergraduate Studies, dated 4 March 2014, was circulated along with a discussion paper concerning a proposed new mechanism to admit students to the Two Subject Moderatorship (TSM) course. Introducing the document he explained that further consultation will take place through the TSM Management Committee and the Undergraduate Studies Committee (USC) following which a final proposal would be brought back to Council for its consideration and approval.

He outlined the high level of external interest in the entry mechanism for the course, especially from the Higher Education Authority and the Department of Education and Skills, which is likely to stem from the incorrect assumption that there are 178 different course quotas to match the 178 TSM CAO entry codes (soon rising to 182 with the addition of Catholic Theological Studies). He noted that of the 953 Level 8 degree course active codes in the CAO system, 579 are related to the university sector and of those, 237 currently relate to Trinity. He also spoke about the work of the Task Group on University Entry and Selection (TGRUSE) and highlighted statements which had been made at that forum to the effect that the other universities will not act to reduce their numbers of course codes unless the Institutes of Technology and Trinity College do so; there is a danger that Trinity will be blamed if TGRUSE does not meet its objectives. He also outlined the complexity of the current entry mechanism along with the difficulties faced by applicants in trying to ascertain the points necessary to gain entry to their preferred TSM combination; this could have been a significant factor in the substantial decrease in first preference applications to TSM this year which are down by 23% on last year.

He brought the meeting through the proposed mechanism which he considered to be the most pragmatic. He explained that it should reduce the number of TSM CAO codes to approximately 25-27 through the use of a main subject code plus a suffix code to indicate the second subject. He demonstrated how the mechanism would

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work at a basic level and advised that this would have to be fully tested through simulations by the CAO. He explained that CAO points would be counted and considered for the main subject and not for the suffix subject and that in order for this to work it would be necessary to make any two subject combination different when the subject choice is inverted, in terms of first year course content. For example, 30 credits would be taken in the main subject, 20-25 credits in the suffix subject, with the remainder coming from Broad Curriculum modules or another subject or a module specifically designed to help first year students with their transition to third-level education. Each subject would retain its own quota which would close when filled, either by students opting for it as the main subject or as the suffix subject.

He outlined some of the possible dangers associated with the mechanism which could include looser control over quotas and the possibility of students gaining entry with lower points to a particular combination when compared to its inversion. However, he provided some proposals to mitigate these risks such as specifying that certain high points subjects could only be chosen as the main subject or to specify that where there is a large disparity in points between subjects in a particular combination that the higher points subject must be taken as the main subject in that combination.

He emphasised the marketing opportunity that this would provide and noted that the deadline for implementation would be for entrants in September 2017.

In response to questions, the Senior Lecturer confirmed that the TSM Patterns A and B would operate as they do now; the choice of a particular main subject on entry would not dictate the major subject chosen under Pattern B in the Sophister years. He also confirmed that there were no plans to subsume all two-subject courses into the TSM course, though consideration may be given to History and Political Science and Political Science and Geography, since there has been interest from those course areas.

There were concerns raised about the workability of, and the level of complexity in, the proposed mechanism. It was felt that it would be difficult to explain how it would work to future leaving certificate candidates since it is not easy to comprehend. Students might have difficulties in taking the two subjects equally in the Senior Freshman year since they must take 5-10 credits of their suffix subject from elsewhere in the Junior Freshman year. There are timetabling difficulties already apparent in TSM and in the current operation of the Broad Curriculum which would be exacerbated by the proposed operation of the Junior Freshman year. It was also suggested that the matters of quotas and quota management would need to be re-examined to determine the actual effect on these.

The Provost noted that reform is necessary but that Council must be sure that it takes the correct direction on this issue and in this regard there would need to be greater analysis of the implementation issues.

Council agreed the following:
(i)   reform of the entry mechanism to TSM is necessary;
(ii)   that, in principle, TSM course codes could be reduced by means of introducing a main subject plus suffix subject coding system to represent the available two subject combinations;
(iii)   to invite the CAO to start modelling the proposed mechanism;

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(iv)   that, in parallel to the modelling exercise, a small working group should be established to consider the proposal and implementation issues in greater detail, and report to Council at its meeting in May 2014 on internal operational matters before a final decision is made.

The Provost thanked the Senior Lecturer/Dean of Undergraduate Studies for his work on the proposal as part of the TGRUSE group.

CL/13-14/122   Any Other Urgent Business

Under Other Business the Council noted and approved a tabled memorandum for the search committee for the Directorship of AMBER - see Actum CL/13-14/135 (ii) in Section D.

SECTION B

CL/13-14/123   Undergraduate Studies Committee
The Senior Lecturer/Dean of Undergraduate Studies, in particular, brought the attention of Council to a minor revision to the harmonised capping regulation. Council noted and approved the draft minutes of 18 February 2014.

CL/13-14/124   Graduate Studies Committee
The Dean of Graduate Studies stated that she wished to re-present the Graduate Studies Committee minutes of 20 February 2014 to the next meeting of Council due to the inclusion of some factual inaccuracies.

CL/13-14/125   Human Resources Committee
The draft minutes of 20 February 2014 were noted and approved.

CL/13-14/126   Quality Committee
The draft minutes of 6 February 2014 were noted and approved.

SECTION C

CL/13-14/127   Higher Degrees—Reports of Examiners - Higher Degrees by Research Alone
The Council noted and approved the reports of examiners on candidates for higher degrees, approved by the sub-committee of Board and Council on 12 February 2014 and noted by Board on 26 February 2014.

PhD   James Barrett; Darren Burke; John Curran; Jose Manuel Caridad Hernandez; Ian Davis; Jaclyn Dolan; Eimear Marie Gleeson; Mícheál Pio Hoyne; Brian Hughes; Rosalind Clare Hussey; Ahmad Iftikhar; Joanne Kierans; Peter Lavin; Marianne Leitner; Peter May; Francesco Manoni; Patricia Mary McCarthy;

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Felim McGrath; Deirdre Murphy; Emma Murphy; Eoin O'Driscoll; Kathryn Richardson; Emma Riordan; Mong Leng Sin.

MLitt   Antoinette Dornan.

CL/13-14/128   Academic Directors
The Council noted the nomination of the following Academic Directors:
(i)   Business, Economic and Social Studies Course (046): Professor M Brady from 26 November 2013 to 12 July 2014, in place of Professor F O'Toole;
(ii)   Philosophy, Political Science, Economics and Sociology (PPES) Progamme: Professor G McElroy from 18 February to 30 June 2014, in place of Professor A Somerville.

CL/13-14/129   Head of Discipline - Botany
The Council noted and approved the nomination of Professor T R Hodkinson, as Head of the Discipline of Botany, 2014-17.

CL/13-14/130   Senior Academic Promotions Committee 2013-2014 and Faculty Review Shortlisting Committees
The Council noted and approved a memorandum from the Acting Secretary, Senior Academic Promotions Committee, circulated, dated 4 March 2014.

CL/13-14/131   Senior Academic Promotions Committee 2013-2014 and Personal Chairs Sub-Committee
The Council noted and approved the revised memorandum from the Acting Secretary to the Senior Academic Promotions Committee, dated 11 March 2014, which was tabled.

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SECTION D
In compliance with the Data Protection Acts this information is restricted

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Signed   ………………………………………

Date   ………………………………………

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