



Trinity College Dublin

C&AG Special Report – Matters Arising out of Education Audits

Provost's Opening Statement for Public Accounts Committee

(27 September 2012)

Chairman and Deputies

In my inaugural address as incoming Provost just over a year ago, I stated that I want to be held accountable and I welcome this opportunity to answer any questions that you have.

Before doing so, I think it would be useful to give some context regarding Trinity College Dublin. Points of detail in relation to the C&AG Report are addressed in the briefing paper previously submitted.

The College educates 17,000 students: 12,000 undergraduates and 5,000 postgraduates (Masters and PhD).

We draw students from every county in Ireland, North and South, and all of our students are part of a vibrant university in the heart of our capital city.

Trinity's mission is to excel in education and research by advancing knowledge and using that knowledge for the benefit of all. Our education is research-led with students working alongside their Professors giving able students an internationally-competitive educational experience.

Widening access to this quality education has long been a key priority for Trinity. This year we will be celebrating the 20 year anniversary of our Trinity Access Programmes which enable students from non-traditional groups, under-represented in higher education, to go to university - currently 19% of our students enter through these routes.

Trinity's reputation is recognised internationally: Trinity is the only Irish university in the top one hundred world universities, and ranks 20th in Europe. A global university cannot ignore these rankings which measure the provision of a high quality education, impact of research, the employability of graduates globally, and international reputation.

The current economic environment poses significant challenges to all Irish universities to maintain or improve the quality of education they offer and compete globally. Trinity's annual expenditure is in the order of €320m. Approximately one half of Trinity's income derives from non-Exchequer sources, mainly from student fees, EU and industrial research, and commercial and philanthropic activities and is used to support the College's academic goals. For example, the income from the Bank Concession enabled Trinity to create 40 new non-exchequer Lectureships which support both teaching and research and assist in maintaining Trinity's ranking.

Trinity has recently launched its Global Relations Strategy which will increase the number of international students but will also develop academic linkages with leading universities world-wide. In line with Government policy, Trinity aims to contribute significantly to develop Ireland as a global education hub.

These are just some key points about Trinity which may assist in today's discussion.