



# SABBAT REPORT

## SABBATICAL OFFICER REPORT TO COUNCIL #8

Hilary Term, March 19th 2024 until April 2nd 2024

**NAME:** László Molnárfi

**POSITION:** President

### REPORT IN BRIEF:

1. ANNUAL LEAVE & TOIL ACCRUED
2. EXPENSES
3. PREVIOUS REPORTS
4. UPDATES & HIGHLIGHTS
  - a. Casework
  - b. Integration of Postgraduate Representation
  - c. Useful Resources for SUs
  - d. Housing Campaign
  - e. National Student Action Group
  - f. USI Congress
  - g. TCD Film Students' Union
  - h. Off-Campus Students
  - i. Social Work Survey Report
  - j. P.M.E Survey Report
  - k. Back to Education Allowance Reform
  - l. Free Period Products in All Higher-Education Institutions
  - m. Palestine Solidarity
  - n. Masters' Fees
  - o. Spaces
  - p. LENS Compliance
  - q. Constitution 1.4



# SABBAT REPORT

5. MEETINGS ATTENDED
6. MANIFESTO PROGRESS
7. MANDATE TRACKER
8. HOW TO GET INVOLVED?
9. VOTER REGISTRATION

## OFFICER REPORT:

### 1. ANNUAL LEAVE & TOIL ACCRUED

Since July 1st 2023 I have taken 2 of my annual leave days.

Since July 1st 2023 I have worked 20.5 of additional hours outside of working hours.

### 2. EXPENSES

The cumulative expenses come out to €3803.23 since July 2023 as of 15th of March 2024.

### 3. PREVIOUS REPORTS

- [July 1st 2023 until October 1st 2023](#)
- [October 1st 2023 until October 16th 2023](#)
- [October 16th 2023 until November 7th 2023](#)
- [November 7th 2023 until November 21st 2023](#)
- [November 21st 2023 until February 6th 2024](#)
- [February 6th 2024 until February 20th 2024](#)
- [February 20th 2024 until March 19th 2024](#)



# SABBAT REPORT

## 4. UPDATES & HIGHLIGHTS

### **Casework**

- The TCDSU has put an extensive plan in place to make sure that students feel supported. This plan was agreed upon by the Sabbatical Officers, the Oversight Commission and the Electoral Commission, and later ratified by the Union Forum, and has been communicated to students. The situation is under control, and the necessary structures continue to be in place to ensure continued service provision to the student body. Rather than running a bye-election during assessment season, a new email, [casework@tcdsu.org](mailto:casework@tcdsu.org) has been set up, which will be dealt with by the Sabbatical Board, with necessary support from the USI, as well as some of the incoming Sabbatical Officers who will be duly compensated for the work. It has received 4 queries so far, all of which have been dealt with.

### **Integration of Postgraduate Representation**

- This remit also had to be re-assigned and I can confirm that I am working on both a memorandum of agreement ([draft](#)) as well as a plan for postgraduate representation with TCD PWO ([draft](#)).
- I have reached out to the 24 Schools as well as to committees that are missing postgraduate representatives in order for the SU to appoint them.

### **Useful Resources for SUs**

- TCDSU has worked on a variety of issues throughout the year, including lecture recording, housing, placement issues as well as FOI requests about

investments, arguments against rent and masters fee increases etc. I believe some of these documents, such as survey templates, reports, presentations would be useful to other student unions as well. As such, I collected them into [one Google Drive folder](#).

## Housing Campaign



- [TCD Renters' Network has been set up](#) and has reached more than 100 members after flyering and social media push, please join if you rent on-campus or at Halls!
  - On the 23rd of March 2024, we conducted a survey of prospective students about whether the housing crisis, as well as rents on



# SABBAT REPORT

campus and Halls are deterring them from applying to Trinity, and you can find the exact results [here](#) and a social media post [here](#).

- I assisted an issue a student was facing at Kavanagh Court on the 3rd of April 2024 and thank you to the TCD Accommodation Office for their support!

**National Student Action Group**



- On the 15th of February, students occupied the Department of Further and Higher Education, demanding the abolition of university fees, the end of casualizing workers, and public student homes. We are now looking to escalate. With dropout rates soaring due to unsustainable conditions





# SABBAT REPORT

within academia, it is now more important than ever that we stand together against oppression. This initiative is supported by multiple student unions and the USI. [Join](#) the National Student Action Group!

## USI Congress

- The PWO TCD [motion](#) on cessation of cooperation with research funders that do not pay liveable stipends, supported and presented by TCDSU, passed USI Congress 2024.
- The TCDSU [motion](#) on electoral reform, including direct elections, passed USI Congress 2024.
- The TCDSU [motion](#) on Proctorio passed USI Congress 2024.
- The TCDSU [motion](#) to cut ties with University Rankings passed USI Congress 2024.
- The TCDSU [motion](#) to on e-book licensing and support for the #ebooksos campaign passed USI Congress 2024.
- StudentSurvey.ie was stopped for 2024/2025 after student boycotts, until a review is conducted which the USI will take part in to make it more student-centric and not so commercialised. Maynooth SU's boycott [motion](#) has been deferred to Congress 2025 for after the review. Maynooth SU and TCDSU are two student unions which have a StudentSurvey.ie boycott motion.
- The TCDSU [motion](#) on defining affordability to be 30% of the monthly national minimum wage net income passed USI Congress 2024. The government is taking a smoke-and-mirrors approach and getting away with expensive accommodation branded as 'affordable'.
- The [motion](#) on grassroots communication and direct action, that TCDSU spoke on, was passed at USI Congress 2024.
- The TCDSU [motion](#) to call for a general election, proposed by Citizenship Officer Ella Mac Lennan, passed USI Congress 2024.

## TCD Film Students' Union



- I supported this grassroots group by emailing all students in the School of Creative Arts and encouraging them to sign up to the TCD FSU. Their Instagram is linked [here](#). Their sign-up form is linked [here](#).

## Off-Campus Students

- Our Health Sciences survey is being analysed and a report will be produced.
- Myself and Welfare Officer Aoife Bennett went to St. James and met with staff on the 21st of March 2024 and the Old Stone Building 1st floor





# SABBAT REPORT

student space will be open soon as well as we are looking into accessibility on the 2nd floor is proposed to be improved.

## Social Work Survey Report

- There were 160 Social Work students registered across undergraduate taught and 103 postgraduate taught students at Trinity College Dublin in the academic year 2023/2024. This group is often overlooked. This is despite this cohort of students facing huge issues, including placement issues such as discrimination and unpaid labour, exhaustion, bullying, unfair grading and impossible workloads. As such, we ran a survey with a 47% response rate, the results of which will be used to lobby the relevant stakeholders for change. Read our report ["TCDSU Social Work Survey Report 2023/2024"](#).

## P.M.E Survey Report

- There are 123 P.M.E students enrolled at Trinity. This cohort of students face huge issues, including on placement such as discrimination and unpaid labour, exhaustion, unfair grading and impossible workloads. Read our TCDSU report "[Sink-Or-Swim: TCDSU P.M.E Survey Report 2023/2024](#)".
- Upon sending this report to the School of Education, TCDSU received confirmation that improvements will be made, including a lighter workload as well as rebalancing the theoretical vs practical teaching divide.

## Back to Education Allowance Reform



- Back To Education Allowance is a form of social welfare paid to long-term social welfare recipients enabling them to access further education, including third-level education once they have been in receipt of a qualifying benefit for more than 9 or 12 months. Myself and our Mature Students Officer Ailish Smith have collected testimonies and created a [report](#) for its reform.
- With this report, myself, Welfare Office Aoife Bennett and Mature Students Officer Ailish Smith have [met](#) Mairéad Farrell TD on Thursday 21st March.

## Free Period Products in All Higher-Education Institutions



- Myself and Welfare Officer Aoife Bennett have with Martina Mullin from Healthy Trinity as well as a range of other staff to submit a budget application for an interim measure for TCD to fund this from the €1 million project fund that TCD is receiving submissions to while we await the government. We have completed our [submission](#) and sent it on.
- Our “Free Period Products in All Higher-Education Institutions” [petition](#)



# SABBAT REPORT

has 3,000+ signatures!

- Myself and Welfare Officer Aoife Bennett have purchased a “couples’ costume” to dress up in and promote our petition, as shown above.

## #AddThe10th

- We support ATD’s campaign to #addthe10th to have socio- economic status recognized as the tenth ground of discrimination in Irish equality legislation. Sign their [petition!](#)
  - I am working with them to hold an ATD workshop on campus with support from the SU and societies!

## Palestine Solidarity





- We held a protest on the 23rd of March 2024, during the Trinity open day, where we handed out leaflets to prospective students, with Academia for Palestine TCD.
- On the 21st of March at 1pm we launched our #RipOffTCD social media



# SABBAT REPORT

storm, and then again on the 23rd of March at 1pm to coincide with the open day, [student guide linked here](#), and we also included Palestine in the latter day's storm.

- I sent out the [STEM Student Preferences for Military and Civilian Work Survey](#) on the 14th of March 2024 and closed it on the 29th of March 2024, and it will be sent to analysis.
- I met the University of Leeds student group, Leeds SWSS, that occupied a building for 15+ days on their campus for Palestine in order to get advice.
- [Join TCD BDS](#).

## Masters' Fees

- Thank you to Trinity News for publishing [my comment piece](#) on the 25th of February 2024 on College's coming attempt to increase masters' fees, and don't forget to join [our campaigns group](#).
- I authored, with the help of Union Forum, the position [paper](#) of the TCDSU advocating for a masters' fee freeze which was presented to the Financial Services Division (FSD) on the 21st of March 2024.
- On the 21st of March at 1pm we launched our #RipOffTCD social media storm, and then again on the 23rd of March at 1pm to coincide with the open day, [student guide linked here](#).



# SABBAT REPORT

## Spaces

- The CSC and the TCDSU have been hard at work for improving student spaces. A series of student spaces, specifically the Atrium, St. James Old Stone Building, Hamilton and 3-4 College Green were identified as needing improvements. As such, the TCDSU and CSC are putting this [document](#) forward and drawing down funds from the student levy.

## Constitution 1.4

- An agreement has been reached between myself, the incoming Sabbatical Board and the two class reps that were against changing 1.4. and that started the impeachment petition. A [motion](#) is being brought to the April 2nd Council mandating the incoming Sabbatical Officer Board to work, with relevant consultation, to bring a motion to Council containing a proposal which if voted through will be put to referendum on Chapter 1.4 no later than the end of Michaelmas Term. This wording should allow the Union to criticise political ideologies and political parties, but will have the necessary safeguards in place to prevent abuse of power. Safeguards should include having to put any possible no confidence motions in the government to a Long-Term Policy (LTP) referendum, and the Union should be prohibited from affiliating to political parties. This wording with the constraints set out will legalise everything we have done this year.

## LENS Compliance

- Thank you to Keely Jenkinson, Disabilities Officer, for leading the meeting





# SABBAT REPORT

on behalf of the SU with the Senior Lecturer and Declan Treanor from the Disability Service on LENS Compliance, with our [report](#), on the 28th of March 2024.

## Constitution 1.4

- The past few weeks have demonstrated mass student support for our grassroots, radical and political union. As a result of the conversations surrounding the walkout and the impeachment petition that failed, members of Council came to realise, and came to an agreement, that a referendum is needed to settle the question, and as such voted through at Council a [motion](#) that, if all goes well, will see the 'apolitical' stance in the constitution put to referendum in Hilary Term of 2025. All of this has only strengthened the radical tendency within the TCDSU, and has furthered our cause. In light of this, our movement is stronger than ever. Thank you to the student body for your expression of confidence in our union!

## 5. MEETINGS ATTENDED

Meeting	Frequency
Sabbatical Board	4x 1hr
TCPID	1 x 1hr
School of Medicine	1 x 1hr
Student Center Working Group	1 x 1hr
Financial Services Division	1 x 0.5hr



# SABBAT REPORT

CSC	1 x 1hr
Healthy Trinity	1 x 0.5hr
Council	1 x 2hr
UF	1 x 1hr
TCD BDS	1 x 1hr
Casework	1 x 0.5hr
ATD	1 x 0.5hr

**Note:** *These are formal college committees, but several other meetings take place regularly and I also meet regularly with a variety of students and staff, my appointments are [bookable online](#), and you are always welcome to my office hours!*

## 6. **MANIFESTO PROGRESS**

[Please click here to see the 2023/2024 Manifesto Promise Tracker for the role of the President.](#)

## 7. **MANDATE TRACKER**

[Please click here to see the 2023/2024 Mandate Tracker for the role of the President.](#)

## 8. **HOW DO I GET INVOLVED?**

- Join the [TCDSU Campaigns Group!](#)



# SABBAT REPORT

- Join the [National Student Action Group!](#)
- Join the [TCD Renters' Solidarity Network](#) if you are a campus or Halls resident!
- Get involved in a group like [Trinity BDS](#), [DU Gender Equality](#), [Postgraduate Workers' Organisation](#) and [Students4Change TCD](#).
- If your class does not have a class representative, email [chair@tcdsu.org](mailto:chair@tcdsu.org) (Conchúr Ó Cathasaigh) and you will automatically be a class representative.
- Come to Council and submit motions, discussion items and take part in the debate, you do not have to be a class representative to do this.

## 9. **VOTER REGISTRATION**

*All credit goes to Ella Mac Lennan, Citizenship Officer, for the below text.*

Local & EU elections will take place in June 2024. To ensure you have your say, register to vote [here](#) now - it only takes a few minutes. You will need your PPSN and Eircode - if you do not have a PPSN, complete the relevant form [here](#).

Even if you do not hold Irish citizenship, you are still eligible to vote in local elections. In addition to this, British citizens can vote in Dáil elections, and EU citizens can vote in EU elections. First time EU registrants wishing to vote in Ireland must complete an [EP1](#) declaration form to prevent double voting.

You may only be registered at one address - students who are already registered or wish to register at their home address may apply for a [postal vote](#). You may also apply for postal vote if you cannot go to your polling station due to illness or disability. The deadline for all postal vote applications is 22 working days before polling day. If you register for postal vote, you cannot vote in person.



# SABBAT REPORT

You may pre-register to vote if you are 16 or over. Your name will be added to the live register when you turn 18.

Frequently asked questions can be found at <https://www.checktheregister.ie/en-IE/faqs>