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## Trinity in Separate 'Secret' Discussions With DIT

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*Irish Independent newspaper*

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# Trinity in separate 'secret' discussions with DIT

JOHN WALSH PUBLISHED 13/03/2009 | 00:00 SHARE

## Trinity College, Dublin, is engaged in another round of secret talks -- this time with the Dublin Institute of Technology.

It has already upset the other universities who were unaware of its negotiations with UCD, which resulted in Wednesday's announcement of an Innovation Alliance.

The separate discussions with DIT are looking at all possible forms of potential alliance such as joint degrees, shared services and even joint staff appointments.

The options under review include everything from a Memorandum of Understanding "to the inclusion of DIT as a separate autonomous institution under the university".

A confidential report to the heads of both institutions sets out areas of potential future collaboration.

It follows three meetings of a high-powered joint working party. It suggests joint programmes and degrees in engineering, health sciences, business, and built environment.

The two institutions have a long history of collaboration and at one stage 1,000 DIT graduates were receiving awards from the university. The report says the importance of considering an alliance comes from the current discussions relating to the rationalisation in the education sector.

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"TCD and DIT are both city centre institutions with a long track record of delivering for the people of the city of Dublin and the country," the report notes.

"It is natural that these two institutions, with complementary remits and significant

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experience of collaboration, should explore new ways of working together at this time.

### Collaboration

"As well as joint programmes, it suggests collaboration in shared services such as purchasing/procurement; innovation, entrepreneurship and technology transfer; student services; Chinese/Asian centre; and joint appointments.

It continues: "Trinity has a 'cap' on student numbers while DIT's stated aim is to increase undergraduate student intake.

"This creates an opportunity to develop more collaborative programmes at undergraduate level without undermining either institution's position."

It adds that at the meetings "the development of new taught masters' courses targeted at industry" was discussed.

The proposed development at Grangegorman (where DIT will be relocated) would also "facilitate this expansion, and the possibility of jointly exploring new international markets was seen as potentially promising".

"Further advantages might include the sharing of specialised equipment and facilities and the critical mass achieved from an alliance of both institutions. Finally, it was considered to be better for both institutions to discuss this potential alliance under their own terms, rather than be forced into such negotiations due to external pressure," it adds.

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