The Urgency of Inclusive Education

Evolving educational landscape

The challenge of outdated assessment systems

Trinity disAbility Hub

The Data Challenges

- Leaving Certificate 2024 – **21% of candidates** in receipt of reasonable accommodations;
- The number of students in higher education engaging with the disability services has risen by **268%** (4,853 in 08/09 to 17,866 in 20/21;
- HEA National Access Plan 2022-28 sets a target
- of increasing the proportion of HEA **new entrants with a disability to 16%** over the seven-year period
- Students registered with disability support services represented **6.6% of the total student population** in 21-22 (AHEAD 2022);

Trinity
disAbility Hub

Unsustainable Traditional Assessments

Cumulative Record of completed student applications 2001/02 to 2022/23

	Value
01/02	222
05/06	421
10/11	818
15/16	1299
20/21	1888
21/22	2061
22/23	2312
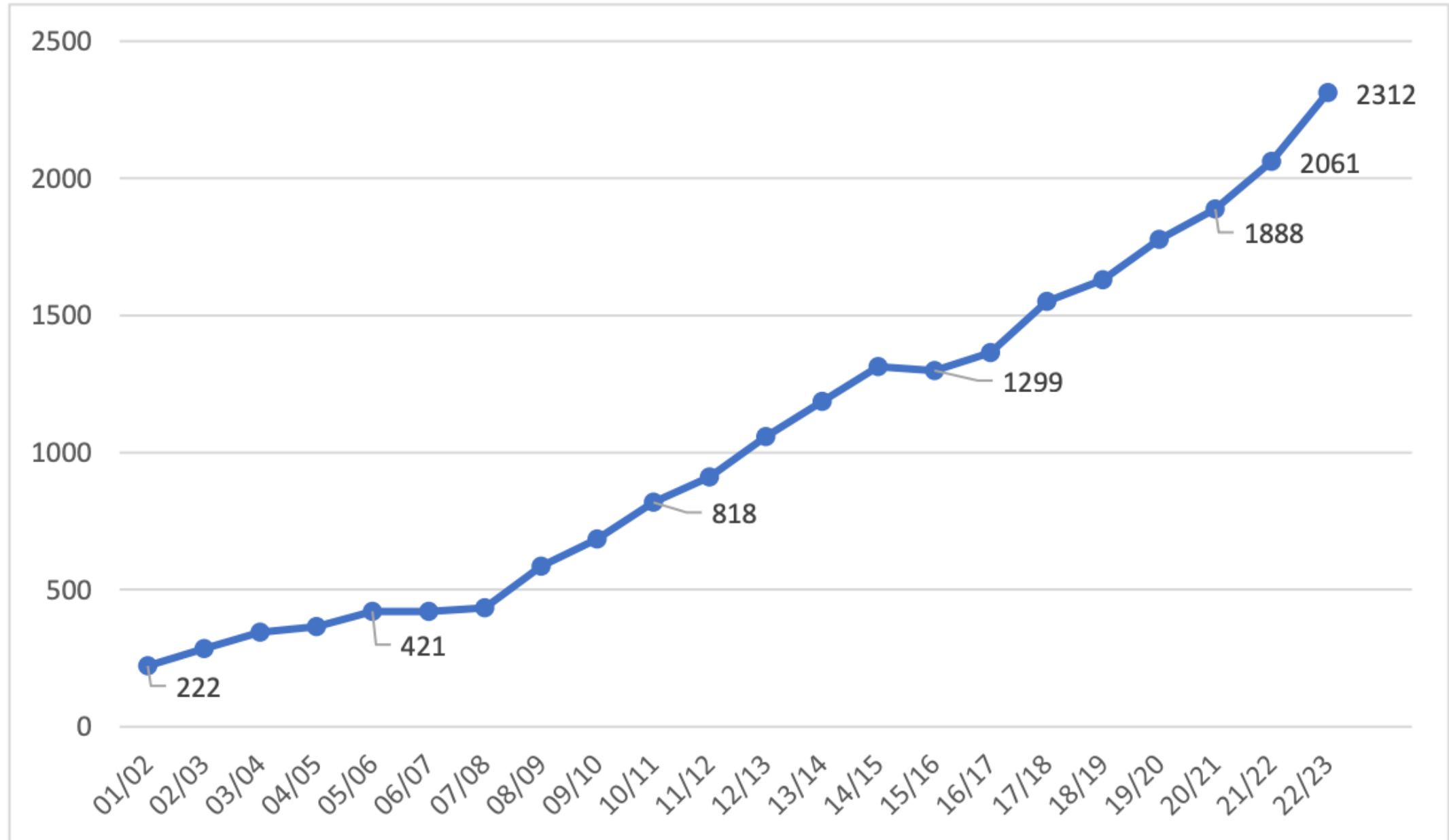
High demand for accommodations

Strain on resources and equity

Trinity disAbility Hub

Why Did It Take A Pandemic To Reasonably Accommodate Everyone?

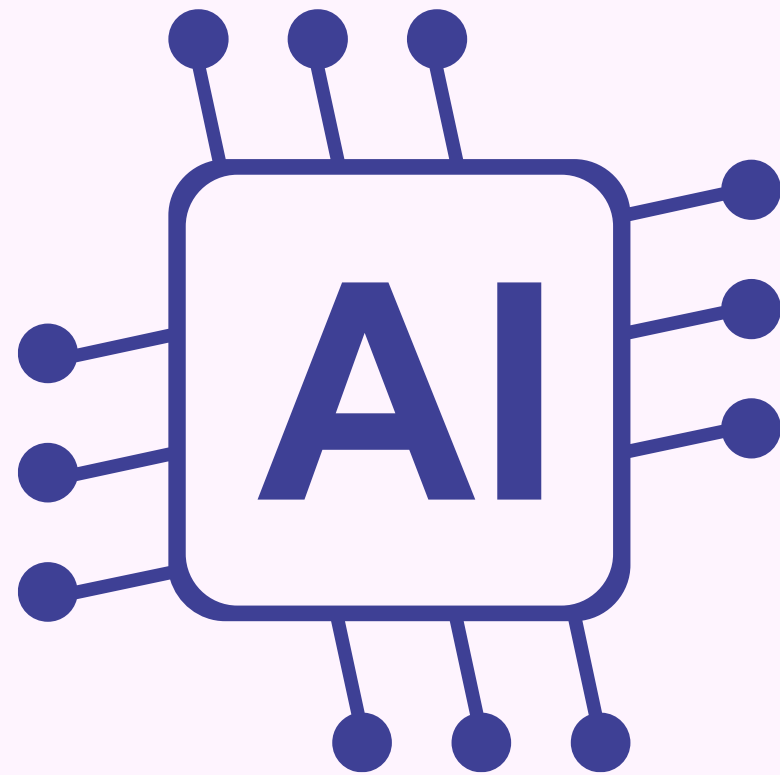# Learning from the Pandemic

Swift adaptation to online learning

Unprecedented level of accessibility

Trinity disAbility Hub

AI in Education

A double edged-sword

- Potential for personalised learning
- Risk of reverting to inequitable practices

Moving Forward with Purpose

- Embrace change and diversity
- Implement proactive solutions
- Understand the difference between equity & equality

Trinity disAbility Hub

Challenges in assessment in HE

1. Assignment deadlines might be included in module or course handbooks or communicated within VLE materials from the beginning of the module or towards the end of the semester, or within a VLE announcement, or separately via email. Thus, **there is no standardised, integrated method of identifying timelines for assessment across modules within a course** to facilitate planning.

2. A reluctance to engage with alternative assessment to meet the diverse needs of learners perpetuates the need for timed, summative assessment, in-person examinations. This is partly based on **notions surrounding the complexity of managing multiple means of assessment, and of ensuring fairness and parity** in awarding grades.

Trinity College Dublin
Coláiste na Tríonóide, Baile Átha Cliath
The University of Dublin

3. Students are assessed through continuous assessment in the form of essay-based assignments, lab reports, group projects, and multiple-choice tests. They also sit modularised end of semester examinations and, often, deadlines for submission of coursework fall within or immediately prior to an examination period. This places a **significant burden** on the student in terms of completing assignments by the submission date **to avoid a pen**alty, whilst simultaneously revising for examinations.

4. Complexities in assessment are particularly exacerbated for **students studying between two Schools / Faculties**, where differing assessment practices are utilised.

5. There is a growing cohort of students transitioning from post-primary education who, despite requiring reasonable accommodations, **lack the formal documentation to support their needs**, further complicating the provision of appropriate support (changes to RACE, School Inclusion Model).