

**ANNUAL REPORT**

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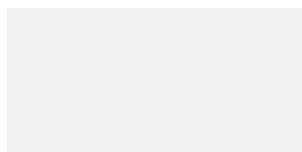
**Quality Promotion Committee**

**2015 - 2016**

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**UCC**  
University College Cork, Ireland  
Coláiste na hOllscoile Corcaigh



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## **Executive Summary**

The UCC process for quality assurance has always sought to preserve institutional autonomy and emphasise quality improvement; the processes are based on sound policies, principles and on best international practice, and involve all of the major stakeholders, including students, as well as external experts in the process.

Following Governing Body's agreement to receive reports from the Quality Promotion Committee at its September meeting each year, reports will review activities in an academic year rather than the calendar year; this report covers the academic year 2015-16. It also includes a summary of issues arising from the Quality Reviews of academic units conducted in 2013/14 which previously had not been reported. This report, therefore, includes:

1. A summary of Quality Review Activity 2013-14 to 2015-16
2. The Annual Institutional Quality Report
3. International Projects
4. Plans for the future

### **1. Summary of Quality Review Activity**

A revised process for periodic review of academic units, approved in spring 2015, was implemented in academic year 2015/16. The new method sought to further introduce flexibility, without loss of rigour, in order to provide academic units, staff and students with best opportunity of benefiting from the outcomes of quality review. Throughout 2015/16 the conclusion of the Research Quality Review was ongoing in the form of agreeing reports and identifying the key recommendations for the University.

### **2. Annual Institutional Quality Report**

UCC submitted its' Annual Institutional Quality Report in July 2016 covering the period September 2014 – August 2015. The revised format includes a significant amount of additional information to that provided in 2015. With the ongoing publication cycle of core Statutory Quality Assurance Guidelines by QQI there is an opportunity to ensure that the ongoing enhancement of UCC procedures is inclusive of these guidelines.

### **3. International Projects**

The Quality Promotion Unit continues to engage in a range of funded international projects through the Erasmus+ and Tempus IV programme.

#### **4. Plans for the future**

There will be a continued focus on enhancing and developing quality review processes with particular attention on ensuring the outcomes of all reviews link into University operations and planning activities. UCC will also develop its approach to quality in light of national policies, statutory guidelines and international good practice.

#### **Recommendations**

That the Governing Body approves this report and its publication on the University web site.

That the Governing Body refers this report for discussion and consideration of any actions to be taken to the Academic Council and other University bodies.

## **Section A: UCC Quality Review Process**

### **1. Introduction**

The focus of the quality improvement and quality assurance procedures in UCC extends to all activities of the University, including education, training, research, administrative and support services. UCC recognises that all areas of its operation will affect (directly or indirectly) the quality of the totality of the learner experience and ultimately may have an impact on student achievement. The University is committed to development of a quality culture and embedding it in all areas of its activities. Students must be at the centre of this philosophy and their contribution through all parts of the process is core to the assurance and assessment of quality within the University. There is a standing item for the student representatives on the QPC, through which they can raise any matter pertinent to the work of the committee. In addition, students participate as full members of the peer review panel in the cycle of Periodic Review of academic units. QPU will continue to work with the Students' Union to facilitate student engagement in quality processes and key in this regard will be the development and delivery of a briefing and training programme for students who are identified by the Students' Union to participate in quality assurance and improvement activities at whatever level in the University.

UCC is fully committed to seeking the views and contributions of all learners, as well as of other stakeholders, including employers, alumni and professional bodies, and to using this feedback to guide the improvement of the quality of the learner experience. The primary aim of UCC in conducting quality reviews is to ensure that the University provides the best possible learner experience and that an ethos of quality improvement is fostered at all levels in the University.

Quality is the responsibility of every member of staff of UCC, and it is recognised that everybody has a contribution to make. All staff are expected and encouraged to participate fully in the preparation for quality reviews and in the conduct of the reviews themselves.

### **Quality Promotion Committee (QPC)**

The Quality Promotion Committee (QPC), chaired by the President, continues to present an Annual Report to the Governing Body and, in addition, reports regularly to the University Management Team of the University (Appendix 1).

### **The Quality Promotion Unit (QPU)**

The Quality Promotion Unit was led in 2014-15 by its Director, Ms Fiona Crozier, assisted by a team of four staff. Ms Crozier moved to a new position in the QAA, UK in July 2015. Thereafter the interim Director was Professor Alan Kelly of the School of Food and Nutritional Sciences, who was previously Dean of Graduate Studies of UCC (2006-2013). The new Director of QPU, Ms Elizabeth Noonan was appointed on the 16<sup>th</sup> of May, 2016. The QPU is primarily responsible for facilitating the implementation of quality improvement and quality assurance procedures in UCC. QPU assists units in preparing for reviews, including assistance with surveys, carries out all the logistical arrangements associated with quality reviews, liaises with the members of the peer review groups, receives the

peer review group reports and prepares reports for the QPC on each review. The Director leads the monitoring of implementation of recommendations for improvements made by Peer Review Groups and the follow-up reviews of actions arising from reviews.

All procedures, guidelines and sample questionnaires are publicly available on the Quality Promotion Unit web site (<http://www.ucc.ie/quality>).

In addition, the Unit is a partner in a number of European EC-funded Tempus and Erasmus projects focussed on developmental aspects of quality assurance and quality enhancement in European countries.

### **Research Quality Review 2015**

The Research Quality Review, a joint initiative of Academic Council Research and Innovation Committee (ACRIC) and the Quality Promotion Committee (QPC), was undertaken in 2014/15.

The Review Panels undertook site visits to UCC between May and July 2015, after which the draft reports were received. Draft reports were reviewed by members of the Steering Committee and were then sent to units for a factual check when ready. During academic session 2015/16 the main focus of activities was to agree the final reports and to identify the key outcomes from the Research Quality Review. At the last meeting of QPC in academic session 2015-16 it was agreed to establish a small group drawn from members of ACRIC and QPC to analyse the RQR reports. The group developed an in-depth summary of the key themes arising from all the finalised Research Quality Review Reports which is reported separately.

### **Quality Reviews 2015-16**

During 2015-16 the following units underwent periodic review in the period April to September 2016:

- School of Biochemistry and Cell Biology (report approved by QPC on 3<sup>rd</sup> October 2016).
- School of Microbiology (report approved by QPC on 3<sup>rd</sup> October 2016).
- Cork University Dental School & Hospital (report approved by QPC on 3<sup>rd</sup> October 2016).
- School of Pharmacy (report to be considered by QPC in November 2016)
- President's Office (Peer Review Group Report to be finalised).

This marked the beginning of the third cycle of quality review and the introduction of the revised review method, which had been approved by QPC March 2015. The revised method placed closer focus on the taught provision of the academic units based on the requirements of the European Standards Guidelines (ESG, 2015) and sought to confirm that the academic standards of the programmes were appropriate, including their location on the National Framework of Qualifications. In the case of two of the academic units under review, Dental School and the School of Pharmacy, the periodic review was tailored to take account of professional body accreditation requirements. These reports were factually agreed with the Schools and will be presented for approval by the Quality Committee at its 3<sup>rd</sup> October 2016 meeting (with the exception of the School of Pharmacy). The quality review of the President's Office was conducted in accordance with the ESG (2015) requirements as well as UCC review requirements including the involvement of a student representative as a full member of the Peer Review Group.

## **Quality Reviews 2013-14**

The operation and management of the Research Quality Review, coupled with the need to ensure that a process and schedule was in place for the start of the third cycle of reviews in autumn 2015, meant that, for the academic year 2014-15, the normal process of follow-up reviews was set aside. As a result the follow-up meeting for reviews in 2013-14 are scheduled to take place in semester one of 2016-17. It should be noted though, that the revised review method implemented from 2015-16 will include annual monitoring of academic units thereby removing the need for an additional separate follow-up process.

## **Key issues arising from Quality Reviews of academic units in 2013-14**

The quality review reports were analysed to identify key findings and issues arising from reports for 2013-14. Findings from administrative/support units have been reported previously and the summary below contains the findings for the academic units reviewed only. A summary of the recommendations can be grouped into the following themes; resources, strategy/governance, organisation structure, staff development, teaching & learning and student related issues.

### **Resources**

Recommendations about resources highlighted the need for identifying and securing potential sources of funding.

- Panels encouraged clarity and distribution of the resource allocation model at School and College levels.
- As in previous years, academic units were encouraged to cluster research themes to maximise benefits and funding opportunities.

### **Strategy and mission / leadership**

Peer Reviewers advised Schools to update their strategic plans in order to better reflect the ambitions and direction of the unit.

- Unique factors affecting the strategic direction of a unit were:
  - o Where the staff student ratio impacted on accreditation processes;
  - o Recent retirements in a School prompted the recommendation to recruit senior academic staff in order to create strong academic leadership.

### **Organisational structure and function**

Recommendations on improvement to School committee structures encouraged:

- o rationalisation of the number of committees;
- o increased participation for all staff in the decision-making processes;
- o communication of administrative and committee structures to staff.

### **Staff development**

Comments relating to staff development appeared in many of the reviews carried out during this period. Several of these dealt with training needs and proposals of an away-day to encourage staff cohesion as a unit.

### **Teaching & learning**

- Several PRG recommendations encouraged review of a School's curriculum and rationalisation of undergraduate and postgraduate provision.
- Reviewers were cognisant of budgetary constraints and encouraged units to explore the potential for cooperation with other academic units for shared modules.

### **Student related issues**

- Schools were encouraged to review processes for providing feedback to students arising from questionnaires conducted in-house.
- Student representation on staff-student committee meetings was also a re-occurring theme with the purpose of the recommendation being to ensure student representation and consultation is formally embedded into School structures.
- Further support for postgraduates was encouraged in the form of induction programmes, research tutors, writing of grant proposals and informal lunchtime seminars. Also, that a representative of the postgraduate community should attend staff meetings for items relevant to its cohort.

## **2. Annual Institutional Quality Report to Quality & Qualifications Ireland**

Following a period of development between 2014 and 2016, Quality & Qualifications Ireland developed a new template for the Annual Institutional Quality Report between higher education institutions and the agency. It was agreed that the information provided in the template would be published on the QQI website and could also be used by institutions for governance, decision-making and other purposes.

### **Annual Institutional Quality Report (AIQR)**

The revised AIQR template was made available in May 2016, a briefing session on its completion was held in mid-June 2016 and submission of the AIQR was required by end of June 2016. The period covered in the AIQR is September 2014 – August 2015 and it will form the basis of the Annual Dialogue meeting between UCC and representatives of QQI due to take place on 7<sup>th</sup> November 2016. It is also anticipated that the AIQR will form part of the institution's profile for future Institutional Review and will form the basis of determining compliance with the European Standards Guidelines 2015.

The revised AIQR template consists of two main sections. Section 1 details the institutional policy and procedures for quality assurance inclusive of details of collaborative programmes, professional accreditation of programmes, articulation agreements and internal review schedules. Section 2 addresses institutional reporting on the implementation and development of quality assurance procedures including programme approvals, reviews undertaken and the profile of reviewers engaged by the University. It also provides information on quality enhancement activities and planned activities. The details of publication of the AIQR on QQI website will be discussed further with QQI in the period October/November 2016.



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### Implications of the Annual Institutional Quality Report (AIQR)

- The systematic provision of information for the revised AIQR and the recent publication by QQI of a range of national quality assurance guidelines point towards the need for an examination of existing UCC quality policies and procedures to ensure that their ongoing enhancement is inclusive of the national guidelines<sup>1</sup>.
- The collection of information on institutions' collaborative and transnational programme arrangements, as well as professional and statutory body accreditations will inform the basis of engagement of QQI with institutions in the near future.
- In particular focus will be placed upon the adequacy of institutions' arrangements for quality assurance of collaborative provision in terms of the assurance of award standards.
- QQI has initiated a sectoral project on a survey of Professional body accreditation (accreditation process and any related activities) to be facilitated by PARN (Professional Associations Research Network [www.parnglobal.com](http://www.parnglobal.com)).

### 3. International Projects

The Quality Promotion Unit, on behalf of UCC, was invited to become a partner in two new Erasmus+ Project proposals in 2014. These projects have since been successfully funded and are due for completion in 2018:

- Towards a National Framework of Qualification for Jordan (NFQ- Jordan)
- Harmonization and Innovation in Central American Higher Education Curricula (HICA)

The following Tempus IV Projects reached the end of their natural life-cycle during the 2015-2016 period. While all activities and these projects have been successfully completed, QPU continues to be involved in some outstanding tasks which mainly relate to financial/budgetary returns.

- FOCUS: Fostering Quality Assurance Culture at Libyan Universities.
- EDUCA: Modernization and Development of Curricula on Pedagogy and Educational Management in the Central Asian Countries.
- MEDAWEL: Integrating a Holistic Approach to Student Services for Increased Student Wellbeing.
- LO@HEI: Encouraging the process of curriculum development based on learning outcomes and research guided teaching in the private higher education institutions of Kosova.
- RecoNow: ENPI South: Knowledge of recognition procedures in ENPI South Countries.

### 4. Plans for the Future

Plans for the academic session 2016-17 will focus on:

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<sup>1</sup> Core Statutory Quality Assurance Guidelines (April 2016) applicable to all providers, the QQI Sector Specific Quality Assurance Guidelines for Designated Awarding Bodies (July 2016). QQI Topic Specific Guidelines for Research Degree programmes (under consultation) and future anticipated guidelines for transnational and collaborative provision.

- Analysis of second cycle of Research Quality Review outcomes to inform development of review methodology for the future and completion of the Quality Improvement Planning cycle at College and University level.
- Developing and enhancing the implementation of periodic review and annual monitoring of academic units based on pilot activity in 2015/16, including:
  - Joint training & development with Students' Union for Student Reviewers;
  - Identification and inclusion of good practice case studies by academic units and exploration of research/teaching links as key parts of self-evaluation, working in collaboration with OVPTL;
  - Building effectiveness of review and monitoring activity, by facilitating the provision of relevant support/expertise to academic units and support units in the self-evaluation phase;
  - Further alignment of internal review and monitoring processes with external quality processes of Professional & Statutory Bodies as well as Accrediting Bodies.
- Continued work to link overall outcomes of quality review to University operational plans contributing to University-wide change and improvement and enhancing the use of relevant quality indicators.
- Ensure that the on-going development and embedding of quality assurance and enhancement activities take account of all national policies, guidelines and initiatives for quality as well as implementation of the Institutional Review of Irish Universities (IRIU) Action Plan for UCC.
- Inform the development of UCC's quality approaches in light of international good practice.
- For Linked Provider relationships (IMI and Turning Point) ensure that quality arrangements meet the expectations of any published national guidelines including procedures for the approval of Linked Provider's quality assurance procedures.
- Consolidate and codify existing institutional protocols and policies for collaborative and transnational provision into a Code of Practice for Collaborative Provision working with the Academic Secretary and Office of Corporate and Legal Affairs (OCLA).
- Continue to build opportunities for international networking and practice exchange through funded international and European projects.

## Section B: Quality Review Reports

Quality Reviews 2013/14 – All other reviews for this year have previously been reported on.

### School of Medicine – Peer Review Group Report

#### Peer Review Group Members

- Professor Claire Connolly, School of English, UCC (Rapporteur)
- Ms Áine Flynn, Academic Secretariat, Registrar's Office, UCC (Rapporteur)
- Professor Alan Johnson, Former Professor of Biochemistry & Dean, Royal College of Surgeons, Ireland (Chair)
- Professor Jean Ker, Professor in Medical Education & Director of the Clinical Skills Centre, University of Dundee
- Dr Jason Last, Associate Dean, Programmes & Educational Innovation, UCD School of Medicine and Medical Science, University College Dublin
- Professor Jill Morrison, Professor (General Practice) and Dean for Learning and Teaching in College of Medical, Veterinary and Life Sciences, University of Glasgow, Scotland

#### Site-visit

The site visit was conducted over 2.5 days from 24-27 February 2014 and included visits to Brookfield Health Sciences Complex and Cork University Hospital.

#### Overall analysis and recommendations

Since the last quality review (2003), the School of Medicine (referred hereafter as the School) has undergone a major overhaul of its activities, facilities and programmes. In 2003, the School was delivering two undergraduate programmes, the MB BCh BAO and the B.Sc. in Public Health and Health promotion, in addition to the MSc in Sports and Exercise Medicine and research-based post-graduate degrees. In this ten year period, the School has modified its medical undergraduate programme to adopt a new integrated teaching structure with defined teaching streams, and has developed new undergraduate courses (Graduate entry stream, Alliances University College of Medical Sciences (AUCMS) twinning programme and various certificates and diplomas) in addition to building upon the success of established programmes such as the B.Sc. in Public Health and Health Promotion to develop thriving postgraduate courses, considerably increasing our student base at both undergraduate and post-graduate levels. The administrative structures within the School have also been re-developed to better suit our current needs and limit as much as possible the duplication of tasks and reduce burden on staff. The past ten years have also seen the School move from dated, dispersed facilities into modern purpose built facilities at the Western end of the campus. The research portfolio of the School has greatly expanded in the past ten years, leading to the establishment of thriving research institutes and groups that are making significant contributions to their research fields. Having rapidly evolved in the past ten years, the School has welcomed the opportunity afforded by this Quality Review exercise to reflect upon the progress made, question its structures and future development, and document staff aspirations and needs. The results of this reflective process constitute the core of the present self-assessment report and have led to the development of a new strategic plan on which the input of the Peer-Review Group will be welcome.

## **General Comment on Quality Review**

### **Self-Assessment Report (SAR)**

The PRG recognised the tremendous effort made by the School of Medicine Co-ordinating Committee in putting together the SAR and substantial appendices. The PRG also recognised that the document had to present the work of a large and complex School and that there were challenges in getting the requisite level of detail.

The PRG noted an absence of detail around the management and governance of ethical matters. Although the appendices provided a lot of detail, this was often not linked to the discursive sections of the SAR. A summary of the detail found in the appendices would have been useful.

### **SWOT Analysis**

The PRG found that the School had made good use of the SWOT analysis exercise and seemed to have found it a useful tool. The grouping of strengths and weaknesses alongside opportunities and threats worked well.

### **Benchmarking**

The choice of McMaster University as the single benchmarking institution was questioned. The duration of the McMaster programme (three years), its problem-based learning approach, exclusively graduate entry and its geographical location all caused the PRG to question the value of the comparison enabled by the benchmarking exercise. Members of the School justified their choice in discussion, citing existing positive relationships and a clear understanding of differences and similarities together with reassurance that the changes the School was considering were on the right track.

	Recommendations in the SAR	Response from the School of Medicine	QPC Comment/Recommendation
	<b>RECOMMENDATIONS MADE BY THE SCHOOL</b>		
1	<p>The PRG noted the recommendations made by the School in the SAR. These included suggestions around:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Organisational structure and function</li> <li>• Clinical Sites and Staff as integral to the School</li> <li>• School defining initiatives</li> <li>• Outreach to staff</li> <li>• Make the School a repository of information</li> </ul> <p>All these recommendations are valid and should be addressed. Some have been incorporated in the PRG's own recommendations.</p>	<p><b>1. Organisational structure and function:</b></p> <p>As outlined in the SAR, the committee structure of the School requires restructuring. In order to do this effectively, a subgroup of the Executive Heads of Department and identified Committee Chairs will be convened to critically look at the governance and committee structures. The subgroup will be comprised of 2 representatives of the life sciences, 1 representative of the MEU and 2 representatives of the Clinical Departments, the Medical School Manager and the Head of School.</p> <p>Aims of group:</p> <p>Review current governance</p> <p>Review and amalgamate committees</p> <p>Review communication between committees and reporting structure to HOS, Executive HOD and School staff</p> <p>Convene September 2014</p>	<p>QPC believes that the various components in this recommendation need to be led by the Head of School, in conjunction with the Head of College. The Head of College should take primary responsibility.</p> <p>Comments from the LP&amp;E board should be taken into account and the whole recommendation should be approached holistically and should be linked to the response to the PRG's recommendation 3 below.</p>

		<p>Report December 2014</p> <p>The Medical Education Unit is a new entity within the SOM. The Head of the Medical Education Unit has been requested to look at the governance structure of the Unit with a plan to present the structure at the Executive Heads of Department in 2014. This will help clarify how the MEU fits into the School structures, the reporting lines, roles of the staff in the Unit and how they link with other Departments and Clinical teaching sites.</p> <p><b>2. Clinical sites and Staff as integral part of School</b></p> <p>Work is currently underway to address this issue. As stated in the report there is a need for integration of SOM (Central) and Clinical teaching sites in the expanded Academic Health Centre network.</p> <p>There is a requirement for a strategic and an operational plan for Clinical teaching sites for infrastructure and personnel.</p> <p>The work of the Clinical sites working group has been expanded to include the following:</p> <p><b>2a. Infrastructural development</b> – Senior Faculty member and Medical School manager in conjunction with UCC Building and Estates, HSE/Academic Health Centre network to progress projects in clinical sites.</p>	
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		<p>This is progressing in a structured way on clinical sites.</p> <p>Branding of UCC on clinical sites is required and is progressing as part of the AHC development.</p> <p><b>2b. Personnel and student coordination at Clinical sites</b> – Senior faculty member has been appointed to take a lead in this area. The remit is improve linkage and communication between the SOM and clinical teaching sites involving the Academic teaching staff of all grades across all Clinical Departments, UCC administrative staff (see below), the Clinical Senior Lecturers on clinical sites, Medical Manpower on clinical sites and outreach by the Medical Educational Unit. Student placement will be aligned to this review.</p> <p>The aim will be to foster better relationships between staff in line with the development of the AHC and to ensure the highest standard clinical placements will be maintained over time</p> <p>Administrative support will be provided to the lead faculty who will report to HOS on completion of the review.</p> <p>The two areas of work will be combined as one to ensure one line of communication across clinical sites. This work will also address outreach to staff –</p>	
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	<p>administrative and Clinical Faculty and the Clinical sites managerial staff.</p> <p><b>3. School defining initiatives</b></p> <p>The SOM requires a strategic plan. The plan should be in line with the College of Medicine and Health's Strategic 5 year plan 2013-2017  <a href="http://www.ucc.ie/en/media/support/hr/briona/CollegeofMedicineandHealthStrategicPlan2013-17.pdf">http://www.ucc.ie/en/media/support/hr/briona/CollegeofMedicineandHealthStrategicPlan2013-17.pdf</a>.</p> <p>To cover the areas of research, lifelong learning and change in Healthcare service and delivery. The specific needs of the SOM will be addressed. This will be developed by the HOS in consultation with relevant stakeholders by end of 2014.</p> <p>The School's objectives and mission statement will be an integral part of the plan</p> <p>This addresses point 1 of the recommendations of the PRG.</p>		
	<b>RECOMMENDATIONS MADE BY THE PRG</b>	<b>School's response</b>	<b>QPC Comment/Recommendation</b>
	NB: Many of the recommendations can be linked to the following overarching recommendation:		QPC would be grateful if a response to this recommendation could be made by the Head of College and the Head of School.



	That the School clarifies and communicates its administrative and committee structures, including how these relate upwards to the College and the University and downwards to subject level structures and committees. Recommendations 1, 2, 4 and 8 below, in particular, may be linked back to this key point.		
1	Review School objectives; develop a strategic plan and a new mission statement that reflects the ambitions of the School	Point 1 (see above <b>3. School defining initiatives</b> )	Endorsed.
2	Clarify and communicate the School administrative structures, taking into account comments below regarding their reform	<p>A review of the administrative structures took place in 2013. A report was presented in early 2014. Items required clarification by HR. Following on from this, the Medical School Manager has undertaken to review the structure of the Administrative staff of the SOM and those in Departments affiliated to the School. This is an onerous task in the context of the large number of departments within the SOM and the distance of some of the Clinical teaching sites and the staff at these sites however this piece of work is essential to the day-to-day work of the School.</p> <p>The plan is to have an administrative forum for the SOM – the initial meeting is planned for September 2014 and will be lead by the Medical School Manager.</p>	Endorsed.

3	Engage the University in the development of a teaching and scholarship track for promotion in addition to a teaching and research track, reflective of international best practice	<p>The University has a promotion track for Faculty, the next round of which is currently underway (April 2014).</p> <p>The SOM has a promotion track for Honorary Senior Lecturer posts; the most recent round was completed in February 2014 with the appointment of 8 Professorial grades based on criteria that include excellence in research and teaching. Heretofore the availability of this promotion track was infrequent however the SOM is committed to making this opportunity available to Clinical faculty every 2 years.</p>	<p>QPC recognises that this recommendation is not specific to the SoM and will ensure that it is brought to the attention of senior management. However, the response does not directly address the matter of differential tracking and QPC is interested in the School's views on what would be a sensible tracking paradigm for Health Science.</p> <p>QPC will ask the Registrar, the VP T&amp;L, the VP R&amp;I and the Director of HR to also consult on the matter.</p>
4	<p>1. Develop a robust support system for administrative staff, to include:</p> <p>a. An administrative forum in medical school</p> <p>b. An administrative forum within and across clinical sites</p>	See point 2.	Endorsed.
5	Consider the introduction of a School-level induction programme for graduate research students	<p>The appointment of a Director of Graduate Studies and Continuous Professional Development is imminent. The post was advertised in June 2014 with the successful applicant in post for September 2014. The post is a half-time equivalent and is across the COMH. The remit will include a more coordinated</p>	Endorsed.

		approach to support of graduate students and will include recommendation 5.	
6	Review reliability of timely feedback to undergraduate students, in line with university policy	Timely feedback to undergraduate students will be reviewed again by the Direct Entry Programs and the Graduate Entry Programs in Medicine. The Directors of the Programs will lead the review and any deficits in the review will be corrected accordingly.	Endorsed.
7	Implement plans to develop the physical infrastructure and the clinical faculty across the clinical training network, to enhance ownership of medical curriculum	Recommendation 7 is addressed above ( <b>2. Clinical sites and Staff as integral part of School</b> ).	QPC does not believe that the response above addresses the issue raised in this recommendation.
8	Clarify the resource allocation model at all levels of the organisation and communicate the rationale for differential growth across subsections of the School	A commitment to look at the resource allocation within the SOM will be made. There has been a differential growth in different Departments over the past few years based on the needs at the time. Efforts have been made over the past 6 months to increase the number of Faculty in Clinical Departments within the SOM with the approval of posts for Departments. This has been challenging given the moratorium on appointments within the	Again – QPC asks for a response to the recommendation which asks for clarification around the RAM.

		Public Sector, which hadn't been an issue when some faculty were recruited several years ago.	
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## School of Biochemistry – Peer Review Group Report

### Peer Review Group Members

- Ms. Katy Birkett, Student member, UCC
- Dr. Michael Carty, Biochemistry, NUI Galway
- Professor Deirdre Madden, School of Law, UCC
- Professor David Timson, Pharmacy & Biomolecular Sciences, University of Brighton

### Site Visit

A periodic review of the School of Biochemistry & Cell Biology was held on 12<sup>th</sup> – 14<sup>th</sup> April 2016.

### General Observations

- The PRG judged that a great deal of time and thought had been spent in preparing for the Quality Review. The SER was very thorough and valuable; the SWOT was good although it could have been more succinctly and thematically arranged.
- The PRG felt that information regarding research funding would have been useful as this has an impact on the functioning and sustainability of this particular School through reliance on research overheads. This information was provided by the VP for Research but the PRG would have appreciated more information and specific figures in order to assess fully the impact of this funding on the overall budgetary situation of the School. The PRG would also have appreciated more details on the School's operational budget and where their income comes from as the PRG noted that the School itself did not identify reliance on research overheads as a threat in the SWOT analysis.
- The PRG noted that information regarding student feedback was inconsistent. Some programmes provided detailed information on student progression and employability but the information provided was not standardised.
- The PRG noted comments on benchmarking for the medical degree but no external benchmarking was conducted. The PRG would have appreciated more information on benchmarking of these programmes.
- Staff identity appears strong with clear enthusiasm for the discipline and very active researchers with a high international reputation. Staff mentoring is in place and there is a strong sense of teamwork apparent in the School.
- The PRG understands that the ability to hire new staff is limited but the School should consider how to maximise any new appointments such as, for example, joint appointments with other schools, which would lead to spin off research opportunities in other areas.

	<b>Recommendations from the PRG to the School</b>	<b>School's response</b>	<b>QPC Comment/Recommendation</b>
1.	Review service teaching and new programmes for their strategic benefit to the School.	We have determined that we will resist proliferation of service teaching so we can concentrate on our flagship programmes. For example, we have already agreed with CMH to reduce Biochemistry teaching in FM modules in 2016-17.	Noted.
2.	Explore avenues of opportunities for new staff, including joint appointments.	New staffing remains problematic. We will aim to secure some new appointments in the 16-17 academic year when staffing for SEFS is to be reviewed in the Autumn of 2016. We need to be ambitious and ensure we recruit top-flight staff who can underpin our research mission.	Endorsed.
3.	Develop alternative Final Year Projects and consider introducing an element of choice for students.	Final year projects. A half "away day" will be held in Sept 2016 to discuss possibilities in this area. The School is open to vary the possibilities of project provision and we will benchmark against good Biochemistry Schools (Dundee, Leeds, Cambridge) to help us in this.	Noted.
4.	Review Continuous Assessment component and its contribution weight to modules	Continuous assessment arrangements will be reviewed in the Autumn of 2016. A lower weight should apply to summative examinations and we need to provide students with feedback on progress and diversify methods of assessment. It may not prove possible to introduce changes until Academic Year 2017-18 as marks & standards and calendar entries will need to be modified.	Endorsed.
5.	Evaluate risk of loss of research income on teaching and maintenance of facilities	We will need to develop a more coherent research strategy to map onto national research priorities.	Endorsed.
6.	Develop mentoring system of staff going for promotion.	All new staff now have mentors and we will ensure mentoring for staff coming up for consideration for promotion. The P&E system has no credibility with our School unfortunately because of the concentration of multiple promotions in single units and even single individuals while long-serving Biochemistry staff are informed, though they meet all benchmarks, they will not be promoted.	Noted.

7.	Communicate more effectively the complaint structure for students	We will operate the new complaint structure and this has been circulated to all staff and will be communicated to student reps and on our website	Noted.
8.	Consider introducing element of component of scientific writing into modules year 1 and 2.	This will be challenging because of very large numbers and staff being already stretched. For example, 300 students take our Sci I modules. We will take this suggestion under consideration – perhaps for Sci III where numbers are more manageable and we are already considering modifying our library project. Alternatively we could consider integrating this into lab class write-ups.	
9.	Demonstrators should get better guidance and support and more time to mark. Person running the practical class still has to take responsibility for those marks.	We need to improve training of our demonstrators, especially with a view to consistency in marking. Increasing CA mark for labs will depend on this. The decreasing numbers of PhDs in our School makes this challenging.	Noted.
10.	Structured PhD programme, module on teaching which requires student to undertake a certain amount to pass the module	We will consider the implications of this.	
11.	School ensure no new processes are devolved to Admin staff.	No new processes devolved to admin staff. We agree with this	
12.	School should consider feeding back to students actions undertaken in light of student module surveys.	We will communicate general responses to class reps. However, the poor % completion limits the significance of these surveys.	QPC notes trend of low completion rates across the university and is aware proposals are currently being discussed at UMTS.
	<b>Recommendations from the PRG to the College of SEFS</b>		

13.	College of SEFS to develop a uniform policy on payment of post graduate demonstrators.	If we do not do so we will have to cancel lab classes in many programmes. We simply cannot operate in Biochemistry without “semi-professional” demonstrators versed in particular methods and this is different to other SEFS disciplines.	QPC recommends this recommendation is brought to the College of SEFS
	<b>Recommendations from the PRG to the University</b>		
14.	University needs to develop a coherent policy for dealing with legacy CID’s to prevent the risk to School budgets and protect the school.		Response as per recommendation 13.
15.	Promotion system - the university should have more frequent rounds of promotional opportunities to retain excellent staff and improve staff morale.		Noted.
16.	University to consider the level of funding of SEFS and requirement of new staff to lower the very high staff ratio to deliver the high quality programmes.	The allocation to SEFS is simply untenable. We use euros100k just to break even each year.	Noted.
17.	Consider the burden on students coming up to exam time (receiving module survey). While students supported opportunities to provide feedback, PRG recommends reconsidering the volume and timing of surveys to avoid fatigue and clashing with exams.		Response as per recommendation 12.



# School of Microbiology - Peer Review Group Report

## Peer Review Group Members

- Dr. Evelyn Doyle, School of Biology and Environment Science, University College Dublin
- Dr. Elizabeth Gebruers (Chair), department of Physiology (Retired) & Staff Ombudsman, UCC
- Professor Alan McCarthy, Institute of integrative Biology, University of Liverpool
- Mr. William McCarthy, Student member, UCC

## Site-visit

The site visit was conducted over 2.5 days from 6-8 April 2016 in the Food Science Building, UCC.

## Introduction

The School's contribution to the research income of the College is outstanding. The PRG discussions with representatives of the College confirmed that the School is held in high esteem, regarded as both student focused and very well managed. The School has a well-deserved international reputation, which is recognised both within UCC and by external regional stakeholders. The School produces high calibre graduates who make an important contribution to the national economy. This is particularly impressive from a complement of 13 full-time members of academic staff. This performance can only be sustained by appointment of additional staff (both academic and technical), in tandem with the necessary accommodation at the earliest possible opportunity. To maintain the School's position at the forefront of research and teaching provision at UCC, the age profile of the staff demands that formal succession planning is a priority, with appropriate attention paid to gender balance, now recognised as important in providing positive role models for undergraduate and postgraduate students.

## General observations on the documentation

The PRG was very impressed by the SER and judged that a great deal of time and thought had been spent in ensuring that it was a well-structured, concise and informative document. The balance between the SER and the accompanying appendices provided all of the necessary information that the review group needed in order to complete its task.

## SWOT Analysis

The SWOT analysis, while valuable, was somewhat out of date. However, the majority of the details were current. Given the detailed attention paid to the SER and the inclusion of a Strategic Plan, the SWOT analysis was therefore considered to be of limited importance.

The Strategic Plan identified key actions in the areas of undergraduate teaching programmes, postgraduate education, research and human capital development. It was a useful addendum to the SER.

## **Benchmarking**

The benchmarking exercise against the University of Sheffield and the University of Dundee was excellent and thorough. The analysis was honest and open, and the institutions were well chosen. The comparison was meaningful, the report balanced and the PRG found it useful. The overall quality of the BSc Microbiology offered by UCC is broadly comparable to the benchmarked institutions. The breadth of the curriculum at UCC compares favourably with those in the benchmarked institutions and there are no apparent gaps in the curriculum. Overall the total contact hours with students are similar across the programmes, but the level of practical training is significantly higher in Sheffield and Dundee than at UCC. This is most evident in the foundation years. The institutions offer alternative types of final year project, which may inform the School's current discussion on this topic. The PRG did note that the staff teaching load at UCC is significantly higher than at either of the benchmarked Institutions.

### Periodic Review – School of Microbiology

	Recommendations for improvement made by the Peer Review Group	School Response	QPC Comment/Recommendation
1.	The School should form a Safety Committee which is chaired by a permanent member of the academic staff and has representatives from the technical staff, PhD students and Postdoctoral researchers. The terms of reference of the committee should include the oversight of general School safety and report to the School management team.	Agree and will implement	QPC would like this recommendation sent to the Head of College of SEFS again stressing the importance of a Safety Committee.  Additionally the matter should be included on the School Risk Register pending resolution.
2.	The School should engage external stakeholders in their undergraduate degree programmes and postgraduate education, where appropriate. The School has a long standing relationship with many of the stakeholders and the PRG were very impressed with the esteem in which the School, staff and degree programmes were held by external stakeholders. The stakeholders all expressed a willingness to be involved in the various programmes via provision of activities such as career advice and student placements. These stakeholders, many of whom are graduates of the School, are a valuable resource and the PRG recommend the School explore ways in which they can best employ their obvious goodwill for the mutual benefit of the students, programme and the stakeholders themselves.	Agree. Already implemented for BSc Biotechnology. Will implement in a measured way other programmes.	Noted.
3.	The School of Microbiology should, at the earliest opportunity, submit a formal succession plan to the College of Science, Engineering and Food Science. The plan should include new	Agree. School will submit plan for Academic and Technical Officer staff within next 3 months. The	

	appointments (both early and mid-career) and address age and gender profile issues in a proactive manner.	comments of the reviewers regarding the critical need for three new early/mid career academic appointments and three technical posts to replace previous and upcoming retirements are noted. Comments on age and gender profile are also noted	
4.	The School should progress the proposed plan for centralised Teaching Laboratory facilities as a matter of urgency. This is essential for the maintenance and further development of a high quality CK402 programme. A formal plan, with appropriate costings, should be drawn up (with cognate Schools, if appropriate) and submitted to the relevant College authorities.	Agree. Will introduce this proposal in the context of wider developments in SEFS; will consult with other cognate Schools in SEFS. The School of Microbiology looks forward to playing a leading role in promoting this initiative	
5.	The School should continue with its development and introduction of innovative teaching approaches. The PRG is aware that this is resource dependent.	Agree but resource provision is a very real and unavoidable issue, particularly in the light of the increases in student numbers.	QPC endorsed the comments of the PRG and would encourage the School to continue its efforts.
6.	The School should take steps to embed the management of Ph.D. students at School level, in addition to the affiliation of students with research groups and institutes. The introduction of more flexibility in the choice of modules within the School's structured Ph.D. programmes should be a part of this process.	Agree. These recommendations are generally accepted and will be implemented by Graduate Studies Committee of SoM.	
7.	The School should take steps to introduce some level of choice for students in the selection of the final year Honours project. This will have a significant impact on the student experience.	This recommendation will require some consideration. Will be considered by Teaching and Learning Committee and the 4 <sup>th</sup>	Noted.

		Year co-ordinator who will make further recommendations to the School Academic Staff Committee, particularly in the context of the ongoing review of the 4 <sup>th</sup> Year curriculum.	
8.	The School should move away from complete reliance on formal lectures and final examinations primarily by introducing some element of continuous assessment. Again, this will impact positively on the student experience if carefully managed.	Significant elements of existing programmes in the School of Microbiology have a continuous assessment (CA) component. Modalities for further increasing CA will be examined by the Curriculum Development and Teaching & Learning Committees.	PRG comment endorsed.
9.	The College and University should find ways of rewarding the School's excellent achievement in research and teaching, including the recognition of individual staff contributions.	Agree!	QPC noted that the University has a staff awards programme which provides formal recognition for individual staff contributions in teaching, research and to the University community.

## **Cork University Dental School and Hospital– Peer Review Group Report**

### **Peer Review Group Members**

- Professor Donald Burden, Professor of Orthodontics and Director of the Centre for Dentistry, Queen’s University Belfast.
- Mr. Ken Halpenny, Director of Specialist Training, Royal College of Surgeons Ireland.
- Dr. Bettie Higgs (Chair), Co-Director of UCC’s Teaching & Learning Centre (Retired), UCC
- Mr. Joe Kennedy, Students’ Union Education Officer, UCC.

### **Site-visit**

The site visit was conducted over 1.5 days from 21-23 April 2016 and included visits to the Dental School & Hospital, Wilton.

### **General Observations**

The Self-Assessment Report (SAR) from the Cork Dental School and Hospital (CUDSH) was well-written and comprehensive. The Peer Review Group (PRG) found the report very helpful as it provided insight into the structure and operation of the CUDSH.

During the site visit there was a very positive engagement with the review process by all levels of staff, as well as by undergraduate (UG) and postgraduate (PG) students. The PRG found the tour of the facilities to be very informative. In all encounters an excellent community spirit was evident despite the complex and challenging environment that inevitably exists in programmes which deliver undergraduate and postgraduate education and training in dentistry. Dental undergraduate programmes are unique among university undergraduate courses in that dental students provide continuing care for patients. In addition, many of the clinical procedures in which undergraduate dental students must gain competence are exposure prone procedures (EPPs). Universities that deliver dental undergraduate programmes have a statutory and ethical duty to safeguard the health and safety of dental students during their education and there is a parallel duty to prevent harm to patients. As such the governance framework in place for any undergraduate dental programme must extend beyond educational governance to include all aspects of student and patient safety as part of a robust clinical governance structure.

The PRG noted that the SAR could have given consideration to the College of Medicine and Health (CMH) Strategic Plan and the University College Cork (UCC) Strategic Plan. Demonstrating alignment with these strategic plans would be helpful to the School and other stakeholders.

The PRG acknowledge that this review has a limited scope due to the recent successful accreditation of the Dental School programmes by the Dental Council, and a recent review of research activity. The PRG was able to concentrate on a smaller number of more focused issues - strategic planning and implementation, student experience, staff development and infrastructure - which are discussed under appropriate headings below.

The PRG are aware that the graduates from the CUDSH educational programmes have a very good reputation both nationally and internationally. The PRG are also well aware that, unlike other

undergraduate degree health programmes, Dental School UG students must provide, under supervision, operative care for both children and adults as part of their clinical education and training. The graduate of Dentistry must be fit to practice independently as a safe beginner on graduation. For this reason the magnitude of risk associated with the UG and PG educational programmes is above that normally encountered in other UG and PG programmes, including other health care programmes such as medicine, where there is no requirement for medical students to provide operative treatment for their own patients.

Furthermore, the CUDSH has a unique remit within University College Cork (UCC) because it delivers undergraduate and postgraduate programmes within a UCC managed dental hospital which also provides primary and secondary care for the local population. For this reason the PRG has made particular recommendations in relation to clinical governance for high-level strategic planning and urgent implementation.

The teaching team fully understand their responsibilities in the area of patient safety, and recognise that at a national level the importance of clear and transparent clinical governance in dental UG and PG programmes is an urgent issue for resolution.

The PRG are also aware that this review was carried out in a context of the confirmation that UCC have made substantial progress in the building of a new dental school. The PRG recognise that the completion of this new build within the ambitious timeframe will present significant challenges. In the interim period, current patient throughput suggests there will be 300,000 patients treated in the present CUDSH facility during the next five years. A significant number of students will be studying within the current facilities during this period. For this reason, the PRG have made short-term and medium-term infrastructure recommendations.

The PRG were pleased to hear that progress has been made with recognition of the funding deficit and the discrepancy between Dublin Dental School and Cork Dental School and Hospital. The PRG share the dental hospital staff aspiration that this will have a positive impact on the student experience in the dental school.

**Recommendations by the PRG for consideration and response.**

	<b>Recommendations for improvement made by the Peer Review Group</b>	<b>Cork Dental School &amp; Hospital response</b>	<b>QPC Comment/Recommendation</b>
1.	<p>The CUDSH has a unique remit in University College Cork (UCC) because it is an UG programme within a UCC owned hospital which cares for patients. Responsibility for clinical governance rests at the highest level in UCC, and there needs to be a clear reporting line up through the University.</p> <p>The governance framework for the UG dental programmes must include all aspects of student and patient safety as part of a robust clinical governance structure. This very high level of governance and responsibility must be addressed urgently.</p>	<p>The School has a clear reporting line to the College of Medicine and Health and the University and this would be further enhanced by recommendation 2.</p>	<p>QPC agrees UCC should have a clinical governance structure which would sit in the College of Medicine &amp; Health. The committee should report to UMTO and also the University Risk Management Committee on an annual basis</p>
2.	<p>The PRG see an urgent need for, and would recommend that, a stronger linkage should exist in the form of a high level stakeholder group, chaired by the President of UCC, who would meet on a regular basis in recognition of the unique patient safety and clinical governance responsibilities that rest with UCC in relation to CUDSH. The stakeholder group should comprise senior representatives from the CUDSH, the CMH, and appropriate external stakeholders. The PRG recommends the committee would also be responsible for the review of the School risk register, which encompasses all of the educational and clinical patient safety responsibilities of the dental school.</p>	<p>The School has a Clinical Governance Committee which oversees the Risk Register and the patient safety issues that arise when students and staff provide clinical care. A higher level committee would provide a stronger linkage for any major issues that arise in this regard.</p>	<p>QPC supports the recommendation but considers that the stakeholder group should be chaired by a senior person other than the President of UCC.</p>
3.	<p>The PRG recommend that a clear and agreed recruitment strategy for CUDSH is developed and proactively pursued in the immediate future.</p>	<p>The School agrees with this recommendation and records of retirement dates are informing the need, and post requests for replacements are being submitted. Recommendation 2 would help to ensure</p>	<p>Endorsed.</p>



	Flexibility must be shown in this regard, in the light of the unique position of UCC operating a hospital with patient safety strategies of prime importance.	that posts would be approved and filled in a timely manner.	
4.	Greater direct contact between the senior staff and students, and increased research-led teaching as an integral part of the student experience, as highlighted by the student representation. A critical mass of senior staff is needed to fulfil this role.	The School has filled a number of posts at Clinical Fellow and Lecturer level and is recruiting further posts, including at Chair level and Research led teaching will be a major component in the selection and recruitment criteria used.	QPC notes CUDSH's response.
5.	It is good to see that initial steps have been taken to incorporate the student voice within committee structures. However, there should be a deepening of this engagement, for example through increased frequency of staff/student meetings and increased representation on the School committees.  There should be a clearer structure for reporting student concerns at the School management meetings, and a response mechanism to enable feedback to students in order to 'close the loop'.	The School agrees with this recommendation and the School will increase Student representation on our Committees.  The School agrees with this recommendation and will put this feedback to Students into place.	Endorsed.
6.	Consideration should be given as to how students can be involved in the design and planning of the new building.	Representations of final year Students will be invited to Planning meetings for the new building and Students kept informed as the project progresses.	
7.	There is a need for a more detailed programme handbook at the start of the academic year. Increased information, including notable dates would address the student concerns about planning their studies.	The School will review all existing handbooks to ensure that all information including notable dates will be provided to enable students to better plan their studies.	
8.	Assessment, and in particular the lack of formative and summative feedback, were concerns expressed by UG students and must be addressed. In addition, clear guidelines for staff and students on grade discrepancies,	The School is already addressing this at the Academic Affairs Committee with a view to standardising the assessment grading and feedback system used across all disciplines in the School.	Noted.

	and in particular the implications for North American students should be made available.		
9.	Opportunities for further student involvement with the wider community, to gain skills that enhance employability, should be pursued.	The School is actively involved in advanced planning for the Dental Outreach Facility which will enhance the Student experience.	
10.	Study facilities such as the library and the student reading room should be improved at the earliest opportunity. The library opening hours should be changed to suit students.	The School supports this recommendation and this issue is on the agenda for the Library Committee and the College of Medicine & Health.	
11.	The student common room is not fit for purpose and should be upgraded.	The School is looking at this issue but is hampered by the lack of space in the current facility.	Noted.
12.	Some clinical facilities, such as in Oral Surgery, are below the expected standard and should be refurbished and modernised at the earliest opportunity.	The School has obtained financial approval and this refurbishment tender is being prepared.	
13.	Among nursing and administrative staff there should be a review of the current structures and consideration given to developing a senior dental nurse grade and similar recognition of administrative staff.	The School will engage with the UCC HR department to look at this and co-ordinate as current post holders retire.	Noted.
14.	Succession planning should take place, for example to ensure continuity of technical skills appropriate for a modern dental school and hospital.	The School will undertake this succession planning to ensure continuity of their skills.	Endorsed.
15.	A modified template for PDR should be developed appropriate to the needs of the CUDSH.	A clinical addendum will be prepared and sent to the University for approval.	
16.	The CUDSH strategic planning should give consideration to the College of Medicine and Health (CMH) Strategic Plan and the University College Cork (UCC) Strategic Plan. Demonstrating alignment with these strategic plans will maximise buy-in at all levels.	This will be done as the School develops its next Strategic Plan for 2018 – 2021.	Endorsed.

## Appendix 1

### Quality Promotion Committee

#### Membership

Sept 2016 – Sept 2020

##### Ex Officio:

- Dr. Michael Murphy, President (Chair)
- Professor Caroline Fennell, Senior Vice-President Academic & Registrar
- Mr. Diarmuid Collins, Bursar
- Ms. Elizabeth Noonan, Director of Quality (Secretary)
- Mr. Eolann Sheehan, President, Students' Union (2016-17)
- Mr. Ian Hutchinson, Education Officer, Students' Union (2016-17)

##### Nominated Members:

*4 academics – 1 representative from each College*

- Dr. Helena Buffery, College of Arts, Celtic Studies & Social Sciences
- Dr. Patrick Harrison, College of Medicine & Health
- Professor Alan Kelly, College of Science, Engineering & Food Science
- Professor Deirdre Madden, College of Business & Law

*3 representatives from administration and services*

- Dr. Michael Byrne, Acting Head of Student Experience
- Ms Kate O'Brien, Manager, College of SEFS
- Ms. Michele Power, Quercus Talented Student Programme

*2 external members of Governing Body*

- TBC
- TBC

## QUALITY PROMOTION COMMITTEE

### TERMS OF REFERENCE

**Reports to:** Governing Body and University Management Team

**Aim:** To assist in the provision of outstanding education in undergraduate and professional and graduate areas by fostering the improvement of quality in education and all related services provided by the University.

#### Responsibilities

The Quality Promotion Committee is responsible to the Governing Body for the overseeing of all matters, which have an impact on maintaining, and where possible, improving and enhancing the quality of the student experience in UCC. It aims to ensure that there are appropriate procedures in place for the assurance of quality within the University and for the promotion of quality improvement in both teaching and non-teaching areas.

- Promote collective responsibility for quality improvement and assurance throughout the University.
- Recommend to Governing Body/UMT/Academic Council policy in relation to
  - Quality assurance
  - Educational development in relation to teaching, learning and assessment
  - The quality of the students' learning experience
- Promote innovation and development, which will enhance the quality of the student experience, in both teaching and non-teaching areas.
- Oversee University procedures for the identification and dissemination of good practice.
- Keep under review policy and procedures for ensuring the integrity of various forms of academic association with external organisations including the franchise of University programmes and the recognition, accreditation or validation of programmes offered by other organisations.
- Promote and encourage equal opportunities practice to enhance the quality of the student experience.
- Keep under review the requirements of national agencies, which have a remit for quality in education such as the HEA and ensure that University policy and procedures are consistent with national guidelines where appropriate.

## OPERATIONAL PROCEDURES

In order to fulfill these responsibilities the Committee will:

1. Approve all significant developments in policies and practices relevant to quality improvement in all aspects of the University, including the design, development and review of guidelines and procedures for QI/QA.
2. Approve the schedule for departmental/unit QI/QA reviews.
3. Approval of the composition of the Peer Review Group.
4. Receive and consider reports and minutes from College/Faculty management committees (or equivalent) regarding work in relation to:
  - academic standards
  - quality assurance
  - quality improvement
5. Receive and consider reports of review panels concerning academic programmes, departments, administration units and central services, and, as appropriate, make recommendations to the Governing Body and UMT and the President for future action.
6. Ensure that there are effective procedures in place for involving students, staff, employers and representatives of the local community in quality assurance and quality improvement processes.
7. Provide appropriate guidance on matters concerning the maintenance and enhancement of quality for programme teams and central services.
8. Keep under review and recommend to Governing Body the information which should be maintained on taught programmes including: the content of definitive programme documents; documentation requirements for programme approval and review; and the issues which should be addressed in external examiners report.
9. Keep under review and recommend to Governing Body the range of statistical information and indicators, which should inform the quality assurance processes for academic programmes and central services.
10. Keep under review quality standards for central services.
11. Liaise with other bodies in the University as appropriate.
12. Report to University Management Team following each meeting
13. Report annually to the Governing Body.

## **CONSTITUTION**

### **Ex Officio:**

- President (Chair)
- Registrar & Senior Vice-President Academic
- Bursar
- Director, Quality Promotion Unit(Secretary)
- President, Students Union
- Education Officer, Students Union

### **Nominated Members:**

- 4 Academics, with experience of participation in quality review and knowledge of quality systems – one from each College, nominated by the President
- 3 Administrative & Support Services representatives with experience of participation in quality review and knowledge of quality systems from administration and services, nominated by the President
- 2 external members of Governing Body, nominated by Governing Body

### **Term of Office**

The term of office for the committee is four years, with the current committee's period of office ending 1<sup>st</sup> October 2020.

### **Casual Vacancies**

The Governing Body has delegated authority to the Committee to fill any casual vacancies that arise during the lifetime of the Committee.