

QUALITY REVIEW FOLLOW-UP REPORT

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Introduction

A meeting to discuss progress made in implementing recommendations for improvement arising from the review of the Department of Education was held on 11 October 2007.

Present: Professor David Cox, Head, College of Arts, Celtic Studies and Social Sciences
Professor Kathy Hall, Head, Department of Education
Ms Hannah Joyce, Department Manager, Department of Education
Dr Norma Ryan, Director, Quality Promotion Unit
Ms Deirdre O'Brien, Administrator, Quality Promotion Unit

Abbreviations

PRG: Peer Review Group

QPC: Quality Promotion Committee

HR: Human Resources

ACSSS: Arts, Celtic Studies and Social Sciences

VP: Vice-President

QIP: Quality Improvement Plan

SEFS: Science, Engineering & Food Science

UMG: University Management Group

Recommendation of PRG	Recommendation of QPC	Follow-up Report Oct 07
A fully integrated central location for the Department be found by the University, with planned and dedicated space for all departmental activities.	Endorsed.	Ongoing Additional space has been allocated to the department since the review, accommodating new activities such as Sports Studies. It is recognised by the Head of College that the issue of space is a pressing one for the Department and discussions at UMG level are ongoing.
That, for health and safety reasons, the manifestly inadequate toilet and adjacent washroom/kitchenette facilities in Leeholme Building must be dealt with as soon as possible.	Noted that remedial work had been carried out.	Implemented
The Department and the University, as a priority, make arrangements for the provision of space to allow staff (including part-time) to meet on a regular basis, and that access to facilities be provided to part-time staff.	The QPC noted this recommendation and referred the Department to the availability of centrally bookable rooms. QPC recommended that the Department ensure that part-time staff do have access to facilities, including Blackboard.	Ongoing It is recognised by the Head of College that the issue of space is a pressing one for the Department and discussions at UMG level are ongoing. All part-time staff have access to facilities (e.g. Blackboard)

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<p>The Department and the University consider the development of a Science Education Centre.</p>	<p>QPC considered that this recommendation is really an issue for the College of SEFS and is linked to the science promotion activities of SEFS, along with proposals for action in this area by UCC, CIT and the Crawford. The QPC recommended that the Head of Department liaise with the Head of the College of SEFS to consider possible actions.</p>	<p>Ongoing</p> <p>The Department will discuss the recommendation further in the context of ‘schoolification’ and also as they develop their Strategic Plan.</p> <p>Dr. Declan Kennedy has been advancing provision for science education over the past year, continuing to develop a range of Science Education initiatives. There is a pressing need for access to a suitable science laboratory which Dr. Kennedy is currently pursuing.</p>
<p>An inventory and upgrading of the resources in the Education Resource Centre be undertaken.</p>	<p>Endorsed.</p> <p>QPC requested that proposals for implementing this recommendation be included in the QIP and that action is taken as soon as possible. The QPC also noted that, in principle, as much of the resource as possible should be housed in the UCC Library and thus available to all staff and students of the University. The Department should include in their report a justification for holding a resource separate from the UCC Library.</p>	<p>Implemented</p> <p>It was noted that the Resource Room is used to keep materials inappropriate for the Library and that all resources possible are kept in the Library. There are plans to organise the space available to provide a preparation area for students.</p> <p>The resource room is managed by a part-time administrator.</p>
<p>The Department develop a strategic plan for the next five years as a matter of immediate urgency.</p>	<p>Endorsed.</p> <p>QPC noted that the University Strategic Framework is presently being considered by all Colleges. The Departmental plan should be in line with the University one. The QPC also noted that there are difficulties in finalising the plan until the appointment process for the Professor of Education is complete.</p>	<p>Ongoing</p> <p>The Strategic Plan is currently being drafted by the new Head of Department in collaboration with the staff of the department. It is awaiting the finalisation of the College of ACSSS Strategic Plan before completion.</p>
<p>The Department should review all its academic programmes as a matter of priority.</p>	<p>Strongly endorsed.</p> <p>The QPC considered this to be a matter of urgency and requested that the outcome of the review inform the QIP.</p>	<p>Implemented</p> <p>The Department has been systematically reviewing its provision. All postgraduate courses have now been modularised.</p> <p>Academic programmes continue to be monitored and amended in light of evidence from staff, students and research on successful practice.</p>

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<p>The Department and the University give immediate attention to succession planning in the Department of Education.</p>	<p>Endorsed.</p> <p>QPC noted that approval for the appointment of the replacement of the Professor of Education is already underway.</p> <p>The QPC also noted that the response of the Department did not appear relevant to the recommendation (<i>a policy has been implemented to ensure that junior/middle staff members are installed in management positions</i>). The QPC welcomed the approach to inclusion of all staff in management and would encourage the Department to develop appropriate committee structures to enable a sharing of the administrative burden.</p>	<p>Ongoing</p> <p>The new Head of the Department, Professor Kathy Hall, has taken up position. The Department is aware of the need for succession planning in the light of upcoming retirements and will liaise with Human Resources and the Head of College on this issue.</p>
<p>The Department improve their communications with their students and consider the wider use of available technologies and their associated methodologies for teaching and learning.</p>	<p>Strongly endorsed.</p> <p>QPC requested that the QIP contain specific details on the implementation of this recommendation, including provision of appropriate training for staff as necessary.</p>	<p>Implemented and ongoing</p> <p>Blackboard is now widely used and is accessible to all students and staff members.</p>
<p>A review of the roles and employment arrangements for part-time staff in the Department of Education be undertaken.</p>	<p>Strongly endorsed.</p> <p>QPC recommended that the Department engage with the Department of HR and the Head of College of ACSSS.</p>	<p>Not implemented</p> <p>The issue of parity of remuneration with staff in other Higher Education Institutes in Ireland for part time staff has not been resolved and is a matter of urgent concern for the department. The Department will provide evidence to HR of the disparity between remuneration rates in UCC and UCD in particular.</p>
<p>The University consider the administrative requirements that should be put in place to support interdisciplinary degrees, including regulations and examining processes.</p>	<p>Endorsed.</p> <p>QPC recommended that this recommendation be referred to the Registrar for consideration and action</p>	<p>Ongoing</p> <p>Budgets for Early Childhood Studies have been devolved to course level. The Head of College has referred the resourcing issue to the Registrar and Bursar.</p>

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<p>The University review the provision of programmes such as the <i>Postgraduate Certificate</i> and <i>Postgraduate Diploma in Teaching and Learning in Higher Education</i> with respect to overall management structure and location, as well as staffing and resourcing issues.</p>	<p>QPC noted that the University has already taken action in this regard and has put in place supports for these programmes. Ongoing discussions will be taking place in regard to the necessary supports for such programmes.</p>	<p>Implemented The University has funded secondments to support these programmes.</p>
<p>The Department seek to develop and agree a distinctive focus for the research of the Department and use the specific expertise available within UCC in the preparation and the making of formal grant applications.</p>	<p>Strongly endorsed. QPC recommended that the Department seek to avail of the expertise of the Office of the VP for Research Policy & Support.</p>	<p>Ongoing The Department has a Research Committee and the process of determining a distinctive focus for their research is ongoing. A Research Strategy is being developed.</p>
<p>Each staff member ensure that the information recorded on the research database, RIS, is accurate and comprehensive.</p>	<p>Strongly endorsed. Confirmation that all staff have complied must be provided in the QIP.</p>	<p>Ongoing The majority of staff members now have their research information recorded in RIS.</p>
<p>The Department actively pursue all opportunities for the support and development of a postgraduate induction and development programme for all research students, in particular PhD students.</p>	<p>Strongly endorsed. The QPC noted that the call for applications under the President's Scholarships for postgraduates in the Humanities and Social Sciences has been made with a closing date of 6th June and would welcome applications from staff of the Department.</p>	<p>Implemented and ongoing The Department's Graduate Studies Committee continues to address this recommendation.</p>
<p>Staff should avail of opportunities to serve on University and College committees and be encouraged to participate in College/University activities, where possible.</p>	<p>Strongly endorsed.</p>	<p>Implemented The Department is now well represented on University and College committees.</p>
<p>The Department should encourage co-supervision of PhD students as an aspect of staff development.</p>	<p>Endorsed.</p>	<p>Implemented This recommendation is the proposed policy of the Department for all new research students from October 2007.</p>
<p>Staff who are in process of completing their studies for a PhD be fully supported by the Department and the University.</p>	<p>Strongly endorsed. Welcomed response of Department. <i>(This has always been the policy of this Department and it will continue to be so).</i></p>	<p>Ongoing</p>

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The Department seek to formalise its links with other institutions in Ireland and internationally, and that such collaborative links be formalised, developed and expanded.	Strongly endorsed. This should form a major part of the strategic plan for the Department and the QIP.	Implemented
The Department liaise with the staff of the UCC Library to explore possibilities for additional funding and to spend the monies already allocated appropriately.	The QPC recommended that the unspent outstanding balance in the departmental Library budget be held, pending the appointment of the Professor of Education, who may need to avail of the resource.	Implemented The outstanding monies are now actively being spent.
The Department avail fully of all other relevant UCC administration and support services.	Strongly endorsed.	Ongoing