

Quality Enhancement Plan

Adult Continuing Education

August 2025

FOR COMPLETION BY QEU	
Date of Peer Review visit: 30 th April – 2 nd May 2019	Head of Unit: Dr Séamus Ó Tuama
Link to Panel Report published on QEU website: https://www.ucc.ie/en/media/support/qualityenhancementunit/reports/admin/FinalACEPeerReviewPanelReport.pdf	Date QEP considered by Quality Enhancement Committee: 20 th November 2025

Item No	Panel Recommendations	Actions Planned ¹	Responsibility for Action ²	Resource Implications ³	Implementation Schedule ⁴	Effectiveness/Impact ⁵
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Strategic Recommendations to ACE

1.	ACE to produce a mission statement in conjunction with the VPLT, which clearly encapsulates its role within the University community.	Ace Strategic Plan 2023-2028 drafted, approved and				
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¹ May include actions planned within the unit or those that require interface with other parts of the university

² E.g. Head of School, School Manager, all staff, specific committees etc

³ Resources – the financial or human resources required to implement the recommendation

⁴ Interim milestone dates can be included here (e.g. within 6 months, within 12 months, within 3 years etc.)

⁵ Recognising the need to reflect on the effectiveness of actions undertaken, and to what extent the actions have achieved their intended outcome

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		presented to VPLT in 2023.				
2.	ACE needs to undergo a strategic planning process which delivers a strategic plan identifying and ranking the actions required to deliver on the plan. This process could include, for example: critical assessment of current external arrangements and partnerships in line with the mission and strategic objectives; evaluation of the success of the current blended delivery model, with consideration to developing further online delivery; a focus on succession planning.	See above				
3.	In parallel with the strategy, a comprehensive review of processes and roles in ACE, including benchmarking against practices in other similar institutions.	Gaye Cunningham report 2024; internal audit carried out by UCC 2025				
4.	ACE to develop an approved Opportunities Assessment Framework to guide its decision making on academic programme development and partnerships. This would include clear lines of consultation with and approval by relevant stakeholders.	This process had been in place prior to quality review. The symbiotic learning paradigm used by ACE is seen as best practice internationally.				

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5.	ACE to continue to align its administration and business processes with those of the University, and with the Connected University strategy in particular.	Noted and implemented.				
6.	ACE to continue to develop further partnership opportunities with academic units in UCC (as it has been doing through, for example, seminars with the School of Biological, Ecological and Environmental Sciences (BEES)).	ACE is proactive in this space.				

Staffing

7.	ACE, working with the HR Department, to review all current and future staffing requirements, including the configuration of posts and the deployment of staff within the Unit.	This is an ongoing process with HR.				
8.	ACE management needs to facilitate the opportunity for staff to develop scholarly assessment on ACE's best practice examples, such as RPL, innovative community education examples, etc.	ACE management continues to encourage staff to engage in dissemination of best practice (e.g. through ASEM LLL Hub, eucen, HELLIN, ESREA, etc.)				

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Marketing and communication

9.	A marketing and communication plan to be developed in conjunction with the University's Office of Marketing and Communications to enhance ACE's marketing and social media presence.	This was actioned through the appointment of ACE Marketing and Business Development Manager in 2023.				
10.	ACE needs to highlight both its community engagement and incubator roles within the University, by establishing a compatible profile for both activities.	See above				
11.	ACE to work to harness the potential of its alumni by recruiting and training them to conduct peer mentoring.	Implemented in Springboard.				

Finance and sustainability The Panel recommends the following in order to place ACE on a more sustainable footing:

12.	ACE, working with the Alumni & Development Office, to explore opportunities for philanthropic funding.	Several meetings held.				
13.	ACE, in association with the Bursar, needs to review the redistribution of income to Colleges, with a view to retaining a greater share in ACE.	Unable to progress this due to Project Alpha.				


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14.	ACE to maintain a balance between its objectives of revenue generation and social/community inclusion.	This always has been a priority and continues to be so.				

Social Return on Investment

15.	ACE Management should work with the Office of the Vice President of External Relations to undertake a social return on investment study of ACE.	No resources to undertake this study.				
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For completion by Unit

Head of School/Unit: Dr Séamus Ó Tuama, Director ACE (Adult Continuing Education)	Signature: 	Date: 9.9.2025
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Head of College/Functional Area: Professor Paul McSweeney Vice-President Learning & Teaching	Signature: 	Date: 10/09/2025
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