

QUALITY IMPROVEMENT / QUALITY ASSURANCE

OFFICE OF BUILDINGS & ESTATES

Present: President, Fiona Crozier, Mark Poland, Michelle McCarthy. Michael McCormack, Paul Pendergast, Eamonn Connaughton

Abbreviations

PRG: Peer Review Group

VP: Vice-President

QPC: Quality Promotion Committee

QIP: Quality Improvement Plan

HR: Human Resources

CCC: Cork City Council

PRG Finding/Recommendation		Unit response	QPC Comment/Recommendations	Follow up Thurs 23rd May 2013
1.	That the Office of Buildings and Estates prioritise all recommendations and convert into a three year Quality Improvement plan	Agree	Recommendation endorsed.	Completed.
2.	That a review of the IP telephony infrastructure be carried out with a view to identifying a potential cost-saving replacement to the existing telephony infrastructure at UCC.	Agree	Recommendation endorsed. Details of timeline for review to be included in QIP	Ongoing. B&E is liaising with the Computer Centre on a joint project to move the existing infrastructure to IP. A plan has been put in place to ensure long term service provision.

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3.	That the Estate, Environment and Heritage Advisory Committee consider the IT support required to enhance heritage activities at UCC.	Agree	Recommendation endorsed.	Implemented. A section was created off the main UCC website to highlight heritage activities. The University Curator is currently compiling a database of all the University's collections.
4.	That room rates and the policy regarding charges, particularly with regards to alumni events, be reviewed to ensure maximum utilisation of the resource.	Agree	Recommendation endorsed.	Ongoing. B&E reviews room charges annually. The Office raised €140,000 from external room bookings last year. However, UCC competes with local hotels for external bookings. This issue is reviewed annually with the University's Secretary.
5.	That a project to review off-site storage facilities and opportunities for cooperation and development of shared services storage facilities be undertaken incorporating estates, IT, Library, individual academic depts. and possible external partners.	Agree	Recommendation endorsed. QPC recommended that B&E lead on the discussions and convene the relevant group.	Ongoing. B&E has held discussions with the landlord regarding the Pouladuff site. The Director of B&E has also spoken with the Librarian and the Director of Library Services regarding alternative means for off-site storage.
6.	That, in the event of change to the situation pertaining to the storage facilities at Pouladuff, the need to make provision for long-term storage of archival materials is actively considered.	Agree	Recommendation endorsed.	Same as above.

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7.	That the long term viability of open access PC labs be reviewed with a view to the potential development of increased and more flexible spaces for postgraduates.	Agree	Recommendation endorsed.	Ongoing. The Director of B&E reported open access labs are still required as the need for students to utilise computers/their own personal machines still exists. However, he envisages this will change with time and the space could be utilised in other ways.
8.	That the Office of Buildings and Estates management team explore the potential for greater alignment of small works and capital development works teams as the balance of the development programme changes in coming years	Agree	Recommendation endorsed.	Ongoing. The Buildings Officer explained the small works and capital development teams have been converging in recent times due to lack of capital resourcing.
9.	That the Office of Buildings and Estates implement a policy for charging and full cost recovery from UCC wholly owned companies for project development and management.	Agree	Recommendation endorsed.	B&E carry out capital development work in UCC subsidiaries. Contract staff members are charged to the subsidiary in question which helps off-set costs.

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10.	That income generating activities be formally identified across the range of services provided by the Office of Buildings and Estates and a corporate policy is agreed on recovering costs from academic and service units where enhanced service levels are agreed.	Agree	Recommendation endorsed.	Implemented. B&E has indentified income generating opportunities. The Director of B&E has drafted Service Level Agreements and intends to bring them to UMTO for approval shortly.
11.	That the Office of Buildings and Estates initiate a formal mechanism through which UMTO/S be informed reliably of plans in relation to estate planning and staffing issues within the Office of Buildings and Estates	Agree	Recommendation endorsed.	Ongoing. The Director of B&E is a member of UMTS. As part of the University budgetary process, he brings these plans to the Bursar and UMTS.
12.	That closer formal links be developed with the Procurement Office across the full range of B&E purchasing, including Green procurement and liaison with the NPS (national procurement service).	These links exist.	Recommendation endorsed.	B&E has established links with Procurement Office. It is intended a post will be created in Procurement Office to deal specifically with B&E procurement.
13.	That the Office of Buildings and Estates should consider options for increasing opening hours based on identifying a suitable funding model supported by corporate policy.	Agree	Recommendation endorsed.	This option is not viable as buildings are not heated overnight in an effort to reduce costs.

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14.	That the Space Subcommittee should be encouraged to identify additional accommodation for graduate students at UCC.	Will review with Space Sub-committee.	Recommendation endorsed.	Completed. The Post-graduates have a dedicated Common Room now.
15.	That the Office of Buildings and Estates in conjunction with the Computer Centre review the IT infrastructure requirements into the future.	Agree	Recommendation endorsed.	Ongoing. The Director of the Computer Centre is looking at possible solutions.
16.	Recommend putting in place a forum for overview of an integrated IT and physical estate infrastructure strategy.	Agree	Recommendation endorsed.	Completed. A group was established and an overall review of IT infrastructure conducted.
17.	That the Office of Buildings and Estates establish formal mechanisms for project prioritisation and integration and transparency of decision making.	In place.	Recommendation endorsed.	Completed as part of Strategic Planning process.

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18.	Having regard to the current economic conditions affecting the financial viability of contractors, that the Office of Buildings and Estates address carefully financial criteria and costing prior to shortlisting and appointment of contractors	Agree	Recommendation endorsed.	Completed. B&E has a financial process in place that determines pre-qualification of contractors. The Bursar is also involved to ensure contractors are financially viable.
19.	That the Office of Buildings and Estates conclude work with Cork City Council on the updated development plan and thereafter establish a forum with CCC and other external stakeholders on impact of works on local and regional areas.	Director of Estates is a member of Cork Area Strategic Plan Steering Committee. More formal links with City Council to be put in place with VP External Affairs.	Recommendation endorsed.	Completed. Mechanisms are in place regarding interaction with CCC. B&E staff members sit on various forums within the city and region. A strong network now exists.
20.	That the Office of Buildings and Estates work with internal and external stakeholders to maximise the potential tourism opportunities offered by the university campus.	Discussions underway with VP External Affairs and Failte Ireland.	Recommendation endorsed.	B&E understands there are other areas within the University liaising with Bord Fáilte and they are happy to support the work in any way they can.

Other issues discussed:

1. Communications:

B&E strives to improve internal communications and has conducted many meetings to this end. The Office now produces a newsletter which it circulates to all staff.

2. Space Allocation

The Committee's reports are now available on the B&E website which is an improvement on previous practice.

3. Croke Park/Haddington Road Agreements:

B&E has adapted to the new Agreements by improving efficiency and introducing additional flexibility through the means of new rosters. The Office faces a continual challenge of maintaining standards with less staff available than before and without incurring additional costs.

4. Services Level Agreements:

Completed.

5. Green Flag:

Achieved.