



Quality Enhancement Plan

Buildings & Estates

2019

FOR COMPLETION BY QEU	
Date of Peer Review visit: 21 st – 23 rd May 2019	Head of Unit: Mr. Mark Poland
Link to Panel Report published on QEU website: https://www.ucc.ie/en/media/support/qualityenhancementunit/reports/admin/PeerReviewPanelReportBuildingsEstates2018-19.pdf	Date QEP considered by Quality Enhancement Committee: 20 th November 2025

Recommendations to Buildings & Estates

Item No	Panel Recommendations	Actions Planned ¹	Responsibility for Action ²	Resource Implications ³	Implementation Schedule ⁴	Effectiveness/Impact ⁵ To be completed as part of follow-up
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Strategic Planning

1.	Ensure that the Masterplan responds to the strategic direction of the University as articulated in the main University Strategy, and Academic Strategy,	Complete Masterplan Review in 2021	MP	Engage Consultant to prepare the plan	2021	Masterplan has allowed identification of key capital developments and guided property strategy.
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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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	along with other associated strategies (e.g. Research, Sports and Digital Strategies) as well as to the strategic estate needs, such as legal compliance works, addressing backlog maintenance and investments to provide the right teaching and learning spaces.					
2.	The Director of B&E and the Senior Management Team should take a leadership role in crafting the thinking for next generation approaches and play a very strong role in guiding the process of prioritisation.	Director of B&E is a member of ULT and plays a key role in strategic planning	Director of B&E	None	Complete	The Director of Estates as a key member of ULT has contributed to the thinking and development of the UCC Strategic Plan (2023-2028).
3.	For the B&E leadership team to create time and opportunity to consider, with key senior colleagues across the university, foresight issues and initiatives such as the future of teaching and learning spaces, agile work structures, the connected curriculum, innovative approaches to commuting etc. Map the student journey and research life-cycle, and the key	Buildings & Estates management are key members of a range of University led Committees	B&E Management	None	Complete	The B&E leadership team play an ongoing role in supporting all aspects of the University Strategic Plan. Particular focus has been the enhancement of teaching facilities and the provision of more informal meeting spaces for students (e.g. Hub development). The ongoing focus on campus masterplanning and enhanced

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	touch points, to facilitate the integration of services and enable student, researcher and stakeholder-centred service delivery.					pedestrian access (e.g. Cavanagh Walkway) and improvements to commuting options.
4.	Develop a proactive approach to identifying resource need and prioritisation with a view to anticipated funding gaps. This will ensure a state of readiness if and when funding/ funding calls become available at short notice.	Range of projects developed as part of backlog maintenance plan to ensure all funds can be expended within Buildings and Estates Management timeframes	B&E Management	None	Complete	<p>The B&E management effectively advocate for necessary funding and pursue all funding opportunities (e.g. Devolved Grant\SEAI Pathfinder Projects etc) and effectively invest available funds on a prioritised basis.</p> <p>In particular the effective management and delivery of essential backlog maintenance projects over a number of years has seen targeted developments in improvements in safety and core infrastructure across campus. Success in achieving maximum funding (CUBS / Kane) in the HESIF process will see further investment in core teaching facilities. B&E has also successfully competed for over €4m in grants to support our 2030 Climate Action Roadmap</p>

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5.	Consider the preparation of a 5 or 10-year strategy for Maintenance of the Estate, taking cognisance of the development of the estate (new builds, refurbishments, disposals and acquisitions) thus allowing budgets to be allocated for upkeep and resources to ensure that the Estate is well-maintained. Lifecycle costs to be established for all major projects, to inform business cases and investment decision making.	Buildings & Management meeting regularly to update maintenance plans which are reviewed annually subject to funding availability	B&E Management	Dependent on annual budget/HEA BLM funding	Complete	B&E continue to manage overall estate, reduce reliance on rented property and effectively manage UCC's portfolio of property in line with current needs. Examples include the rationalisation of rented property (Lancaster Hall, 13 South Mall etc.) and a focus on Space Utilisation. The provision of a much-needed large exam venue was addressed (Doughcloyne). Life cycle costing is a key parameter for all investment decisions.

Workforce Development Plan

6.	Develop and coordinate an approach for succession planning to preserve and transfer existing expert institutional knowledge and cultural diversity.	Succession planning supported by HR Business partner	Director of B&E	None	Complete	Critical post identified as part of University wide initiative. Every effort to ensure continuity of resource availability or alternative short-term arrangements put in place.
7.	Undertake a GAP analysis to ensure that across the current workforce the number of staff and range of staff skills and expertise is adequate for responding to the needs of the	Strategic staffing kept under review. PF 3 prepared for key posts	B&E Management Team	Dependent on Annual budget	Complete	Key posts identified for consideration. The financial position of the University has limited B&E capacity to fill needs. Support from UCC academy has helped address some needs.

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	Estates & Capital Plans in light of the University Strategy.					

Service Delivery and Quality Management

8.	As part of the overall development of services to the University community, consider developing periodic and structured approaches to meet with key stakeholders early and often to understand current and emerging needs.	Regular meetings with Students Union and other key stakeholders in place	B&E Management	Within existing resources	Complete	B&E management meets with Student's Union and College/School Heads as required. A structured meeting every year allows the Students Union to put forward their priorities. We attend the RISI forum annually and close working relationships exist with each College and functional units.
9.	In the context of the current high-level demand for space, there is a need for a space review/audit for utilisation and efficiency. This audit should include some element of external input.	Space audit of all centrally booked space completed. Significant space utilisation programme of work in place. Supported by UCC Academy and informed by EAB/AUDE etc.	Director of B&E	Resources provided by HEA/UCC Transformation Fund	Ongoing	HEA Audits completed. New University Strategic Space Utilisation Group (USSUG) established and space utilisation being addressed across 10 separate work streams supported by the President's Strategic fund.
10.	Develop and apply Smarter KPIs (more strategic in focus, transparent and more useful in evaluating the work of the department) and inform	Strategic KPI's reported annually (space, energy etc.)	B&E Management	None	Complete	Space and energy KPIs identified and monitored on an ongoing basis. Benchmarking versus the AUDE EMS provides useful insights. The HEA

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	approaches with international benchmark data as appropriate (e.g. Association of University Directors of Estates (AUDE)).					Space Survey provides insights on utilisation of teaching facilities.
11.	Develop and use, as a matter of routine, appropriate infographics to show achievements in room utilisation and maintenance of standards.	Comprehensive space reports prepared by building etc.	B&E Management	None	Complete	Completed and shared widely as part of space utilisation project. In particular each College is provided with feedback on individual rooms and their frequency of booking, match to room capacity and overall utilisation rates. This allows interrogation of patterns of use and reassignment of spaces.

Capital Programme

12.	Review the governance and management of Capital Projects and associated project management processes with a view to the introduction of appropriate gateway reviews at critical phases. There is potential for process improvement through post-project appraisal, post-occupancy evaluations and learning from design reviews.	Policy on Capital Development and Property Transactions developed and approved by GA	Director of B&E / Capital Projects Office	None	Complete	Policy adopted by GA and applied to all new developments. GA physical Assets Committee established to guide management of physical assets etc. All projects comply with infrastructure guidelines and must be approved at critical gateways. The Capital Programme has been audited extensively.
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13.	Review the management of consultants and contractors with a view to de-risking projects by having on-going structured and contractual oversight.	Risk reduction strategies in place in line with Infrastructure Guidelines and reviewed for individual projects	Capital Projects Officer	None	Complete	Project Boards in place for all major projects. Risk management processes in place for all capital development.
14.	Put in place processes for formalised and structured stakeholder engagement (i.e. with academics, students and members of professional services) to ensure optimum planning, and appropriate and timely responsiveness to the University's needs.	Member of PSLF. Engagement with ULT and ULT Sub-Committees and GA Committees ensure strong stakeholder engagement	B&E Management	None	Complete	Processes in place and working effectively. Steering Committees in place for significant Capital Projects and structured engagement in brief development and sign off of requirements.
15.	Give some consideration to the current arrangements for procurement and review how further efficiencies might be brought to bear to service Capital Projects delivery. This might include a localised procurement resource within B&E, acting as an expert liaison in ensuring coordination with the University's Procurement and Contracts Office, while meeting	Part-time inhouse procurement resource in place to ensure expertise/consistencies and liaise with Procurement & Contracts Office	B&E Management	Resourced from capital programme	Complete	Current arrangements working well. Internal and external audits and strong oversight from GA on all capital development.

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	the needs of B&E as a service user.					
16.	Develop a programme and financial management plan to include an overall view of the totality of the portfolio of projects; the prioritisation of projects within the Capital programme against potential available budget and management of expectations; long term maintenance and the gap between new buildings and older stock.	Prioritisation of projects completed. HEA Backlog Maintenance fund since 2021. Long term financial plan underway with Finance Office	Director of B&E/ Finance Office	Based on UCC's capacity to fund from all sources (HEA, EIB etc.)	To be completed in mid-2025	Overall long-term capital financial plan building on the business case for individual projects will establish capital programme in medium term.

Student Support and Engagement

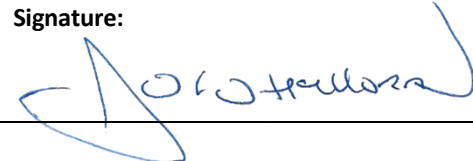
17.	Plan for more extensive deployment of available training for front-line staff in relation to student issues; including mental health, first aid training and/or training on identifying and responding to distressed or at-	Comprehensive training programme in place for staff supporting students directly	B&E Management	From B&E Recurrent Budget	Complete	Comprehensive training programme in place covering health and safety, first aid, student support etc.
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	risk students. Where specific training is not currently available in the University, determine how best to source, develop and deploy.					
18.	Ensure earlier engagement with students, as key stakeholders, in the design and scope of projects. Develop a protocol for more structured and early engagement with the Students' Union, student clubs and committees, and the student body generally in estates-related activities.	Early consultation with Student Body on key projects (e.g. Crow's Nest/Hub etc.)	B&E Management			Close engagement with student body in relation to changing student needs in post covid environment. Additional common room spaces, commuting enhancements etc put in place.

Communication and Engagement

19.	Increase the number of Townhalls to at least once per semester ensuring improved communication and providing a forum for open discussion on issues of common interest/relevance.	President townhalls in place to inform staff of latest developments. Briefings, toolbox talks, Safety Action Team etc offer opportunity for B&E staff to input into B&E strategy.	B&E management	None	Complete	Good lines of communication available to all staff to contribute and offer insights to B&E management.
20.	Develop an appropriate means of communication for each unit (perhaps informed by a needs analysis) to include innovative approaches, and the use of technologies to reach all staff audiences across the Buildings & Estates team. A regular Newsletter may be an appropriate short-term step.	Each unit has established communication pathway to engage staff	B&E management	None	Complete	Good lines of communication available to all staff to contribute and offer insights to B&E management. University wide awards, training opportunities and culture initiatives availed of at every opportunity.
21.	Develop an internal and external communications strategy to inform people about achievements, the full range of services, priorities and developments within the B&E function, with good news and high impact visuals.					Website kept up to date. New help desk facility includes automated response\tracking of helpdesk requests. Use of work vivo to share positive initiatives with University community.

For completion by Unit		
Head of Unit: Mr Mark Poland	Signature: 	Date: 23 rd October 2025

Head of Functional Area: Professor John O'Halloran	Signature: 	Date: 28 th October 2025
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