

QUALITY REVIEW FOLLOW-UP MEETING

CHAPLAINCY

A meeting to discuss progress made in implementing recommendations for improvement arising from the quality review of the Chaplaincy was held on 19 October 2009.

Present: Fr Joe Coghlan, Head, Chaplaincy
Dr Norma Ryan, Director, Quality Promotion Unit

Introduction

The Chaplaincy finds itself in a very difficult position since the quality review took place. There has been a significant decline in resources available to the Chaplaincy for the funding of staff positions and activities. Furthermore the moratorium on the filling of vacant staff positions, imposed by the Government Department of Finance, has created huge difficulties for the Chaplaincy which has lost two of the three Catholic Chaplains due to retirement in the past academic year. The inability to fill these positions has led to the necessity to reduce the level of service offered to the University and has required very difficult choices to be made by the Head of the Chaplaincy; furthermore it has caused him upset and distress. It is hoped that the position can be improved in 2009/10 but without additional staff it is unlikely that many of the recommendations for improvement can be implemented just yet.

Abbreviations

PRG: Peer Review Group

VP: Vice-President

QPC: Quality Promotion Committee

QIP: Quality Improvement Plan

HR: Human Resources

VPSE: Vice-President for the Student Experience

PRG Recommendation	QPC Recommendation	Follow-up Report October 2009
Recommendations to the University		
1. Appointment procedures for Chaplains be regularised as a matter of priority	Recommendation strongly endorsed	Implemented. A new process for appointment of future Chaplains with a revised job description has been agreed on an interim basis with the Diocese of Cork, the Department of HR in UCC and the VP for Student Experience.
2. An additional Full-time Chaplain be appointed as a matter of urgency, with	Recommendation referred to VP Student Experience for consideration	
a. due consideration be given to the importance of age and gender balance in a Chaplaincy setting.	Recommendation endorsed	Not implemented
b. an increase of staff be linked to the refocusing of priorities including self-review of all activities.	Recommendation strongly endorsed	Not implemented.

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	c. job descriptions be established for all Chaplaincy personnel.	Recommendation strongly endorsed	Implemented
	d. job descriptions and process for appointment of members of student team be established.	Recommendation strongly endorsed	Implemented Each member has a job description and interviews took place
3.	The university authorities recognise that Chaplaincy is very different to other departments; that many of its activities are difficult to quantify and contain the elements of spirituality and confidentiality.	Recommendation endorsed	Ongoing More work needs to be done in this area.
4.	The structure of the Chaplaincy budgets be examined with a view to: a. redressing the imbalance between the Temporary staff budget and the Permanent staff budget and b. moving the Chaplain's salary from the Consumables to the Pay budget.	Recommendation endorsed	Not implemented. There is still confusion re the respective roles and budgetary responsibilities of the UCC Chaplaincy and the Honan Trust. Discussions are ongoing with UCC, the members of the Honan Trust Board and the Diocese of Cork & Ross.
5.	The University be much more overt in recognizing the substantial financial contribution of both the Honan Chapel and the Honan Trust to the Chaplaincy and thereby to the students and staff of the University.	Recommendation endorsed	Not implemented. There is still confusion re the respective roles and budgetary responsibilities of the UCC Chaplaincy and the Honan Trust Board. Discussions are ongoing with UCC, the members of the Honan Trust Board and the Diocese of Cork & Ross.
6.	Supervision for pastoral care offered by Chaplains be explored and, where possible, implemented.	Recommendation endorsed	Not implemented. Action on this recommendation has been deferred pending appointment of Chaplains.
Recommendations to the Unit			
7.	The Chaplaincy review all space allocation within its control as a matter of urgency and consideration be given to the following:	Recommendation endorsed. The QPC welcomed the commitment of the Chaplaincy to making the best use of all available space resource and wished to re-	See below

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		iterate that the QPC will support the Chaplaincy in its decisions in this regard. QPC recognised and acknowledged the issues raised by the Head of Chaplaincy with respect to the possible use of Hillside and the other specific recommendations under this heading.	
	a. the possibility of moving major chaplaincy functions to Hillside;		This is an unrealistic expectation at the present time.
	b. the possibility of relocating the reception and administration office to the front of the building;		It has been decided not to re-organise the reception area.
	c. the provision of office facilities for the part-time chaplains to enable them to meet students and staff in a private and dignified setting;		The part-time chaplains are satisfied with the current arrangements.
	d. specific times and space be allocated exclusively for staff;		Not implemented. Current resources do not allow implementation of this recommendation.
	e. the possibility, as part of the University's Student Services' plans, of moving the functions of both Iona and Hillside to one larger venue;		Not implemented. Action on this is impeded by the current financial restrictions.
	f. the allocation of an alternative, modern, student-friendly, flexible, interdenominational, multipurpose space in the planned new Student Centre.		Not implemented. There is no new Student Centre.
8.	The Chaplaincy reviews and asserts its core identity and subsequently embarks on a process of re-branding	Recommendation strongly endorsed	Implementation deferred until more staff are appointed. This requires thought and time, which is not currently available.
9.	That immediate attention be given to how Chaplaincy publicises its presence, its message and its services. The Peer Review Group	Recommendation strongly endorsed	Partially implemented. The Chaplaincy has a modern web site which has been redesigned and is

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	recommends greater use of information technology as well as other forms of media within UCC and the wider community to further this cause		updated weekly. Again, this needs time.
10.	More definite systems of self-review and data collection be put in place where possible which would provide valuable information about trends and effectiveness of certain activities	Recommendation endorsed	Not implemented. Action on this recommendation awaits the filling of the vacant posts. This also needs time and must be considered in the light of 3 above.
11.	The spiritual and academic nature of university ministry be strengthened.	Recommendation endorsed	Ongoing. Plans are in place for a conference. A book club has been established together with a discussion group.
12.	The Chaplaincy should continue to build relationships with students of non-Christian denominations.	Recommendation endorsed	Ongoing. This is very dependent on participation by the non-Christians who are less than enthusiastic.
13.	Given the nature of the restructuring of the University, consideration be given to the importance of establishing more definite links with each of the four Colleges.	Recommendation strongly endorsed	Not implemented. Action on this recommendation is awaiting the filing of the vacant posts. This function is incorporated into the new job descriptions of the vacant posts.