

Quality Enhancement Plan

School of Law

November 12th 2020; updated on March 20th 2023

FOR COMPLETION BY QEU	
Date of Peer Review visit: 25 th – 27 th February 2020	Head of Unit: Professor Mark Poustie
Link to Panel Report published on QEU website: https://www.ucc.ie/en/media/support/qualityenhancementunit/reports/buslaw/FinalSchoolofLawPanelReportQECApproved.pdf	Date QEP considered by Quality Enhancement Committee: 23 rd March 2023

Item No	Panel Recommendation	Actions Planned ¹	Responsibility for Action ²	Resource Implications ³	Implementation Schedule ⁴	Effectiveness/Impact ⁵ <i>To be completed as part of follow-up</i>
1	The Dean, in consultation with the Law Executive/School Management Team, should promptly finalize the School's new Strategic Plan; this plan should include an action plan with clear timelines and Key Performance Indicators to achieve its strategic goals that will cover the short-, medium-, and long-term vision and objectives of a modern, forward-looking and	Establishment of Strategic Plan WG, development of draft Strategic Plan, consultation with Law Executive and School, consideration at College level for alignment.	Dean	Implementation of the Strategic Plan requires the prioritisation of existing resources but will also require additional resources particularly for	Completed	All aspects of the strategic plan are now in place and Vice-Dean roles have had significant impact in advancing the objectives and priorities of the School

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 **To be completed as part of follow-up 12-15 months post publication of QEP** - 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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	dynamic post-Brexit School that exploits the School's potential and aligns with the University Strategic Plan and Academic Strategy.			new or refurbished facilities		
2	The Dean, in consultation with the College Financial Analyst, should finalise the School's Business Plan to support the realisation of its Strategic Plan before the end of Semester One 2020/21; this business plan should include a clear staffing plan, an evidence-based resource requirements list (including space), with all plans clearly aligned with the relevant budgets / income projections.	Engagement with College Financial Analyst and consultation with School Executive to develop a Business Plan to support the new Strategic Plan	Dean and College Financial Analyst	The School will shift to a more sustainable financial model	To be completed by end of January 2021	Completed: School of Law Business Plan approved by School Exec in February 2023 This provided an opportunity to reconsider aspects of the School's programme portfolio (e.g. discontinuing the EBCL and moving the all BCL programmes to four year deliver) Significant focus on PG and Non-EU recruitment (in line with Internationalisation Strategy)
3	The School Manager to coordinate the setting up of a data collection and analysis project to support the running of the School's activities and evidence-based decision-making.	Build data capacity and analysis through online student evaluations, graduate destination survey, and Athena Swan data and actions, to inform the School's activities and evidence-based decision making	School Manager and IT Officer	Setup workload hours for the IT Officer	Ongoing: new online data gathering processes are being developed; survey to be completed by April 2021; Athena Swan application to be submitted in January 2021	Many actions completed with ongoing actions in line with the AS Action Plan : Athena Swan Bronze Award achieved in March 2021 Athena Swan Action Plan in place and being implemented School EDI committee established Online student evaluation reporting mechanism in place WAM (Workload Allocation Model) developed for academic staff and is now working effectively to ensure that research time is protected
4	The Dean, in conjunction with the School Curriculum Committee and the Director of	Set up an LLM Review working group to	Dean, School Manager; Vice Dean	Workload implications for	Partly completed: LLM Review underway; to be	Ongoing and near completion: Review of LLM Review completed in

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	Teaching and Learning, should review its programme offerings to align with the School's vision, aims and objectives, as well as the University Strategy, Academic Strategy and Strategy Plan.	examine PG portfolio; UG review Working Group (WG) to be established following conclusion of PG review	(Teaching & Learning)	those involved in WGs but long-term it is intended that the programmes will be streamlined for more efficient delivery and generate more income	completed end by January 2021; UG review to start in March/April 2021 and to conclude by end of September 2021	April 2021 which resulted in significant changes to ensure attractiveness to a global audience LLM Review Implementation WG established to implement recommendations Review of UG programmes is currently underway to be completed by June 2023, with professional skills and placement a significant focus
5	As planned, the Dean and the Governance Working Group should overhaul the School's governance structures before the beginning of the 2020/21 academic year, in line with its strategic vision including the appointment of clearly defined appropriate leadership roles.	Governance Working Group set up; new governance structure to be consulted on with Law Executive and School; new School rules to be approved by CEMC and CC; Deputy and Vice-Dean TOR to be developed and roles advertised	Dean	More streamlined Executive and Governance structure; clearer decision-making structure	Completed: Governance WG has completed its task – new School rules approved at CEMC on 23/09/2020 and CC on 07/10/2020. Deputy Dean and Vice Dean have been appointed and new governance structures will be in place by the end of November 2020	Completed: Vice-Deans appointed for: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Student Welfare and Affairs (combined with the Deputy Dean role)• Teaching Learning & Curriculum• External Engagement and Affairs• Research• Internationalisation This has resulted in a strong focus on the School's key priorities with student engagement in many of the School's key committees School Rules revised and approved by CEMC in Sept 2020
6	The Dean, in consultation with the Law Executive/School Management Team and the School's Marketing and Communications Officer, should take steps to ensure that an effective internal communications system is prioritised as part of the planned overhaul of its governance and communication structures and processes.	Increased internal communications through the Dean's regular updates to staff, School Meetings and features on the School's News website	Dean and Marketing & Communications Officer (MCO)	Essential to retain the MCO role to enable this work to continue	Completed: Appointment of Marketing & Communications Officer in November 2019 has resulted in significant development of internal communications through newsletters, regular features on the School's News website, including	Completed Notable positive outcomes in relation to increased reporting of impact of the School's research and activities (e.g. the QS rankings)


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					"spotlight" series, and regular updates by the Dean.	
7	The Dean and the School's Director of External Engagement and Alumni Relations should work with colleagues in Alumni & Development to promptly finalise the School's Alumni and Development Strategy, which is vital to achieving its strategic goals.	Appointment of Vice Dean (External Engagement); regular meetings with ADO to develop the School's Alumni & Development Strategy and to progress work in this area	Dean and Vice Dean (External Engagement)	The School must continue to fund A&DO activities adequately and to continue to work in partnership with ADO	Partly completed: ADO have developed an Alumni Strategy; fortnightly meetings with ADO already take place; Vice Dean (External Engagement) recently appointed, effective from November 2020; new strategy for philanthropic development to be completed by end of March 2021	Ongoing: Significant success in acquiring philanthropic support in conjunction with the ADO, for example: Matheson lecturership and PhD donation (signed Dec 2022, embargoed until 23/03/23); value €500K Arthur Cox renewal of scholarship funding for law students; value €180
8	The Dean and the School Management Team/Law Executive should move forward with developing a meta-strategy (and related plan) to provide the School of Law with new, innovative and more suitable facilities that address the pedagogy, space and technology nexus, in light of commitments made in the University's Strategic Plan 2017 – 2022.	Set up a WG to develop a meta-strategy to commence work in January 2021; ensure that the School's facilities remain on the University's Strategic Plan; increase PG and Non-EU recruitment to build capital resources	Dean and Executive Management Team	Covid-19 may impact on University resources, which may in turn impact on this recommendation	Ongoing: WG to commence in January 2021	New Building WG established Inclusion of New School Building in School Strategic and Business Plans Submission of bid to UCC to have new law school building included in the priority UCC projects following the CUBS Building (April 2022) Updating of hybrid meeting rooms which are highly effective for hybrid teaching and meetings; widespread use of Teams Internationalisation Strategy has been developed with support of UCC Academy and is currently being implemented; a notable increase in students applying from target countries (e.g. China, India, North America)


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9	The Dean and Law Executive/School Management Team, in consultation with the School's IT Officer, should develop a comprehensive digital plan encompassing all the School's activities including research, administration, outreach and internationalisation, regulation, learning, teaching and assessment.	Development of a Digital Plan for the School flowing from the meta-strategy in Item 8 and data collection in Item 3	Dean, Deputy Dean and IT Officer	Workload for the IT Officer and the Deputy Dean	The School responded successfully and with great agility to moving all functions online during Covid-19; learning from this process can be incorporated into a Digital Plan for the School once "normal" business resumes	Technology: highly successful move to online teaching and processes during Covid; LLM-MM moved to blended delivery Digitisation of many processes – particularly following Covid e.g. <ul style="list-style-type: none">• WAM (Workload Allocation Model)• Student applications• Student evaluations Widespread use of Microsoft Office Forms to collect and analyse data IT Officer engaging with wider university in relation to the university's new Digital Plan and to align with the School's IT strategy
10	The Dean and the School Management Team/Law Executive should revisit the academic staff mentoring scheme to ensure it operates more systematically.	Revise staff mentoring scheme in the light of the QR self-evaluation and Athena Swan findings	Dean; Director of Staff Welfare and Development	Within workload of Director of Staff Welfare and Development	Role of Director of Staff Welfare and Development has recently been created under new Governance structures; revised mentoring scheme will be completed and implemented by March 2021	Ongoing consultation in relation to mentoring being undertaken by the Director of Staff Welfare and Development Staff well-being survey was undertaken in 2021 re Research time during Covid
11	The Dean and the School Management Team needs to continue to develop its plans for income-generation through internationalisation and philanthropy, to ensure the long-term financial sustainability of the School.	Appointment of Vice Dean (Internationalisation) and Vice Dean (External Engagement) to prioritise and build on work already taking place within the School; ongoing development	Vice Deans for Internationalisation and External Engagement	Key part of workload for the Dean and Vice-Deans	Ongoing: Vice Dean appointments have been made; international partnerships with Chinese University, Minzu for a joint LLM, and with China's No.1 Law School, China University of Political Science & Law	An Internationalisation Strategy was developed with support from UCC Academy. This included <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Recruitment Handbook• Recruitment Plan• Marketing Toolkit Continued development of partnerships (China – e.g. Hainan, Southwest, BTBU in place; Canada –

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		of partnerships with international Law Schools (also addressed through the Item 2 on business plan and Item 7 on A&D activities)			(CUPL), have potential to increase Non-EU LLM recruitment from 2021; as noted in item in ADO philanthropic activities are continuing	Dalhousie & University of Victoria in place; US – George Washington & Cleveland under development; India – OP Jindal Global Law School under development) Philanthropy as in 7 above
12	The School's overall approach to teaching, learning and assessment should be reviewed in light of advancing digital learning initiatives.	This recommendation has been largely overtaken by developments during Covid-19; this issue will also form part of the Terms of Reference of the PG review, the UG review and the meta-strategy	Vice Dean for Teaching & Learning; IT Officer; Chair PG Committee; Chair UG Committee; Chair meta-strategy working group	Considered within resources required for PG and UG reviews. However, may need to be reallocation of resources within School budgets to support digital learning initiatives on ongoing basis.	Ongoing: during Covid-19 the School's Director of Teaching & Learning has led development across the entire CBL in developing digital learning initiatives with weekly support for staff in digital learning strategies; PG report to be completed by end of January 2021; UG WG will commence work in March/April to be completed by September 2021	Significant supports have been developed around digital learning by the VD (Learning & Teaching) and IT Officer Inclusive Education learning pilot and strategies led out by VD (Learning & Teaching) (Summer 2022) Digital teaching, learning and assessment is being considered as part of programme and curriculum reviews Significant successes by Law staff at the President's awards for T & L
13	The School Curriculum Committee should ensure that professional skills are embedded in learning and assessment in all Law modules within the UG and PG curriculum.	This will be embedded in the PG and UG reviews referred to in Item 4.	Vice Dean (Teaching & Learning); Clinical Education Coordinator; Chairs of PG and UG Working Groups	Additional resource may be required to deliver enhanced skills but awaiting the outcome of reviews. Likely additional resource for management of placement	Underway: Current LLM Review includes consideration of placement/professional skills on the PG programmes (to be completed by end of January 2021); review of clinical skills modules on UG programmes to be completed by as part of UG review (to be	Near completion: LLM Review is completed UG review is ongoing with professional skills a high priority Ongoing focus on expanding clinical and placement opportunities for students; highly successful Law Clinics at UG and PG level, such as the Sports Law Clinic and the Child Law clinic

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				partners and clinical placement	completed by September 2021)	
14	The Director of Teaching and Learning should encourage all academic staff and tutors (including PhD students) to engage with training and mentoring opportunities provided within the School and the University on matters relating to Teaching and Learning and with opportunities for professional development as offered by CIRTL.	The School's new Workload Allocation Model includes a graduated work allowance for staff engaging in CPD to encourage engagement with CIRTL programmes; this will also be supported through the mentoring in Item 10	Vice Dean (Teaching & Learning) and Director of Staff Welfare & Development	Within the workload allocation of the roles	Partly completed: The new Workload Allocation Model is being piloted this academic year 2020-2021; new Vice Dean (T & L) and Director of Staff Welfare & Development appointments have been made	Completed: WAM is now established and working successfully Head of Law Strategic Fund and Staff Development Fund support professional development opportunities, which is being widely availed of by staff Law academic staff continue to engage in CIRTL's PG and Masters in Teaching & Learning in HE
15	The Director of Teaching and Learning and the Clinical Education Coordinator should develop and implement a placement policy to broaden placement and other practice-based learning opportunities for students, taking into account the range of legal skills that are currently necessary in a variety of professional settings.	The action to develop this policy will be closely integrated/aligned with Item no 13 above and will form part of the review of professional skills on the programmes	Vice-Dean (Teaching & Learning); Clinical Placement Officer; Chairs of PG and UG review WGs;	Workload as identified under 13	Placement policy to be developed in tandem with no 13 above	Underway: Review of clinical and placement policies ongoing as part of UG review See also 13 above
16	The Vice-Dean for Student Affairs/Director of Learning and Teaching should ensure that there is a standardised best practice approach to obtaining, and responding to, student feedback and communicating this to students and ensure that any developments are fed back into the data collection and analysis project.	New online student feedback survey to be developed, to enable analysis and communication of feedback; linked also to Item 3	Deputy Dean and Vice-Dean (Teaching & Learning)	Workload time for IT Officer and Vice Dean	To be completed by December 2020	Completed: An online student feedback survey in now in place, the findings of which are communicated to individual staff and a general report presented to the School Meeting Monthly meetings are held between the Student Council, the Deputy Dean VD (Student Welfare and Affairs) and staff
17	BCL (International) and BCL (Law and French) Programme Directors should review the programmes, in conjunction with students, to ensure they are adequately	A review of BCL (Law & French) took place in 2018-2019 and some points already	Vice Dean (Teaching & Learning); Vice Dean (Internationalisation) and Programme	Workload time for Vice-Deans and Programme Directors	Student French language mentoring scheme was implemented in 2019-2020 and an additional module taught in French will be	Completed: New modules delivered in French on BCLF (LW1114)

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	prepared for and supported during their year abroad.	implemented e.g. language mentoring by incoming Erasmus students and hiring of another colleague who can teach in French. The BCLI review will be integrated in the UG review to commence in March/April 2021.	Directors of the BCLF and BCLI		available from 2021-22. Outcome of BCLI review to be completed by September 2021.	Student mentoring for language has been established with incoming Erasmus students Increased partnerships for BCLI placements have been established by the VD (Internationalisation) On-going work as part of UG review
18	School should re-establish a Teaching and Learning Committee for the start of the academic year 2020/21 to ensure that its ambition in teaching and learning is steered and implemented through its governance structures.	The new Governance Structure includes a Teaching and Learning Committee	Dean; Vice Dean (Teaching & Learning)	Within workload allocation of Vice-Dean (Teaching & Learning) and of other committee members.	Completed: New structures approved. Implementation underway with Vice-Dean (Teaching & Learning) appointed. New Committee to be set up immediately overseeing UG and PG Committees.	Completed: Learning and Teaching Committee has been established and meets regularly, chaired by the VD (Learning & Teaching) Significant developments have been made in relation to quality processes within the School (e.g. internal moderation; engagement with External Examiners; engagement with inclusive learning practices)

For completion by Unit		
Head of Unit: Prof Mark Poustie	Signature: 	Date: 21/03/2023

Head of College/Functional Area: Prof Ursula Kilkelly	Signature: 	Date: 22/03/2023
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