

QUALITY IMPROVEMENT / QUALITY ASSURANCE

DEPARTMENT OF MUSIC

Present: Caroline Fennell, Fiona Crozier, Jonathan Stock

22nd July 2013

PRG Finding/ Recommendation		QPC Comment/ recommendation	Follow up July 2013
1.	That those outstanding matters recommended in the previous quality review be addressed and brought to finality	Recommendation of PRG strongly endorsed.	<p>1a. Staffing. A new Chair has been confirmed for the Department. However, as a member of staff has recently left Music, they will endeavour to attract more full-time staff.</p> <p>1b. Committee structures. Improved committee structures have been put in place, ie committees for teaching & learning, research and graduate studies.</p> <p>1c. Workload allocation. The University has since implemented a workload allocation model. The Dept piloted it last year and it has been operational for a few months now.</p>
2.	That the appointment of the Chair of Music be expedited.	<p>Recommendation of PRG implemented.</p> <p>QPC noted that the University has approved the filling of the professorship in Music and that the recruitment process is underway.</p>	<p>Completed</p> <p>(see recommendation 1a above)</p>
3.	That the Head of Discipline issue be resolved as a matter of urgency.		Completed.
4.	That an appropriate structure of senior staff be established within the Department of Music to support the Chair, Head of Discipline and other staff.	QPC referred recommendation of PRG to Head of College ACSSS for consideration and comment	The embedding of the schoolification process has meant a senior member of staff from the Dept is now full-time Head of School. While the Dept appreciates the support from the School, as such, there are less senior staff to support the Dept.

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5.	That any vacancies at Senior Lecturer level at that might result from the appointment of the Chair and Head of Discipline ought to be filled at that level.	QPC referred recommendation of PRG to Head of College ACSSS for consideration and comment, noting the restrictions of the Employment control Framework operating in the public sector presently.	Ongoing. The Dept strongly endeavours to fill its current vacancies.
6.	That the Department adopt a strategic approach to its engagement with the College and University at various levels.	Recommendation of PRG strongly endorsed. Response of Department and the evidence of active engagement welcomed by QPC	Ongoing The Department of Music recognises the importance of adopting a strategic approach to its engagement with the College and University. The Department is currently taking such an approach.
7.	That the Department re-draft its mission statement and set of operating objectives so that that they are more closely aligned with the strategic plan of the College of Arts, Celtic Studies and Social Sciences, the Strategic Plan of the University and national cultural and arts policies	Recommendation of PRG strongly endorsed. The QPC noted the regional context in which the Department is sited and commented on the need to recognise that there is another School of Music in Cork and that it is important to distinguish the two Schools in terms of mission and goals.	Completed.
8.	That, in re-drafting its mission statement and objectives, the Department focus on its 'Unique Selling Points', its brand values and a clear set of strategic priorities that have a regional, national and international horizon.	Recommendation of PRG strongly endorsed.	Completed

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9.	That all academic staff in the department individually and collectively take responsibility– at the highest level – for advocating for and articulating the abilities, capacity and potential of the Music Department among other departments, disciplines, schools colleges and other University entities	Recommendation of PRG strongly endorsed.	Completed
10.	That the Vice Presidential Offices of Research and Innovation, of Teaching and Learning, and of the Student Experience, together with the Head of College, make a joint response to the recommendations set out in this review and bring forward proposals for addressing those issues that within their remit with a particular emphasis on recognising and enhancing the role of the Music Department in promoting the University both regionally and worldwide.	The QPC endorsed this recommendation and referred it to the Head of College ACSSS, noting that the role of the activities of the staff and students of the Department of Music is important in the defining of the brand that is UCC. Music is central to the vision of the ‘Irish Identities’ project.	Completed.

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11.	That a full-time Events Organizer / Communications officer be appointed to help plan, organise and facilitate the schools ambitious programme of events. Consideration could be given to making this appointment at a strategic level within the School of Music & Theatre, or at College level, in conjunction with the priorities of the Head of College.	Referred to Head CACSSS QPC noted the financial restrictions and employment restrictions imposed on the University currently by government. QPC queried could this post be self-funding?	Due to financial restrictions, an Events Officer has not been appointed.
12.	That the revised mission statement and objectives (see recommendation 8 above) be communicated at all appropriate levels including promotional material, the departmental website, College website and UCC International Students Office.	Recommendation of PRG endorsed.	Completed. The mission statement is displayed prominently on the Dept. web-site.

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13.	That, in accordance with the governance issues mentioned above, the Department develops a more focused and strategic approach to advocacy within the University community and to influencing other schools, decision makers, disciplines and units both in terms of enhancing the departmental profile at the highest levels and in terms of a broad outreach for joint or interdisciplinary research, teaching and practice with peer units and individuals within UCC.	<p>Recommendation of PRG endorsed.</p> <p>QPC welcomed the positive response of Department</p>	Ongoing.
14.	That the Head of School and key senior staff communicate more strategically and more regularly with decision makers at all levels of University structures and that staff participate where possible on all key working groups and assembly meetings at School, College and University level.	<p>Recommendation of PRG endorsed.</p> <p>QPC welcomed the positive response and engagement of Department</p>	<p>Ongoing.</p> <p>The Dept supports this recommendation and has made significant progress in this regard</p>
15.	That consideration be given to making staff meetings more efficient and businesslike, i.e. as a decision making forum rather than a debating / discussion forum and that substantive and detailed matters be dealt with at committee level.	Recommendation of PRG endorsed.	<p>Ongoing.</p> <p>Substantive and detailed matters are dealt with at staff meetings and at committee level.</p>

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16.	That a Department wide system/process be established to analyse student feedback/reviews.	<p>Recommendation of PRG endorsed.</p> <p>QPC noted that the University is about to pilot a new student module evaluation system and this should help the Department in its analysis.</p>	<p>Ongoing.</p> <p>The Department already has a system of student feedback. Currently that feedback is analysed by individual members of staff, as is appropriate. The Department also has a staff-student committee that considers student views on a regular basis.</p>
17.	That the Department enhance its positive relationships with its alumni and other student and graduate networks.	Recommendation of PRG endorsed.	Ongoing.
18.	That the Department adopts a Workload Allocation Model as soon as possible, as this would provide clarity in terms of workloads, enable reconsiderations of the balance and nature of staff activity, and help facilitate discussions and negotiations with the University and College. This model should include research and should precisely account for administration.	<p>Recommendation of PRG endorsed.</p> <p>UCC has developed an Academic Workload Allocation Model for implementation in the academic year 2011/12.</p>	<p>Ongoing</p> <p>The University has since implemented a workload allocation model. The Dept piloted it last year and it has been operational with a few months now.</p>

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19.	That the College and University prioritise additional senior appointments within Music, beyond the Chair of Music and Head of Discipline. It is the understanding of the Peer Review Group that strategic appointments can be made even within the current restrictions imposed by Government, and it is recommended that this be considered as an urgency requirement in order to secure the longer term viability of the Department of Music	QPC noted that a Professorship in Music has been advertised and is in the process of recruitment. Other matters relating to appointments have been referred for the attention of the Head of College ACSSS in the first instance. The Department is encouraged to engage proactively with the Head of College ACSSS on these matters.	Ongoing. The Dept continues to engage with the Head of College ACSSS on this matter.
20.	That the Department reconsiders the number of joint honours combinations being offered at undergraduate level with a mind to solving the issues of timetabling and transit between the building and the main campus.	Recommendation of PRG endorsed. The QPC noted that a 2 years notice period of significant changes to the programme offerings is required to be given to potential students.	The Dept will continue to review this issue. The Department has taken steps to improve student progression at the early stage of BMus to avoid difficulties later in the programme.
21.	That the Department reconsiders its mission in terms of research strengths and develops programme-wide learning outcomes, with a mind to student exit trajectories and employability.	Recommendation of PRG strongly endorsed.	Ongoing.

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22.	That a rebalancing of student numbers in favour of postgraduates is achieved.	<p>Recommendation of PRG endorsed.</p> <p>QPC noted that this action is very much in line with the University's strategic goals.</p>	<p>The Department is actively recruiting postgraduate students into its various programmes: three taught MAs, HDip, MPhil, PhD (including the PhD Digital Arts) and the new MRes. The Department is supporting the introduction of the MA in Irish Studies is considering the development of joint postgraduate programmes with Drama and Theatre Studies.</p>

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23.	<p>That the Department continue its process of recasting the curriculum and give strong consideration to reducing the number of programmes and modules with the following points in mind:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>a.</i> Making gains in workloads, efficiencies, and maximising departmental FTE income; <i>b.</i> Improving the consistency of quality for graduates and improving their employability; <i>c.</i> Creating greater depth through the creation of a stronger core curriculum. This might take the form of multiple cores perhaps centred around research strengths / clusters in the areas of Media Theory, Ethnography, Cultural Theory, Performance and Composition. 	<p>Recommendation of PRG endorsed.</p>	<p>The Department considers its curriculum and range of programmes on an ongoing basis and seeks at all times to balance the need to make gains in workload, efficiencies and FTE income with the need to respond to University policy and maintain core Department values.</p>

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24.	That the Department establishes clear, prioritised research clusters - such as those noted in the SAR (media theory, ethnography, cultural theory, performance and composition) – and that these be articulated in the reconfigured mission statement and teaching and learning objectives recommended above.	Recommendation of PRG endorsed.	Ongoing.
25.	That the Department continues its engagement with the University in what has been a positive initial discussion about how its research activities, and specifically practice-based research activities, should be evaluated for purposes of research assessment and promotion.	Recommendation of PRG endorsed. QPC noted that the metrics used by UCC for evaluation of research in UCC do recognise practice-based activities and scholarly activities	Ongoing
26.	That the Department continues to support faculty in reaching their full research potential through the inclusion of research in a transparent and equitable workload allocation model and the development of support mechanisms for faculty interested in exploring practice-based research as a medium of publication.	Recommendation of PRG endorsed.	Ongoing (See recommendation 18 above)

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27.	That the Head of College and VP for Research & Innovation initiate a dialogue with the Discipline towards the establishment of clearer principles for assessing the entire spectrum of research in music	Recommendation of PRG endorsed. QPC noted that the metrics used by UCC for evaluation of research in UCC do recognise practice-based activities and scholarly activities	Ongoing.
28.	That the Department explore the potential for increased numbers of postgraduate students	Recommendation of PRG endorsed.	<p>The Dept acknowledges the difficulty in attracting postgraduate students and it is currently trying to establish a PhD in Performance (Music) in 2015-16.</p> <p>The Zhejiang collaboration did not prove viable but a new MA proposal is currently being developed within the Department. The Dept wishes to promote the strategy of the College's Internationalisation agenda and the Head of College made recommendations with regards efforts to continue progress with the MA proposal.</p>
29.	That the College of Arts, Celtic Studies and Social Sciences re-establishes its fund for postgraduate scholarships (as discussed with the Head of College) as a matter of urgency and explores means of supporting academic staff in attending research conferences and related events.	Recommendation referred to CACSSS	<p>Completed.</p> <p>PhD Scholarships have been provided by the College to the School to support events.</p>

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30.	That the Department initiates discussion with the Head of College and the Vice President for Research & Innovation towards the articulation of a research initiative exploring the cultural and economic impact of the arts in Ireland. This should be explored with reference to the cultural events coordinated by the Department for the public at the university, city, national and international level.	Recommendation of PRG endorsed.	The Dept runs the hugely success Fuaim free music concert series during the academic year. The Dept is also involved in: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Cork International Choral Festival • The Sean O Riada Composition Competition • The Cork Music Education Partnership
31.	That the Department prioritises objectives in line with its budgetary capacity.	Recommendation of PRG strongly endorsed.	Ongoing.
32.	That the discipline-specific requirements be embedded in budget lines (including special building requirements, equipment, facilities etc.).	Recommendation referred to Head CACSSS	Ongoing.
33.	That the Department explores options to accrue the full benefits of the FTE weighting for the purpose of income generation.	Recommendation of PRG endorsed.	Ongoing.
34.	That the Department identifies and examines priorities for the development of initiatives to raise non-exchequer funding streams for the ongoing development of the Department.	Recommendation of PRG endorsed.	Ongoing, primarily at School level.

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35.	That the Audits of Health and Safety, Disability/Access and Security be carried out and that the Head of School, Head of College and Head of Buildings and Estates agree a costed and phased implementation of the remedial works required.	Recommendation of PRG endorsed. QPC noted that the department of Music has submitted its H&S report and included a plan to address issues	Health & Safety and Disability/Access audits were carried out. The Dept continues to work with the Office of Buildings & Estates with regard phased repair and improvement of facilities. The Dept remains only partially accessible to students, staff and visitors who are mobility impaired.
36.	That a budget line be established by the College to meet the discipline-specific building requirements in the Music Building (including sound-proofing, temperature and humidity control in specified rooms etc).	Recommendation referred to Head CACSSS as decisions on budgets in schools/departments are devolved to the relevant Head of College	The Head of College has raised the needs of the Dept with the Office of Buildings & Estates.
37.	That a schedule of general repairs and maintenance to be prioritised, agreed, budgeted for and carried out.	Recommendation of PRG endorsed.	Ongoing. (See recommendation 35 above)
38.	That issues to do with access to and from the Music building (including links to the main University campus) be resolved and prioritised within the University's strategic plan.	Recommendation referred to Head of CACSSS to address	Ongoing (See recommendation 35 & 36 above).
39.	That full Wireless internet access be made available throughout the entire building as an immediate priority.	Recommendation implemented QPC commended the prompt action on this recommendation.	Completed. This issue has been addressed and full Wireless internet access is now available throughout the building.

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40.	That the deficiencies in computer laboratories need to be addressed.	Recommendation of PRG endorsed.	This issue has been addressed in part: the undergraduate computer laboratory has been refurbished and converted into an open-access laboratory. Further investment is needed to address the deficiencies in the postgraduate computer laboratory and the studio. The Department is limited financially regarding the necessary upgrading of these facilities.
41.	That Discipline-specific equipment needs be assessed and prioritised (e.g. Music Technology software / hardware, Instrument acquisition / maintenance / tuning, PA systems etc.).	This recommendation was referred to the Head of CACSSS to be included in considerations of budget allocations. The QPC also recommended that the Department and College should have due regard to the opportunities available to the discipline for attracting external funds which could be used for this purpose.	Ongoing. The Dept is challenged financially regarding the maintenance of pianos and other departmental instruments.
42.	That the café / social area be improved, given the remote location and the lack of local facilities.	Recommendation of PRG endorsed. QPC noted that additional funds will be required to improve the facilities	Some improvements have been made to the student canteen: new furniture, kitchenware and vending machines have been installed. The Department is limited financially regarding further upgrading of these facilities
43.	That a more coherent and consistent approach to issuing front-loaded course outlines, early feedback, availability of materials, and evaluation needs to be implemented.	Recommendation of PRG strongly endorsed.	Ongoing The Department supports this recommendation and has made significant improvements in the delivery of feedback/evaluation, course outlines and materials.