



**UCC**

Coláiste na hOllscoile Corcaigh, Éire  
University College Cork, Ireland

**UNIVERSITY COLLEGE CORK  
NATIONAL UNIVERSITY OF IRELAND, CORK**

**QUALITY IMPROVEMENT/QUALITY ASSURANCE**

**PEER REVIEW GROUP REPORT**

***SCHOOL OF HISTORY***

***DISCIPLINES: HISTORY AND HISTORY OF ART***

**ACADEMIC YEAR 2009/10**

**Date: 23 March 2010**

## **ABBREVIATIONS**

CAO: Central Admissions Office

ESG: European Standards & Guidelines for Quality Assurance in Higher Education

H: History

HA: History of Art

INIHS: Irish National Institute for Historical Research

PAL: Peer Assisted Learning

PMDS: Performance Management & Development System

PRG: Peer Review Group

QPU: Quality Promotion Unit

SAR: Self-Assessment Report

SWOT: Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats

VP: Vice-President

## PEER REVIEW GROUP (PRG) MEMBERS

Name	Position/Discipline	Institution
Professor John Groeger	Head of School of Applied Psychology	University College Cork
Dr. Anne Mills	Admissions Officer	University College Cork
Professor Gearóid Ó Tuathaigh	Department of History	NUI, Galway
Professor Robert Savage	Professor of Irish Studies	Boston College, USA
Professor Paul Smith	Department of the History of Art	University of Warwick, UK

### TIMETABLE OF THE SITE VISIT

The timetable is attached as Appendix A.

The timetable was deemed suitable and appropriate for the task of the PRG.

The site visit was well organised and covered all aspects required by the reviewers to enable them to complete the review successfully.

### PEER REVIEW

#### Methodology

The review panel elected Professor Robert Savage as Chair of the PRG. All members of the PRG contributed to the drafting and finalisation of the report.

The PRG divided into two groups, as indicated on timetable, for some of the sessions in order to enable the panel to meet with a wider range of student groups and staff. The PRG worked as a team throughout and shared experiences from the individual sessions each evening and following the meetings. Each issue was considered both from the perspective of the individual disciplines and of the School as a whole.

## **Site Visit**

During the visit, PRG requested further documentation regarding finance, library, etc. This was provided in a timely and helpful manner. Those scheduled to meet the PRG attended promptly and their comments were very helpful to the PRG. The PRG acknowledged the Quality Promotion Unit (QPU) for its support, remarking on the clarity and comprehensiveness of the documentation provided (including national and university guidelines and policy documents), the advice and direction provided, and the exemplary courtesy and consideration shown to the PRG by the staff of the Unit.

Because of on-going industrial action, PRG did not have the opportunity to meet with representatives of the administrative staff within the School and thus this report was prepared without input from this cohort of staff. The discussions would have been enhanced by such engagement.

## **Peer Review Group Report**

All members of the PRG contributed to the drafting of the report, its findings and the recommendations for improvement. The report was drafted initially on site during the evenings and the afternoon of the second day, and was finalised using email communications in the weeks following the review. All members of the PRG agreed the final report.

## **OVERALL ANALYSIS**

### **Preface**

It is necessary at the outset to address a structural issue that informs the content and presentation of this report. Under the new school structures of the University the School of History incorporates the academic disciplines of History and History of Art. In practice both disciplines have continued to operate largely as discrete units. Both disciplines compiled their own Self-Assessment Report (SAR), and staff spoke largely of their own circumstances, those of their discipline, and made recommendations specific to their discipline. Moreover the circumstances of both disciplines currently are, in many areas, different from each another. Accordingly, while issues and

concerns common to both disciplines are addressed, this report will necessarily reflect the duality of the current position.

The review took place in a time of transition. The difficult economic environment has imposed constraints (e.g. resulting in freezing of promotions and appointment and restrictions on sabbatical leave) that have been felt across the university, including the School under review. The 'schoolification' process within the University is still underway, and structural changes necessary to establish the School are still at an early stage. The University Strategic Plan informed the reviewers and guided the discussions. The recently-completed University-wide Research Quality Review informed the analysis and research plan of the School. Since the last review the School has seen the retirement of a cohort of senior academics of professorial rank with international reputations and strong research records, and another such retirement is imminent. Their departure presents challenges to the School, notably the challenge of renewal and of determining new directions and priorities, consistent with the objective of maintaining and enhancing the high academic standing of the School in the coming years.

### **Self-Assessment Report (SAR)**

The SAR presented by the Discipline of History was comprehensive in its analysis, data and recommendations and was well presented. It was consistent with the other data provided to the group and by meetings with key office holders and the wider stakeholder population. It conformed to the guidelines and requirements of UCC.

The PRG recognises that, because of the particular circumstances under which the Discipline of History of Art is operating, it did not find it possible to present a SAR that fully met all the requirements.

The PRG noted that UCC has a Strategic Plan. The SAR reports would have been enhanced if the Disciplines had made more systematic and sustained reference to the College and University strategic plans. It was also noted that there was sometimes a lack of consistency in statistical references to the measures employed, e.g. student full time equivalents, staff student ratios, etc. These, however, did not impair the review process.

## **SWOT Analysis**

### **Discipline of History**

The SWOT analysis presented in the SAR seemed sensible and pertinent. It provided a clear description of the process that was carried out – this was inclusive and conducted on a collegial basis. The SWOT analysis sought to address wider contextual and relevant issues to the Discipline.

The PRG unequivocally endorsed the following:

#### ***Strengths***

1. The School of History is a well-functioning teaching and research unit which attracts increasingly large student numbers, including some outstanding students.
2. The research output of staff in the School is wide-ranging in both content and form, and is delivered to a high standard of professional competence and innovation.
3. Research projects in the School have been particularly successful, even prolific, in the development of digital humanities, resulting in a very high level of online publication.
4. The School has particular strengths in Medieval and Early Modern History, Irish Social and Economic History, International History, and Cultural and Religious History.
5. The School has very strong connections with local history associations and journals, including local media outlets, resulting in an exceptionally strong degree of outreach into the wider community.
6. The School's highly effective administrative staff is one of its main assets, both as an interface with students and as the key to the efficient functioning of the entire academic unit.
7. The School offers a varied undergraduate teaching programme in both content and form, with a strong commitment to small-group teaching and research-led teaching through seminar and option courses.
8. History students consistently describe academic and administrative staff as approachable and helpful, and the student retention figures in second and third year are exceptionally high in comparison to other subjects.
9. Postgraduate and postdoctoral research and training within the School is flourishing and continues to result in a large number of graduates whose publications and conference presentations are both frequent and of very high quality.

### *Weaknesses*

1. The growing administrative burden imposed upon staff, together with a substantial increase in student numbers and higher expectations regarding research output, make it imperative to re-engineer work-flows within the School through the adoption of a fair and effective workloads model.
2. The School needs to conduct a review of its undergraduate teaching programme and continue the process of reforming its postgraduate teaching structures.
3. The exceptionally strong local and national research output of School staff has tended to lead to a smaller proportion of research outputs appearing in international peer-reviewed publications.
4. There is concern about the School's ability to maintain its highly successful research projects in the current economic climate. Given the recent loss of revenue and budget surpluses, it was felt that the School needed to augment independent income streams from private and international funding sources.
5. School members are eager to build closer links through collaborative teaching and research with other sections of CACSSS and outside the university.
6. A review of the international range of undergraduate course content was felt to be desirable given the School's traditional emphasis on Irish History in its research and teaching.

### *Opportunities*

1. The School of History is a highly successful academic unit which is well placed to take a leading role in the development of academic life in UCC despite the current turbulent environment.
2. The Discipline of History is well placed to build on and take advantage of the demonstrably high visibility of History in Ireland and clear public interest in the discipline.
3. The recent appointment of several new Professors and Heads in cognate Schools and Disciplines, offers an opportunity for History to develop productive new relationships with other academic units in the college.
4. 'Schoolification', while containing some threats, offers the opportunity to reassess links with other disciplines, particularly Classics.
5. International political developments such as the enlargement of the EU, greater links with China, and extensive connections with the United States offer the opportunity for further innovative curriculum development.
6. The use of digital technologies in pedagogy, research, and publication greatly expands the scope and range of our interaction with students, scholars, and the

wider community, and creates new opportunities for research and collaboration.

7. National commitments to the “smart economy” and to the development of fourth level education are an opportunity for History to expand its postgraduate programmes.

### ***Threats***

1. The economic climate in Ireland and the wider world, and the particular financial difficulties facing UCC, present the single greatest threat to the School of History, presenting a serious limiting factor upon all ambitions with regard to staffing, research resources, and teaching.
2. Policy commitments to development of the ‘smart economy’ and fourth-level Ireland have been undermined by the economic crisis.
3. The lack of prioritisation of humanities at governmental and university level presents the threat of disproportionate rationalisation and retrenchment in the coming years.
4. Loss of sabbatical leave, freezing of promotions, unregulated workloads, and reduced resource availability (e.g. in the library) threaten to have serious negative implications for morale and productive capacity, particularly with regard to research.

### **Discipline of History of Art**

The summary presentation in the section on the SWOT analysis of the Discipline of History of Art did not detail the methodology employed nor did it provide clear information on how it was formulated.

The PRG considered that the summary of the SWOT analysis, as presented, lacked a clear strategic perspective.

The PRG particularly noted the following

### ***Strengths***

1. A small, new and relatively young teaching team allows for a high level of flexibility and responsiveness.
2. A small teaching team requires all staff to become involved in all areas of the curriculum.

3. A stable cohort group of under graduate students and a growing number of postgraduate students.
4. The close working relations between staff and students maintained through personal contact is viewed by both staff and students as a valuable asset to student learning.

### ***Weaknesses***

1. A small teaching team makes more difficult the delegation of workloads.
2. Additional pressure is placed on the teaching team when one member of staff takes sabbatical leave.
3. The available space for History of Art at 3 Perrott Avenue limits the possible development of the Discipline, particularly with regard to designated working space for postgraduate students.
4. Throughput of research-based postgraduate students is too low to secure any research quantum contribution.

### ***Opportunities***

1. The opportunity to develop a broader range of post graduate provision, building on the existing focus on Modern and Contemporary Art History and practice through a second taught MA focusing on earlier periods of Art History.
2. The Lewis Glucksman Art Gallery both as a potential source of employment and also as a teaching and learning opportunity.
3. The opportunity to establish closer links with the Crawford College of Art and Design with regard to sharing the issue of learning resources such as the library, and elements of teaching and learning such as the shared use of a visiting speakers.
4. To capitalize on funding opportunities in the digital humanities by facilitating transferable web literacy skills at undergraduate and postgraduate levels with the purpose of enhancing employment opportunities for History of Art graduates.

### ***Threats***

1. Budgetary limitations represent a constraint on the efficient and effective operation of the discipline. This is felt both through constraints placed on teaching, such as the reduction of the tutorial programme and the curtailing of a visiting speaker series, and has in addition jeopardized plans for conferences and other scholarly activities. Such constraints have also resulted in cuts in the

part-time teaching budget that have resulted in the loss of provision in some important areas of the discipline and therefore a narrowing of the overall curriculum and consequent opportunities for student learning.

2. Government policy regarding funding and the issue of students paying fees may impact on future enrolment.
3. University restructuring may impact on the autonomy of the Department.
4. The small size of 3 Perrott Avenue does place some constraints on operating efficiency; ideally the building would contain office space for academic staff and administrative support plus one suitable teaching space, at present this is not the case.
5. Such constraints have been further exacerbated by the loss this year of the Discipline's Post Doctoral fellow and the expertise and commitment to the teaching programme brought to the department by this member of the academic team.
6. Budgetary constraints also make the further development of activities such as Summer Schools more difficult due to the lack of funding available for the development and advertising of such programmes.
7. Such constraints also represent a threat to the discipline's policy of organizing study trips in Ireland and abroad, as a means to counter the institutions geographical distance from major artistic centres.

### **Benchmarking**

The PRG noted that the Discipline of History submitted a very helpful and constructive benchmarking statement, based on comparisons with the Universities of Aberdeen, Nottingham and Swansea. PRG was impressed by the scale of *External Research Income Generation*, but noted that the income for Swansea was understated by some 50%. It was further noted that the inclusion of another Irish University would be desirable in a future benchmarking exercise. The PRG had the opportunity of interrogating various aspects of the comparisons undertaken, and the conclusions reached, in this benchmarking exercise.

The Discipline of History of Art did not undertake a benchmarking exercise. The PRG felt that History of Art should undertake such an exercise as soon as possible in order to help inform the future development of the Discipline.

## **FINDINGS OF THE PEER REVIEW GROUP**

The PRG noted that no SAR was presented by the School. Two disciplinary reports were presented, one on each Discipline. Accordingly the comments below reflect the two individual SARs presented.

### **Discipline of History**

#### **Details**

The PRG noted that History is a relatively large Discipline (formerly referred to as a Department) reflecting its status as a flagship academic discipline in humanities in UCC. The range of expertise of its staff is reflected in the range of its programmes and course offerings. It has a very large population of undergraduates. In addition to those taking History as a degree discipline, History is also one of the principal pillars for the degree in Politics and for the interdisciplinary degree in European Studies. It has a large menu of taught postgraduate Masters programmes, with a total of 68 students enrolled in the current session, and has a strong cohort of research postgraduate (31 PhD and 9 MPhil in 2009/10), many of whom are funded by IRCHSS.

In its considerations the PRG paid particular attention to the fact that the holder of the last established chair of History is due to retire imminently and, accordingly, the professorial level of appointments in History is strikingly out of line with its size, reputation, current academic strength and with comparable Departments of History in Ireland and internationally.

The attention of the PRG was drawn to the gender imbalance in staff, in particular in the category of permanent academic staff.

The PRG noted that the dispersed nature of the accommodation housing the staff and activities of History allowed little surplus capacity and little opportunity for provision of interaction spaces for staff and students, including postgraduates. This has the effect, *inter alia*, of militating against group cohesion.

## **Discipline Organisation & Planning**

The PRG recognises that the staff is very positive in outlook and forward looking. Following on recommendations made in the report on the quality review of the Department of History conducted in 2005, a committee structure broadly along the lines recommended was introduced. Recent changes and proposed developments represent further refinement of the functions and composition and representative character of these committees, reflecting the changing circumstances and the staff experience to date of this evolving departmental management structure. The PRG recognises that the staff is positive and strongly committed to this ongoing development. The PRG found strong endorsement among staff of these changes. The effective functioning and composition of these committees should be kept under review, and the frequency and value of these committees may need further consideration.

The PRG noted that the difficulties encountered to date at arriving at an acceptable workloads model relate to a wider issue of academic workloads under active consideration at College and University levels. The proposal that History, by means of a working group, should seek to devise an agreed workload model for its own staff is not unreasonable, though clearly this exercise should be attentive and contribute to the wider consideration of this issue within the College.

## **Teaching & Learning**

The PRG was pleased to note that the Discipline is highly commended by undergraduate and postgraduate students both in terms of content and delivery of programmes, and the approachability and availability of staff. The documentary information (e.g. annual Handbook) provided by the Discipline to its students is helpful, while the special booklet on *Writing Skills for Students* (compiled for the History discipline) is especially useful. It was clear, from meetings with external stakeholders, that this enthusiasm for History, and affection for the staff, is sustained many years after a graduate leaves UCC and represents considerable capital of good will for the Discipline and the University.

The need to ensure that sensible use be made of constantly evolving technology in teaching and learning was emphasised by staff and students alike, not least in the

context of striving to achieve optimum flexibility (in scheduling and locations) in delivery modes.

### **Research & Scholarly Activity**

In terms of research publications and their record of attracting external research funding, History is a strong and successful academic discipline with a high reputation nationally and in certain areas internationally. Its SAR identifies strategic intentions in terms of its research orientation and support for the further development of the research agenda of all staff. The review of the programmes of external funding that sustain several clusters of research activity requires urgent attention. The PRG noted that the Discipline has commenced this review as a matter of urgency.

### **Staff Development**

The PRG acknowledges the difficulties for staff development arising from current curtailment of promotions and sabbaticals, and endorses the recommendations in the SAR with regard to this. In particular, the PRG recognises the dearth of professorial appointments in History and endorses the observations of the History SAR in relation thereto.

The PRG wishes to emphasise the importance of a fully functioning academic leave scheme as being critical to sustained research excellence in the Humanities. Specific recommendations in respect of staff development are included below.

### **External Relations**

Membership of national and international committees is strong. Representation in key sections of media is also strong. There is considerable individual activity by staff in local and regional context of 'public history' and general civic enlightenment. Moreover, History offers a part-time MA in Local History, an important contribution to the professionalism of the practice of local history. It is important that this particular aspect of the Discipline's performance be recognised both within and outside the university. As part of the overall review of strategy the Discipline should

consider whether a more collective and cohesive strategy or focus in this area of its activities might better achieve the desired impact and recognition.

### **Support Services**

The PRG noted the constructive engagement of the Library staff with the Discipline, in respect of its teaching and its research mission. It is clear that there is a close and responsive relationship between the History staff and key personnel in the Library. The PRG noted the commitment to providing information literacy to students. The importance of continuing funding of e-resources (notably IReL) that have enhanced the total capacity for teaching and research in the Humanities in recent years was emphasised by staff and is endorsed by PRG.

### **Departmental/School Co-ordinating Committee & Methodology employed in the preparation of the Self-Assessment Report**

In preparing for the SAR the great majority of the History staff participated in the day-long session for the SWOT analysis. Interviews with individual staff confirmed that there had been widespread consultation and engagement with the SAR process.

### **History of Art**

#### **Preface**

The PRG would like to emphasise that it is not the intention to directly compare the Discipline of History of Art with the Discipline of History, since in all significant respects the two disciplines are different in character, history, details, programmes, etc.

#### **Details**

The PRG noted that History of Art is a compact discipline of recent establishment within UCC and with considerable potential for development. It is the view of the PRG that, in order to capitalise on the potential in the Discipline, strong academic leadership is essential.

The PRG considered that the Discipline makes an imaginative and diverse provision based on the restricted resources and from within the expertise available at present. The severely limited accommodation does not allow sufficient capacity for the nature of its activities and is not conducive to the emergence of a collegial culture embracing staff and students alike.

### **Discipline Organisation & Planning**

It was evident that academic staff is uniformly positive about the academic leadership within History of Art, but clearly have questions about the emerging organisational model within the School of History.

The PRG were of the view that, given its current size, an elaborate committee structure specific to History of Art would not seem justified or appropriate; however the PRG sees clear potential for enhanced efficiency and opportunities for staff development within a committee structure of a School.

### **Teaching & Learning**

The PRG was pleased to note that the Discipline is highly commended by undergraduate and postgraduate students both in terms of content and delivery of programmes, and the approachability and availability of staff. This represents considerable commitment of a small staff cohort. The enthusiasm is sustained many years after a graduate leaves UCC and represents considerable capital of good will for the Discipline and the University.

The present curriculum is very satisfactory, and consistent with what is on offer in high quality institutions.

PRG recognises the critical importance of field trips to History of Art and recommends that provision be maintained at reasonable cost, and that the timing of trips is such that it does not exclude those students with other teaching-term study commitments.

## **Research & Scholarly Activity**

The PRG noted that what has been achieved so far represents a strong achievement in less than benign circumstances. The potential is there to achieve comparability in most key areas with successful institutions of comparable size internationally. With appropriate strategic direction the Discipline could reasonably be expected to attain a high international standard.

The PRG also noted that it is very important for History of Art and the Finance Office to ensure that all external research and scholarly funding is correctly coded into the UCC finance systems so that it can be adequately tracked and credited to the appropriate funds within the Discipline.

## **Staff Development**

PRG acknowledges the difficulties to staff development with current curtailment of promotions and sabbaticals, and will be endorsing the recommendations in the SAR with regard to this.

The PRG wishes to emphasise the importance of a fully functioning leave scheme that is critical to sustained research excellence in the humanities.

The PRG would emphasise the importance of developing leadership capacity in the Discipline by ensuring that mentoring and other appropriate support is available to the Head of Discipline in his/her role as a leader of an autonomous discipline

## **External Relations**

The PRG saw evidence of strong representation amongst some of the staff in appropriate international fora.

Good initial contacts have already been established with local institutions but should be developed further with a view to more systematic exploitation of opportunities for pedagogic and research collaborations.

## **Support Services**

The PRG noted the constructive engagement of the Library staff with the Discipline, in respect of its teaching and its research mission. It is clear that there is a close and responsive relationship between the History of Art staff and key personnel in the Library. The PRG noted the commitment of providing information literacy to students. The importance of continuing funding of e-resources (notably IReL) that have enhanced the total capacity for teaching and research in the humanities in recent years was emphasised by staff and is endorsed by PRG. PRG recognises the critical importance of ARTstor access to History of Art and recommends that provision be maintained.

The discipline needs to work with the Space Allocation Committee to consider a way to have its administrative support housed within its own premises.

## **Departmental/School Co-ordinating Committee & Methodology employed in the preparation of the Self-Assessment Report**

In preparing for the SAR the great majority of the History of Art staff participated in the day-long session for the SWOT analysis. Interviews with individual staff confirmed that there had been consultation and engagement with the SAR process.

## **Department of History Quality Review PRG Report 2005**

The PRG noted the implementation of most of the recommendations applied to the Department of History with the exceptions noted below. Action is currently ongoing on the remaining issues.

### Abbreviations

*PRG: Peer Review Group*

*VP: Vice-President*

*QPC: Quality Promotion Committee*

*QIP: Quality Improvement Plan*

*AC: Academic Council*

*SEDC: Staff Enhancement & Development Committee*

*JYA: Junior Year Abroad*

*ACSSS: Arts, Celtic Studies & Social Studies*

*UMG: University Management Group*

*P&E: Promotion & Establishment*

<b>Recommendation of PRG in QR Report 2005</b>	<b>Recommendation of the QPC</b>	<b>Follow-up Report February 2010</b>
<p>That the Department forwards its plans for a History department building to the appropriate College bodies for consideration, while at the time participating actively in the development of a strategic plan for the housing of the Arts Faculty.</p>	<p>Recommendation was noted by QPC.</p> <p>QPC noted that the question of a building for the Department of History is not on the agenda of the Buildings Committee nor is it part of the University Strategic Plan. The QPC suggested that the Department forward the plans and their views on the matter and enter into a discussion with the Director of Buildings &amp; Estates.</p>	<p>Work is still ongoing on this long-term project.</p> <p>The Arts Faculty (now College ACSSS) has been appropriately housed in the O’Rahilly Building.</p>
<p>That the following recommendations be implemented in relation to the committee structures in the Department:</p>		<p>A new protocol for the operation of the departmental committee system to be drawn up, with agreed terms of reference for all committees.</p>
<p>(a) Introduction of a regular, cyclical rotation pattern for committee membership.</p>	<p>QPC endorsed recommendation.</p> <p>The QPC noted that the committees referred to would be subcommittees of the departmental committee and with membership drawn from all sectors of staff.</p>	<p>Partially implemented and ongoing.</p>
<p>(b) Introduction of a system of staff election to serve on committees.</p>	<p>QPC endorsed recommendation.</p> <p>QPC noted that introduction of such a system in no way conflicts with the obligations of the Head of Department. The recommendation is trying to ensure a representative system for membership of committees. This recommendation does not imply that all members of the committee should be decided by election.</p>	<p>Not implemented.</p> <p>This has been overtaken by the establishment of the School Management Committee.</p>
<p>(c) Establishment of a Department Finance Committee to support the work of the Head of Department to ensure transparency in financial planning and allocation.</p>	<p>QPC endorsed recommendation.</p>	<p>The committee was established but has been superseded by establishment of the School Management Committee.</p>

<b>Recommendation of PRG in QR Report 2005</b>	<b>Recommendation of the QPC</b>	<b>Follow-up Report February 2010</b>
(d) Establishment of a Workloads Committee to monitor and review workloads in the Department	QPC endorsed recommendation.	Department found it impossible to deliver on this at the time. It is now newly established and hopes to deliver within 2010/11.
That the resources issues relating to postgraduate support and facilities should be given urgent consideration at Faculty and College level, as these are vital to maintain UCC's competitiveness in attracting research students.	The QPC noted that the department has a room for postgraduate students and also has some computers (see response of department to recommendation 6 below). In principle the QPC supported this recommendation and suggested that the Department make a submission to the Space Subcommittee of the Buildings Committee, justifying the request for additional space and facilities. The QPC also suggested that the Department should consider carefully how best to use the space currently allocated to the department to the best advantage for staff and students.	Ongoing.  The School has raised the issues with the Space Committee justifying request for additional space and facilities. Specific postgraduate needs are now being more clearly articulated by PG cohort and dialogue is taking place with the head of discipline to agree further progress.
That Departmental and Faculty representations be made to the University that Government of Ireland fellowships should not be construed as sabbatical leave by the University since full provision is made for staff substitution.	The QPC noted the lack of clarity in relation to the Government of Ireland Fellowships in the current Sabbatical Leave document approved by AC. The QPC referred the issue to the SEDC for consideration and a request to bring forward a policy proposal on the issue.	Implemented.
That the Department institute a more effective and more inclusive seminar programme designed specifically for MPhil and PhD students, addressing large historical and methodological issues.	QPC strongly endorsed recommendation.	Introduced and currently undergoing further development. See PRG recommendations below.
That urgent consideration of the resources necessary to sustain a teaching and research library capable of maintaining the distinguished levels of teaching and research in History is given at Faculty and College level.	QPC supported this recommendation in principle. The resources needed are the responsibility of the Library to source and allocate. The Department should consider using some of its research income to supplement existing resources.	Implemented by UCC and the other Irish Universities.  Access to e-journals and specialist Library services has ensured the availability of excellent Library facilities in UCC.

<b>Recommendation of PRG in QR Report 2005</b>	<b>Recommendation of the QPC</b>	<b>Follow-up Report February 2010</b>
That the Professorship in Medieval History which is due to fall vacant in the near future should be advertised and filled at the appropriate time without significant pause.	In principle the QPC supports this recommendation. However it is a matter for the Head of the College of ACSSS. The filling of all senior posts will need to be argued for at UMG level.	UCC did advertise the post. The process was initiated but not completed for reasons outside the control of the Discipline.
That the existing staff in the Department be augmented by an additional position in Continental European History of the modern and contemporary periods.	In principle the QPC supports this recommendation. .	Implemented
That the Department address the significant disparities in teaching workloads among the academic staff.	QPC endorsed recommendation. QPC recommended that a transparent system of workload allocation be put in place.	Addressed; not yet resolved. Issue is under continuous review – see PRG recommendations below.
That there needs to be an early review of the Promotion & Establishment scheme, particularly with regard to the rigid application of some requirements for promotion to Senior Lecturer.	A review of the P&E Scheme is already underway. It is anticipated that the review group will report in the autumn.	Implemented and ongoing. A review of the P&E scheme has taken place and the scheme has been amended. Applications are now being processed through the new scheme and the scheme will be reviewed again once this process has been completed.
That the Department seek an early review of the current scheme for granting of sabbatical leave in order to restore some degree of predictability to research and leave planning.	The Department is referred to the scheme (published on the UCC web site under Human Resources at <a href="http://www.ucc.ie/pandp/">http://www.ucc.ie/pandp/</a> ). The QPC confirmed that a staff member may apply as early as he/she wishes for sabbatical leave.	Review has been completed by UCC. A revised scheme has been drafted and is under consideration by University bodies. Current restrictions continue to present difficulties for staff.
That the History Department explore possibilities of closer contact with the subject specialists among the library staff and invite them from time to time to participate in meetings of the Departmental Library Committee.	QPC strongly endorsed recommendation.	Implemented and ongoing.
That the Departmental Library Committee give consideration to the current	QPC strongly endorsed recommendation.	UCC has put in place access to a very significant range of e-journals and resources, with

<b>Recommendation of PRG in QR Report 2005</b>	<b>Recommendation of the QPC</b>	<b>Follow-up Report February 2010</b>
expenditure on Books and Journals, which is at present heavily weighted in favour of Journals.		Disciplines having an appropriate advisory role.

### **History of Art Quality Review PRG Report 2005**

The comments of the PRG on the implementation of the recommendations arising from the Quality Review of the History of Art unit are given in the table below.

#### Abbreviations

*PRG: Peer Review Group*

*VP: Vice-President*

*QPC: Quality Promotion Committee*

*QIP: Quality Improvement Plan*

*HR: Human Resources*

*ACSSS: Arts, Celtic Studies & Social Sciences*

*CIT: Cork Institute of Technology*

<b>Recommendation of PRG in QR Report 2005</b>	<b>Recommendation of QPC</b>	<b>Follow-up Report February 2010</b>
That from the end of the current arrangement, a full-time head be appointed in the Department of History of Art and that the necessary arrangements should be put in place well of advance of that date.	QPC endorsed recommendation.	Implemented.
It is vital that the rich diversity of approaches to the history of art currently fostered among departmental staff be maintained; alternative traditions should be actively integrated.	Recommendation endorsed. QPC recognised the need to keep the breadth of the discipline in the programmes.	Ongoing
That the possibility of attracting donor funding to fully equip one of the rooms in the Connolly Building for the needs of, <i>inter alia</i> , History of Art students be investigated. This could lead to the imaginative development of a compact hub or Centre for Image Studies, which would also encompass nearby locations such as the UCC Granary Theatre and the Kino Cinema. In the interim,	Endorsed the finding of the PRG and the principle behind the recommendation. The QPC noted there are possibilities for a number of different options in implementing this recommendation and suggested that these should be considered in discussions between Professor Elkins, Dr. G. Young (Dept. of English) and the Director of Buildings &	This was instigated but is no longer applicable in current circumstances.

<b>Recommendation of PRG in QR Report 2005</b>	<b>Recommendation of QPC</b>	<b>Follow-up Report February 2010</b>
links should be fostered with the Kino Cinema in order to alleviate current pressing needs for suitable venues for showing of films, etc.	Estates.	
That the Department should ensure better preparation for seminars and reading groups, in advance of internationally acclaimed Art History scholars visiting UCC, in order to maximise the use of their time while on campus for the benefit of the whole college community.	QPC endorsed recommendation.  The QPC recommended that the Department of History should consider allocation of some of the Library budget to enable seed funding of resources for the discipline, responsibility for which lies with the Department of History at the present.	Implemented
That the Department should ensure that scholarly activity is more evenly spread throughout the staff of the entire department.	QPC strongly endorsed recommendation.  QPC suggested that History of Art should consider the possibility of collaborating with relevant staff/units in other institutions, for example, CIT, so as to reduce the burden of the teaching workload on staff and should lead to an encouragement to staff to work on research projects.	Ongoing.
That the Department should ensure that all teaching staff across the Department have doctorates.	QPC endorsed recommendation.  The QPC supported the recommendation for all permanent staff and felt that part-time staff should be encouraged and assisted to work towards acquiring a PhD qualification and engaging with research.	Implemented and ongoing.
That the Department should ensure that, as far as possible, teaching is delivered by full-time staff.	QPC endorsed recommendation.  The QPC suggested that drawing practitioners from other areas to support the teaching on programmes would enhance the programmes and	Implemented  However in the present financial circumstances use of qualified part-time staff is necessary to deliver the programmes.

<b>Recommendation of PRG in QR Report 2005</b>	<b>Recommendation of QPC</b>	<b>Follow-up Report February 2010</b>
	would ease the burden on the small cohort of full-time staff.	
That the Department should plan well in advance for sabbatical leave and other types of staff development.	Recommendation endorsed. The QPC recognised that the staff of History of Art needs sabbaticals to facilitate access to materials in the discipline not housed in UCC. However the QPC would encourage all staff to engage in scholarly activity.	Ongoing for all members of staff
That the Department should continue to foster fruitful links with local stakeholders such as the Glucksman Gallery, the Crawford College of Art and Design and the CIT.	QPC strongly endorsed recommendation.	Ongoing Links with the Glucksman Gallery are ongoing and Dr. Kriebel is currently organising an exhibition with René Zechlin.
That the Department should focus further in its work on other comparable European institutions/non-English language speaking departments elsewhere.	QPC endorsed recommendation.	Ongoing
That the Department should establish clearer links between international movements in the art world and the Irish response to such international movements.	QPC endorsed recommendation.	Implemented
That the Department should ensure greater 'follow through' from First Year to subsequent years by introducing some elements of the current Final Year programme into First Year.	The QPC noted the difference of opinion between the reviewers and the staff of History of Art. The QPC considered that it would be preferable to have a consensus on this and recommended that further consideration be given to resolving this issue.	Implemented
That the Department should continue to foster collaborative research projects with other departments throughout the University.	QPC endorsed recommendation. History of Art is referred to the Acting Head of College of ACSSS for elaboration of what the situation will be regarding support when the funding from	Implemented and ongoing. Many collaborative projects were put in train and implemented.

<b>Recommendation of PRG in QR Report 2005</b>	<b>Recommendation of QPC</b>	<b>Follow-up Report February 2010</b>
	The Atlantic Philanthropies ceases.	
That the Department should explore the possibility of introducing postgraduate programmes in art theory and also in the art of curatorial and art management and administration.	QPC endorsed recommendation.	Ongoing
Consideration should be given to providing a full-time administrative assistant for the Department. In the meantime, the current arrangement whereby the Departmental executive assistant has a photocopier in her office should be discontinued for health and safety reasons.	The QPC referred this recommendation for consideration to the Acting Head of the College of ACSSS, along with the issue of how continuing support and resources to support the activities of History of Art will be provided.	History of Art does have administrative support provided by a Senior Executive Assistant in the School of History. The support is provided to History of Art but is only a part of the duties of the Senior Executive Assistant. The PRG recommended that the office be re-organised to suit the needs of all users and that the provider of administrative support be housed in History of Art premises as soon as possible, if appropriate.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS FOR IMPROVEMENT**

### **Recommendations for improvement made by the School**

The PRG noted that there were no recommendations for improvement presented by the School. The two Disciplines independently presented their own recommendations. Accordingly the comments below reflect the recommendations made by each Discipline.

#### **Discipline of History**

##### **Recommendations for improvement made by the Discipline**

The PRG endorsed the following recommendations made by the Discipline of History in the SAR with some additions where deemed appropriate.

1. To implement the proposals of the School Research Committee to re-focus History's research profile and performance, in the light of the findings of the RQR report.
2. To implement the structured PhD process initiated and overseen by the School Graduate Studies Committee, and to monitor its impact, particularly with regard to the generic skills element.
3. To consider the introduction a distance-learning MA programme in History with a view to curriculum innovation and the generation of significant fee income. This programme would be subject to University development funding and should be examined in the light of available resources and current market conditions, the School's Priorities and general cost-benefit issues (including opportunity cost).
4. To proceed with the appointment of a Chair in Irish History to replace Professor Keogh.
5. To assist staff to achieve promotion to Professor and Senior Lecturer and to consider *inter alia* academic workloads and other factors that might affect this.
6. To establish a Working Group on equal opportunities practice and to feed outputs into the University Equality Committee.
7. To establish a Working Group on Workloads, chaired by the Head of School, to devise a suitable model, taking into account the research, teaching and supervision priorities of the School and developments at College and University levels.
8. To rotate officers and membership of committees in 2010-2011.
9. To continue the work of the Learning and Teaching Committee in developing quality research-led undergraduate teaching.
10. To plan, prepare and deliver tutor training programme for 2010/2011.
11. To increase opportunities for postgraduates to publish and to give due consideration to how this objective might best be achieved.
12. To establish a working group to review the future of the Irish National Institute for Historical Research, in the context of a wider strategic review of

the Discipline's configuration of research projects and priorities and of the resource issues relating thereto.

13. To ensure refurbishment of staff offices.
14. To build capacity for strategic awareness and strategic action.
15. To continue building interdisciplinary links within UCC and intra-institutional links nationally and internationally.

**Recommendations for improvement made by the Peer Review Group in addition to those made by the Discipline of History.**

The PRG recommends that:

***The Discipline***

1. Greater clarity and direction with respect to the availability of the tutorial system and its consistency throughout all years of the programmes be put in place for students.
2. The Discipline clarifies the system for allocation of places on quota bound modules in 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> year and that this system be communicated in a timely and transparent fashion to students.
3. Further consideration is given to the inclusion in the senior year of the undergraduate programme of a formal introduction to information literacy specifically related to archival systems.
4. The Discipline actively engages with the careers service to provide subject-specific advice to students on careers and postgraduate opportunities.
5. Greater clarity and information flow on the postgraduate and research seminars be made available, to ensure that appropriate audiences are fully informed and that the full value of these seminars is widely shared.
6. The Discipline introduces a dedicated discipline-specific induction day to research postgraduates, to complement the University induction programme.

7. The adoption of an annual report from each academic staff member on research progress as an appropriate measure for staff development.
8. The Discipline formulates in strategic terms its outreach activities so as to optimise the public profile of the Discipline locally, nationally and internationally for the benefit of the Discipline and for UCC.
9. In the context of the review of the INIHS that the Discipline reviews the viability of the full suite of research projects currently sustained by external funding.

### ***The University***

10. The University gives urgent consideration to easing the restrictive terms under which sabbatical leave is currently being supported, and to restoring a sabbatical research leave scheme that takes account the full range of research-directed objectives of staff.
11. The adoption of the recommendation in the SAR *re* the appointment of a chair in Irish History will still leave the professorial level in History in UCC substantially below the level merited by the Discipline's academic standing and scale. The University should address this anomalous situation as a matter of urgency.
12. In the context of overall support for research initiatives and developments in the School of History, and in the Humanities in general at UCC, further consideration needs to be given to the role of the Office for the VP for Research in assisting such initiatives and developments.

### **History of Art**

#### **Recommendations for improvement made by the Discipline**

The PRG endorsed the following recommendation in the SAR:

1. That the space committee should consider re-housing the staff member providing administrative support to History of Art within the unit's designated building. The PRG noted that the present administrative support is not a full-

time activity for the post holder who also provides support for History and who reports to the Head of School.

**Recommendations for improvement made by the Peer Review Group in addition to those made by the Discipline of History of Art.**

The PRG recommends that:

*The University*

1. While the PRG is not in a position to recommend on the detailed structure of the new School of History given that discussions are continuing and that a discussion document (as we were informed) is under consideration by interested parties; in any new structure that may emerge the Discipline of History of Art, to achieve its potential and to contribute to best effect to the academic reputation of the University, must be accorded parity of esteem and be acknowledged as an autonomous disciplinary entity.
2. Mentoring and other appropriate support is provided to the Head of Discipline in his/her role as a leader of an autonomous discipline.
3. The University give urgent consideration to easing the restrictive terms under which sabbatical leave is currently being supported, and to restoring a sabbatical research leave scheme which takes account of the full range of research-directed objectives of academic staff.
4. The members of History of Art are supported in the development of a strategic plan which should include specific targets for research outputs, which resonate with the School, College and University strategic plans.
5. The Library or University, as appropriate, pursues the possibility of sections of books being provided as PDFs, online, under appropriate licensing arrangements (to meet the deficits in History of Art).
6. Provided that growth and further recommended development of History of Art takes place the PRG envisages that the restoration of a professorial appointment in History of Art will become at once logical and appropriate to its further development and distinction.

### *The School*

7. The School addresses the disparity between the Discipline's current and anticipated future image provision requirements and the technical support presently provided.

### *The Discipline*

8. History of Art capitalises upon the opportunities potentially available for quality enhancement, staff development and increased efficiency available through participation in School committee structures.
9. History of Art explores the opportunities for masters as well as doctoral research-based qualifications so as to increase the throughput of and reduce completion times of postgraduate studies.
10. The use of the UCC-CIT Memorandum of Understanding is explored as a means for the History of Art to pursue the opportunities in the domains of reciprocal library arrangements, teaching and research collaborations, afforded by links with Crawford and other local institutions.
11. That provision of access by History of Art to ARTstor is maintained.
12. Provision of field trips are maintained at reasonable cost, and organised so that they do not exclude those students with other teaching-term study commitments.
13. The Discipline actively engages with the careers service to provide subject specific advice to students on careers and postgraduate opportunities.
14. That before the discipline engages in any initiative aimed at offering a summer school, which would further reduce the already restricted time available for research to academic members of staff and may not prove financially beneficial, that a detailed cost-benefit analysis should be undertaken.

## APPENDIX A

### SCHOOL OF HISTORY

#### PEER REVIEW GROUP SITE VISIT TIMETABLE

##### In Summary

- Monday 22 February: The Peer Review Group (PRG) arrives at Jury's Hotel for a briefing from the Director of the Quality Promotion Unit, followed by an informal meeting with staff members from the School of History.
- Tuesday 23 February: The PRG considers the Self-Assessment Report and meets with departmental staff and student and stakeholder representatives. A working private dinner will be held that evening for the PRG.
- Wednesday 24 February: The PRG meets with relevant officers of UCC. An exit presentation is given by the PRG to all members of the department. A working private dinner is held that evening for the PRG in order to finalise the report. This is the final evening of the review.
- Thursday 25 February: External PRG members depart.

<b>Monday 22 February 2010</b>	
16.00 – 18.00	Meeting of members of the Peer Review Group Briefing by Director of Quality Promotion Unit, Dr. Norma Ryan. Group agrees final work schedule and assignment of tasks for the following 2 days. Views are exchanged and areas to be clarified or explored are identified.
19.00 – 21.00	Dinner for members of the Peer Review Group
21.00 – 22.00	Meeting with members of the Peer Review Group and Head of School and School Co-ordinating Committee. <i>School of History staff:</i> Dr Flavio Boggi, Head, History of Art Mr Gabriel Doherty, History Dr David Edwards, History Professor Dermot Keogh, History Mr Simon Knowles, History of Art Dr Miles Pattenden, History Professor Geoff Roberts (Head of School) Dr Diarmuid Scully, History
<b>Tuesday 23 February 2010</b>	

08.00 – 08.15	Convening of Peer Review Group	
08.15 – 08.45	Dr. Flavio Boggi, Head, History of Art	
08.45 – 09.15	Professor Geoff Roberts, Head, School of History	
09.15 – 09.45	Group meeting with all <u>History of Art</u> Staff	
09.45 – 10.30	Group meeting with all <u>History</u> Staff	
11.00 – 13.00	Private meeting with individual staff members (History) <b><u>Group A</u></b> Dr. Anne Mills Professor Gearóid Ó Tuathaigh Professor Rob Savage 11.00: Professor Dermot Keogh 11.15: Dr Clare O’Halloran 11.30: Dr Diarmuid Scully 11.45: Dr Larry Geary 12.00: Dr David Ryan 12.15: Dr Malgorzata D’Aughton	Private meeting with individual staff members (History of Art) <b><u>Group B</u></b> Professor John Groeger Professor Paul Smith 11.00: Dr Ed Krčma 11.15: Dr Sabine Kriebel 11.30: Mr James Cronin 11.45: Dr Jenifer Ní Ghrádaigh 12.00: Professor Tom Dunne 12.15: Dr Jennifer O’Reilly
12.30 – 13.00	Professor Paul Giller, Registrar Working lunch	
13.00 – 13.45	Professor Peter Kennedy, Vice-President for Research Policy & Support	
13.50 – 14.50	Visit to core facilities of School (Tyrconnell Building), escorted by Professor Geoff Roberts (Head) and Dr Flavio Boggi.	
15.00 – 17.00	<b><u>Group A</u></b> Dr. Anne Mills Professor Rob Savage Professor Gearóid Ó Tuathaigh <b>Representatives of 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> year students – History</b> Jennie Brosnan, 2 <sup>nd</sup> year, History Jesse Harrington, 1 <sup>st</sup> year, History David Lynch, 1 <sup>st</sup> year, History Brian Phelan, 2 <sup>nd</sup> year, History	<b><u>Group B</u></b> Professor John Groeger Professor Paul Smith <b>Representatives of 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> year students - History of Art</b> Gavin Farmer, 2 <sup>nd</sup> year Aoife Hegarty, 2 <sup>nd</sup> year Annika Henning, 1 <sup>st</sup> year Jennifer Higgins, 1 <sup>st</sup> year
15.00 – 15.40		

15.40 – 16.20	<b>Representatives of final year students - History</b> Shaun Ahern, History Aisling Bolger, Politics James Cussen, History Vivian Lee, History Michael Moran, European Studies	<b>Representatives of final year students - History of Art</b> Christopher Falconer Yvonne Gubbins Fiona Lonergan Charlotte Morrison Paul Hannan
16.20 – 17.00	<b>Representatives of Graduate Students - History</b> John Borgonovo, year 4, PhD (just submitted) Sarah-Anne Buckley, year 4, PhD (just submitted) Emer Knightly, MA in Media in Irish History Barbara O’Donoghue, year 2, PhD John O’Donovan, final year, MPhil Maeve O’Riordan, year 1, PhD Aine Sheehan, final year PhD, Early Modern Irish History	<b>Representatives of Graduate Students - History of Art</b> Elaine Hoysted, MPhil Maura Kiely, MPhil John Paul McMahon, PhD Máirin Ni Shé, MPhil Maeve Spence, HDip Rachel Warriner, taught MA
17.00 – 18.30	<b>Representatives of external Stakeholders</b> Mr. Andrew Coleman, past graduate, ( <i>History</i> ) Cllr. Mick Finn, past graduate, ( <i>History</i> ) Ms. Orla Flynn, Acting Head, Crawford College of Art & Design ( <i>History of Art</i> ) Mr Brian McGee, Cork City and County Archivist ( <i>History</i> ) Professor Catherine O’Brien, Prize donor, ( <i>History</i> ) Ms. Laraine O’Connell, past graduate, ( <i>History of Art</i> ) Mr. Stephen O’Leary, past graduate, ( <i>History</i> ) Dr Carmel Quinlan, past graduate, ( <i>History</i> ) Ms Sophia Wright, past graduate ( <i>History of Art</i> )	
19.00	Meeting of Peer Review Group to identify remaining aspects to be clarified and to finalise tasks for the following day, a followed by a working private dinner.	
<b>Wednesday 24 February 2010</b>		
08.30 – 08.40	Convening of Peer Review Group	
08.40 – 09.00	Mr. Con O’Brien, Vice-President for Student Experience	
09.00 – 09.20	Professor Grace Neville, Vice-President for Teaching and Learning	

09.20 – 09.30	Ms. Anne-Marie Cooney, Financial Analyst, College of Arts, Celtic Studies & Social Sciences	
09.40 – 10.40	Visit to UCC Library, meeting with Ms Margot Conrick, Head of Information Services, Arts & Humanities Librarian / Arts & Multimedia Librarian, Q+3 and Ms Elaine Charwat – Special Collections, Archives and Repository Services, Q-1.	
11.00 – 11.15	Mr. Cormac McSweeney, Finance Office	
11.15 – 11.35	Dr. Flavio Boggi, Head, History of Art	
11.35 – 12.35	Private meetings with individual staff members (History) <u>Group A</u> Dr. Anne Mills Professor Gearóid Ó Tuathaigh Professor Rob Savage 11.35: Dr Mervyn O’Driscoll 11.50: Dr Finola Doyle O’Neill 12.05: Dr Detmar Klein 12.20: Dr. Mike Cosgrave	Private meeting with individual staff members (History of Art) <u>Group B</u> Professor John Groeger Professor Paul Smith 11.35: Ms Gemma Carroll 11.50: Ms Catherine McCarthy 12.05: Ms Laura Pomeroy
12.35 – 13.15	Professor David Cox, Head of College of Arts, Celtic Studies and Social Sciences	
13.15 – 13.45	Working lunch	
13.45 – 16.40	Preparation of first draft of final report	
16.40 – 17.00	Professor Geoff Roberts, Head, School of History	
17.00 – 17.30	Exit presentation to all staff, to be made by the Chair of the Peer Review Group or other member of Peer Review Group as agreed, summarising the principal findings of the Peer Review Group.  This presentation is <u>not</u> for discussion at this time.	
19.00	Working private dinner for members of the Peer Review Group to complete drafting of report and finalisation of arrangements for completion and submission of final report.	