

DEPARTMENT OF MUSIC

PEER REVIEW GROUP

- Professor R. Yacimini, Department of Electrical & Electronic Engineering, UCC (Chair)
- Mr D. Ó Giolláin, Department of Folklore and Ethnology, UCC
- Professor H. White, Department of Music, UCD
- Professor D. Cooper, School of Music, University of Leeds, UK

SITE VISIT

The site visit was conducted over 2.5 days from 31 January - 2 February 2005 and included visits to departmental and library facilities and meetings with

- Head and staff of the department as a group and individually
- Representatives of undergraduate and postgraduate students
- Representatives of employers, past graduates and other external stakeholders
- Mr Michael O'Sullivan, Vice-President for Planning, Communications & Development
- Professor Keith Sidwell, Vice-Dean of Faculty of Arts
- Ms Carmel Cotter, Finance Office
- Mr Paul Prendergast, Office of Buildings & Estates

An exit presentation of the principal findings of the Peer Review Group was made to staff of the department in the afternoon of the second day.

DESCRIPTION OF DEPARTMENT

Note: Data given is for the academic year 2004/05

Head of Department: Dr. Paul Everett
Staff: 11 academic staff (1 Professor (part-time), 1 Senior Lecturer, 7 full-time Lecturers, 2 part-time Lecturers), 1 Senior Executive Assistant, 1 technician
Staff Academic FTE: 11.92 (9.60 FTE academic staff; 2.32 FTE part-time budget)
Student/Academic Staff Ratio: 15.79
Location of Department: Music Building, Sunday's Well
Degrees/Diplomas offered: BA, BMus, MA, MPhil, PhD

NUMBER OF STUDENTS

The Department has 188.25 Student FTEs distributed as follows:

Undergraduate Student FTEs

Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Total U/G	Economic	Visiting American	Visiting European
67.83	43.42	41.50	26.00	178.75	30.08	29.83	4.25

Master Taught	Master Research	PhD	Total P/G
---------------	-----------------	-----	-----------

1.00	4.00	4.50	9.50	Postgraduate Student FTEs
------	------	------	-------------	----------------------------------

MISSION STATEMENT

“The Department of Music at UCC is committed to the cultivation - through creativity in teaching, research, composition and performance - of a dynamic learning community dedicated to an interdisciplinary and cross-cultural understanding of music.”

AIMS OF DEPARTMENT

- To be a model of excellence in teaching/learning, scholarship, performance and composition;
- To live up to the commitment in our Mission Statement (to the cultivation - through creativity in teaching, research, composition and performance - of a dynamic learning community dedicated to an interdisciplinary and cross-cultural understanding of music).

GENERAL COMMENT ON QUALITY REVIEW

The reviewers found the Self-Assessment Report to be exemplary. The ‘Analysis and Recommendations’ section was a model of concision and clearly outlined the role and the objectives of the Department to the satisfaction of the PRG. The rest of the report, consisting of Appendices A to K, gave comprehensive information on the Department and its activities.

SWOT Analysis: The overall analysis dwelt legitimately on the Department’s undoubted strengths, but gave less specific consideration to weaknesses, opportunities and threats.

Benchmarking: The PRG felt that the benchmarking exercise was competently executed. The chosen institutions were appropriate and the focus was on (a) curriculum and teaching, (b) staff profile and activity, (c) the department’s public face and (d) resources.

Teaching & Research: All details were to the satisfaction of the reviewers.

PROGRESS MADE ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF PRG RECOMMENDATIONS

A meeting to discuss progress made in implementing recommendations for improvement arising from the review of the Department of Music was held on 3 November 2006.

Present: Professor David Cox, Head, College of Arts, Celtic Studies & Social Sciences
 Dr. Paul Everett, Head, Department of Music
 Dr. Norma Ryan, Director, Quality Promotion Unit
 Mr. Gerard Horgan, Executive Assistant, Quality Promotion Unit

Abbreviations

PRG: Peer Review Group

QPC: Quality Promotion Committee

HR: Human Resources

OMC: Office of Marketing & Communications

JYA: Junior Year Abroad

VP: Vice-President

QIP: Quality Improvement Plan

PTTB: Part-Time Teaching Budget

QIF: Quality Improvement Fund

Recommendation of PRG	Recommendation of QPC	Follow-up Report November 06
That the Department should raise and enhance its profile locally, nationally and internationally.	<p>Recommendation endorsed.</p> <p>The academic profile of a department and its academic excellence are a matter for the department itself. Only the department can raise its profile (and increase its level of academic excellence) and the department is urged to strive to lead in this regard.</p>	<p>Ongoing</p> <p>Requires additional external funding/resources in order to engage professional marketing consultants to market Department effectively.</p> <p>Initial discussion with OMC might prove beneficial.</p>
That the <i>potential</i> of the Music Building as a teaching/learning, performance and research space should be fulfilled	<p>Recommendation endorsed.</p> <p>This is a matter for the department. The department should consider using some of its own resources, e.g. JYA money. The department is recommended to develop a strategy to use the surplus in funds from the academic year 2003/04. The QPC noted that the department had already been awarded some funds from the QIF 2004.</p>	<p>Ongoing</p> <p>Certain facilities have been enhanced: upgrading of O’Riada Hall, new PA system and mixing desk.</p> <p>Further funding is required to realise the potential of the Music Building. Maintenance of the building & infrastructure are outstanding issues.</p> <p>Department feels that it is inappropriate to use JYA money to fund activities like those mentioned above.</p>
That the difficulties for students arising from the remoteness of the Music Building from the main campus should be significantly reduced.	<p>The QPC supported the recommendation and referred the issue to the Office of Buildings & Estates, including a reference to consideration of the possibility of putting in a lift on the cliff face.</p>	<p>Not implemented.</p> <p>The Department did contact Buildings & Estates but a resolution has not been reached to date.</p>
That it should be ensured that the Music Building is a safe place, properly secure for its stakeholders	<p>QPC acknowledged the concerns of the staff of the department and referred the issue to the department and General Services Officer for consideration of security of access.</p>	<p>Not implemented.</p> <p>The Department is not satisfied with the current level of security at the Music Building. Discussions were held with the General Services Officer but the security presence has since been reduced. The Department is of the view that it is the University’s responsibility to pay for the extra security required.</p>

Recommendation of PRG	Recommendation of QPC	Follow-up Report November 06
That it should be ensured that the Music Building is properly accessible by people with disabilities.	QPC referred this issue to Buildings & Estates and requested that serious consideration be given to the possibility of an internal lift in the building.	Not implemented. The Head of Department is not aware of a feasibility plan. Work involved is considerable (removal of 4 rooms).
That the Department should be at the cutting edge of technological development	Recommendation endorsed. The QPC would encourage the department to consider options for funding technician(s), hardware, software, etc. from JYA & Early Start Semester students. The QPC suggested that the department list their requirements and make a proposal on how it intends to fund these.	Not implemented. A technician was hired but the level of resources needed require 'roll-over funding of a capital nature'. There is little by way of external donor funding.
That the Department should further develop graduate studies.	Recommendation strongly endorsed. The Department is asked to include specific actions in their Quality Improvement Plan.	Ongoing Any further development will require additional staff and capacity.
That there should be marked improvement in library provision.	Department is recommended to detail specifics of what is lacking in the Library and to make plans to redress the shortcomings.	Not implemented. In the Department's view this is essentially an issue for the Library and the University to resolve. There are also issues around the budget which the Department will discuss with the Library.
That the clerical-administrative workloads of academic staff should be reduced.	Recommendation noted.	Not implemented. The Music Department. has one administrator, which they believe is insufficient for the needs of the department. An increase in the number of both academic and administrative staff is required. The Head of Department. will write to the Head of College (ACSSS) to request more staff.

Recommendation of PRG	Recommendation of QPC	Follow-up Report November 06
<p>That a new scheme of instrumental/vocal tuition for students whereby quality-control is exercised by the Department should be established.</p>	<p>The QPC noted that action on this recommendation is for the department and that the department does have the control over the issue.</p> <p>The department is recommended to consider collaborating with the School of Music in the provision of instrumental/vocal tuition module which would be recognised by UCC.</p>	<p>Not implemented.</p> <p>Issues around approving teachers for tutorials and the cost of engaging teachers. Collaboration with School of Music inappropriate given differences in approach.</p>
<p>That an apposite level of resourcing and professional promotion for the university's provision of public music events should be achieved.</p>	<p>Noted the recommendation and would encourage the department to continue its actions in this regard.</p>	<p>Ongoing</p> <p>The Department is willing to administer concerts (weekly basis); however, there is an issue of cost. Head of Department. indicated that University needs to fund its own cultural activities at a higher level, provide a budget for marketing of events and engaging professional marketers.</p>
<p>That the undergraduate curriculum be reconsidered.</p>	<p>Recommendation strongly endorsed.</p> <p>The department should seriously consider a reduction in the number of modules it teaches. Specific options for rationalisation need to be included in the Quality Improvement Plan. A rationalisation would free up some time and thus enable staff to supervise more postgraduate students.</p>	<p>Not implemented.</p> <p>Possible misunderstanding by PRG of undergraduate curriculum. Rationalisation is taking place but according to Head of Department, it cannot be done without additional staff.</p> <p>Head of Department wished it noted that the undergraduate program annually, at 255 credits, is almost twice as heavy as any other Arts department has to deliver, and that the considerable distance between sites (15 minutes walking time) makes it extremely difficult to dove-tail timetables.</p>

Recommendation of PRG	Recommendation of QPC	Follow-up Report November 06
That staff registered for doctorates be given the opportunity to complete them.	Recommendation strongly endorsed. See also response to the recommendation above.	Implemented The Head of Department stated that this 'has always been department policy' The Head of Department frees up work so colleagues can complete PhD's.
That in future a doctorate should be made a requirement when academic posts {in the University} are advertised.	Strongly endorsed.	Agree in principle but both the Head of College and the Department recommend that the formula applied by Human Resources should be that a doctorate is 'normally' required, thus allowing for rare exceptions. It was noted that this policy was approved by Governing Body in 2006.
That all staff be encouraged to publish.	Recommendation strongly endorsed.	Implemented and ongoing.
That the University devise clear procedures for assessing composition and performance for promotional purposes.	Recommendation not endorsed. The QPC noted that UCC has an extended definition of scholarly activity for the purposes of promotion. The University is not in a position to devise specific criteria for one particular discipline.	Current University promotional system does not recognise compositions as publications. The Head of College (ACSSS) is in agreement that this should change. Recommendation needs to be re-examined by the University.
That the department's resources should be focused more on developing graduate studies and research rather than on the undergraduate programme.	The QPC supported the recommendation and requested department to address the issue in the quality improvement plan for the department. Specific details and actions should be included, along with timelines.	Not implemented Additional teaching staff and part-time teaching resources required.
That efforts be made to reduce staff teaching and administration loads.	The QPC noted that action on this recommendation is in the control of the department. By rationalising module options and committee structures in the department workloads can be reduced.	Not implemented An increase in staff is required to implement this recommendation.

Recommendation of PRG	Recommendation of QPC	Follow-up Report November 06
That a Chair in Ethnomusicology be created.	Recommendation noted. The QPC noted this aspiration, as did the Dean of Arts. The current financial position of the university makes it impossible to implement at this present time.	Not implemented
That the Library substantially increase its holding in scholarly literature in music, in order to meet the requirements of this research-active department.	Department is recommended to detail specifics of what is lacking in the Library and to make plans to redress the shortcomings.	Not implemented In the Department's view this is an issue for the Library and University to resolve.
That the Buildings and Estates Office be asked to complete the remedial work that has already been started.	QPC supported this recommendation and referred the matter to the Office of Buildings & Estates for attention.	Ongoing Some work has been done, but it remains incomplete to date.
That the lecture room be refurbished and equipped to an appropriate standard.	Recommendation endorsed. Action taken by department noted (Department sought and received some funds from the QIF 2004 and is planning to use some of the departmental budget to fund this essential improvement).	Implemented, ongoing improvements.
That the University engages with the Department in improving access from the bridge to the Music Building.	The QPC supported the recommendation and referred the issue to the Office of Buildings & Estates, including a reference to consideration of the possibility of putting in a lift on the cliff face.	Not implemented Requires construction of a lift, also raises safety and security issues as well as issues of cost.
That the Buildings and Estates Office should enter into urgent dialogue with the department and improve the safety of entrance and access to the building and safety in its immediate surroundings.	See response under recommendations 3 & 4 above (regarding the remoteness of the building and the safety of the building).	Ongoing