



**UNIVERSITY COLLEGE CORK**  
**NATIONAL UNIVERSITY OF IRELAND, CORK**  
**QUALITY ASSURANCE/QUALITY ENHANCEMENT**

**SCHOOL OF HISTORY**

**PEER REVIEW PANEL REPORT**

***ACADEMIC YEAR 2016-17***

***OCTOBER 2017***

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## Peer Review Panel Members

Name	Position/Discipline	Institution
Dr Helena Buffery	Senior Lecturer, Department of Spanish, Portuguese and Latin American Studies	University College Cork
Professor Steven Ellis	School of Humanities	NUI Galway
Mr Aaron Frahill (Student Reviewer)	College of Arts, Celtic Studies and Social Sciences	University College Cork
Dr Linda Goddard	Senior Lecturer, Director of Postgraduate Studies, School of Art History	University of St Andrews
Professor Paul Ross (Chair)	Head, College of Science, Engineering and Food Sciences	University College Cork
Professor Neville Wylie	Professor of International Political History	University of Nottingham
Dr Kay Taaffe	Panel Secretariat Support	University College Cork

### Context

The School of History at UCC encompasses the Department of History and Discipline of History of Art; these operate as discrete entities within the School and consequently this report will, from time to time, refer to each individually. Notwithstanding these divisions the Panel does address issues at School level to support structural integration within the School.

History has traditionally enjoyed a position of high status within the University and beyond. This is attributable to an august tradition of scholarship over many decades, with a reputation for contributing to national debate and public discourse. History of Art was founded as a unit of the Department of History in October 2001. The School is coming out of a challenging period, where there has been limited academic recruitment, few opportunities for promotion and a reduction in student numbers due to falling recruitment for the CK101 Arts Degree. This peer review can be viewed, however, as coming at an opportune time when the School is entering a period of transition, with new staff appointments approved for History, a new Head of College and a new President within the University. In addition, the School can look forward with renewed focus, to the opportunities for research impact and public engagement presented by the Irish and international centenaries, at a time when the University, the city and the region will need a high profile voice.

NOTE: Digital Arts & Humanities (DAH – referred to in the SER) was established as a discipline in 2014-15, and is co-located between the Schools of History and English, but for the purposes of this review, is not included; DAH will be reviewed as part of the periodic review of the School of English (October 10th – 12th 2017).

## Overall Analysis

The Panel was impressed by the commitment and dedication of staff in the School to their disciplinary interests and to their students. The Head of School is highly esteemed by staff, peers, students and stakeholders for his supportive, consensual leadership style during a challenging period for the School and for Higher Education in general. Despite current constraints around staffing and infrastructure, there is a genuine open-door policy for student support (confirmed by students and external stakeholders). There is openness to new ideas and diversification, particularly around curriculum expansion and the introduction of new programmes. It is clear that the School remains a dynamic environment in terms of community engagement and publications, as evidenced by the recent publication of the acclaimed and high-profile *Atlas of the Irish Revolution*. On the research front, the School achieved a high score in the 2015 Research Quality Review (RQR) which was “a marked improvement on the previous review’s scores”, and the RQR stated that “The School of History at [UCC] is successfully upholding a strong research culture while coping with high student numbers and limited financial resources.”<sup>1</sup>

Case-study presentations during the site visit demonstrated that early career academic staff are engaging with, and exploring, creative and innovative Teaching and Learning (T & L) strategies and practices. This engagement with T & L was evidenced by a number of significant developments, such as the MA in Strategic Studies which has been highly commended by the Office of the Vice-President for Teaching and Learning (OVPTL) as pioneering e-learning within the University, and by the fact that a staff member had recently been awarded the President’s Award for Excellence in Teaching. The focus on “non-canonical” subjects within History of Art, including non-western art and art by women, was commended by the Panel.

Feedback from students in respect of History of Art strongly praised the unit’s high level of organisation, the clear sense of progression within the degree, and the diversity of modules offered, despite the small staff numbers within this unit.

With the level of expansion that has taken place, and in the light of staff and resource constraints, the Panel had some concern about the overall strategic planning within the School. While staff were highly committed and passionate about their own fields, a shared vision for the School was not evident from the SER and site visit. In the absence of a shared vision, there was a perception that staff envisaged the strategic direction of the School from the prism of their own sub-disciplines, a factor which may be a legacy of previous Departmental structures prior to schoolification. The Panel was of the view that there is a need for the articulation of a shared vision which takes account of the broad range of interests across the whole School.

A critical issue for the School has been in the area of staffing. Recommendations to the University of the previous Panel Report (2010) in relation to the appointment of key Chairs have not been implemented. With retired Chairs not being filled, and no promotions to professorial level in the last promotion round, this has led to potential issues for research leadership and leadership succession within the School. Limited opportunities for staff promotion and development have resulted in a lack of opportunity for staff to advance their careers and take on leadership roles, leading to poor morale. There is a significant gender imbalance within the Department of History, with only four female lecturers, and with no woman in a senior lectureship role. Furthermore, the current strength of the staff numbers

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<sup>1</sup> SER, p.5

in Irish history clearly presents some challenges in responding to the weight of student interest in contemporary international history. In the case of History of Art, the pressures on staff of delivering the programmes for which they, as a unit, are entirely responsible with their current staff numbers was of significant concern for the Panel. A similar cause for concern that emerged during the course of the review related to European Studies, a four-year programme whose delivery reportedly depends for the most part on one staff member within History.

The structural challenges presented for the review by the hard boundaries between History and History of Art within the School re-emerged during meetings with staff, stakeholders, and postgraduate students, during which the Panel at times had to make a particular effort to ensure that voices from History of Art could be heard; in the light of the staffing issues presented, this highlights an urgent need for the School to develop a strategy to advance more cohesively as a whole School leveraging the strengths of the diverse disciplinary communities it houses.

## **Peer Review Process**

### **Methodology**

The Panel met over three days and the site visit timetable (Appendix 1) enabled comprehensive engagement with staff, students and stakeholders, and with senior management at University and College level. The composition of the Panel provided good coverage across the disciplines of History and History of Art, student representation, and knowledge of internal institutional and organisational structures within the University. The Panel undertook a tour of the School's buildings and facilities, which included a visit to the Special Collections section of the Boole Library. The entire Panel contributed to the production of the final Panel Report. Secretariat support from the Quality Enhancement Unit (QEU) was provided to the Peer Review Panel throughout, to facilitate the conduct of the review and support the Review Panel in formulating and agreeing the final Review Report.

### **Self-Evaluation Report (SER)**

The SER was presented in two parts, representing the separate disciplines of History and History of Art. The main rationale for this, as presented in the SER, was that this had been the case in the previous review (2010). However, it did mean that it was difficult to gauge from the documentation whether there was any strategic engagement between the two units, and indeed the overall impression was that History of Art was disadvantaged by the current structure of the School, due to its size, student numbers, and limited capacity for succession planning.

The Panel noted a number of gaps in the Department of History SER; in particular there was little indication of how, or to what extent, the recommendations of the previous review process (2010) had been implemented. There was an absence of a clear mission statement for the School (other than supporting that of the University). The Panel did acknowledge, however, that the SER was written in the period during which the new University Strategic Plan (2017 – 2022) was being developed and, consequently, this might have presented a vacuum in terms of mapping the School's vision for the next five years. There were, however, a number of critical initiatives of strategic importance planned for the School which became evident during the site visit, but which were not mentioned in the SER: for example, the proposed designated History pathway for the BA; the development of a flagship MA; the re-launch of the Irish Institute for Historical Research; and the opportunity to provide initial leadership and direction for the university-approved new Centre for

International Relations. Furthermore, even though there was explicit reference to the planned incorporation of DAH in 2017-2018, it later became clear that its location has yet to be resolved.

Although there was some ambiguity around the “aims and main characteristics of the unit”, the History of Art SER provided a clear account of approaches to teaching and learning, graduate skill-sets, transferable skills and career destinations for graduates. The nature of the student experience was more apparent in this report. The Panel considered that, because of the discrete nature of this unit in the current School structure, it was a lost opportunity not to have undertaken a benchmarking exercise.

### **SWOT Analysis**

The SWOT analysis and benchmarking are normally undertaken to underpin the SER – not as separate activities – and the report would have benefited from having these processes integrated more into the self-evaluation. The strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats identified by both units can largely be endorsed by the review panel. Reading both in parallel was particularly illuminating, with the benefits, in History of Art, of having a small coherent team involved in delivering all areas of the curriculum set against a small, stagnant budget and ensuing questions of sustainability, to be compared with the perceived strengths of History’s commitment to student choice, curriculum diversity, and a wide range of teaching philosophies and practices set against the perceived weaknesses of low student attendance levels, the actual inflexibility of CK101, limited coverage of historical eras, places and themes, lack of clarity about the History skillset etc. The Panel would recommend that the School engages in on-going communication and self-evaluation processes through away-days, research days, seminars etc. to enhance the overall cohesion and cooperation between the units and to ensure that staff have an opportunity to engage in the process of strategic planning for the School.

### **Benchmarking**

The benchmarking was against the University of Cardiff. While the rationale for the selection of University of Cardiff was clear vis-à-vis History, it was also noted that the lack of a History of Art department there had underpinned the decision not to undertake a benchmarking exercise in History of Art. This was viewed as a missed opportunity by the Panel. Furthermore, the presentation of the benchmarking exercise was largely descriptive in nature, with little indication of how any learning had been integrated into the School’s own conclusions or recommendations, beyond reference in the summary to the “UCC History Department [being] strikingly ill-rewarded in terms of promotion to professorship and senior lectureship when a comparison is conducted of staff at equivalent career stage in the two institutions”.

### **Developments since the last Review**

The SER provided limited evidence of reflection on the developments and recommendations since the last quality review in 2010. It was, in fact, notable that some key recommendations from the past review in 2010 had not been implemented and were now being recommended again by the current Panel. These relate to, for example, postgraduate facilities, staff workloads and equality of opportunity for staff.

### **Tour of the Facilities**

As well as visiting the School of History buildings, in which particular difficulties – such as the disadvantages for History of Art both of not having their administrative support co-located in the same building and limited dedicated PG space – became more apparent, the Panel

received a tour of the Special Collections Unit within the Boole library. This was recognised as a highly valuable resource and the Panel acknowledged that it is imperative that this is appropriately funded to ensure that the primary sources are available to support the teaching, learning and research agenda of the School.

## Findings of the Panel

### ***School Organisation and Planning***

During the course of the site visit, the Panel became aware that there are a number of key on-going interdisciplinary challenges and initiatives which need to be better reflected in the organisational structure of the School and in strategic planning; *inter alia*, the relationship with the discipline of History of Art and other Historical Studies disciplines within the College; the management of shared interests and programmes with the Department of Government; and the location of Digital Arts & Humanities. In addition, there are a number of proposed new initiatives, not least the Centre for International Relations, but also additional new programmes, such as the MA in Global Gallery Studies and a denominated BA programme involving History. A highly successful initiative for the School has been the MA in Strategic Studies, which is being viewed across the College as a flagship programme utilising digital capacity for reaching new audiences of learners. A key concern for the Panel, however, was that these new initiatives were adding complexity and workload when there is no effective mechanism for managing these within the current workload system; it was also felt that workloads in terms of new initiatives fell unevenly on staff. Although six new posts have been approved, four are due to retire in the next few years; consequently a five-year staffing plan is essential, which should take account of the opportunity for greater collaboration and integration across the School. It is critical that this staffing plan, particularly in respect of new staff appointments, be drawn up with reference to an overarching Strategic Plan for the School, taking account of long-term developmental needs to ensure balance across the various specialisms represented within the School.

The Panel recognised there was significant duplication across the School in relation to committees, with History of Art replicating those of History, and little cross communication across the disciplines. This problem will be exacerbated by imminent retirements of key administrative staff with the contingent loss of organisational knowledge. The Panel considered that there is a need for key, transparent organisational structures to be put in place to support the Head of School in managing a smooth transition in relation to administrative systems, and to ensure that there is appropriate and sustainable leadership in place to enhance the quality and reputation of the School by responding to significant opportunities locally, nationally and internationally.



### ***School details including staff profiles***

Many of the challenges in relation to staffing have already been referred to, particularly *vis-à-vis* succession planning and staff workload. However, the acute effects of the current pyramid structure of the School, with relatively few staff at senior lecturer level and only one appointment to professorial level since the last review, is a major cause for concern. A key challenge for the School has been the lack of action at University level to follow up on the recommendations that have been made for several years in relation to Chairs, resulting in a situation in which a very large school now only has one member of staff at professorial level, with the resulting impact on research leadership, public engagement and reputation, succession planning, staff mentoring and development etc. This situation is particularly critical in relation to the position of Chair in Irish History, whose previous incumbents had ensured that UCC had a high-profile intellectual voice in national public debate. Given the immense local, national and international importance of the current Decade of Centenaries, it is difficult to understand why appointment to the Chair in Irish History has not been identified as a top priority for the University.

It was highlighted in the course of discussions that a Chair of Irish History has been approved as long as philanthropic funding is found to support such a post. The Panel supported the view of School Management that this could take many years and that filling this post was critical in the short to medium term. The Panel recognises the potential impact that the appointment of a Chair in Irish History at this time would have, not only for morale across the School, but for the University's campaign to attract philanthropic and research funding, in particular during the decade of historical commemorations. With a Chair in Irish History in place, the University's philanthropic campaign could look at the potential to build research projects, PhD scholarships, archival resources and public engagement resources etc., to support this Chair and the esteemed Irish historians currently researching and publishing successfully within the School.

Another critical aspect in terms of staff profile is the gender imbalance in History, with only 4 female academic staff to 18 male academics. This gender imbalance was also referred to in the previous Panel Report (2010). It is essential that processes are in place to recognise and realise equality of opportunity for staff. While the Panel acknowledges that there is no "quick fix" solution to the gender balance issue, it does recommend that UCC equality and diversity policy is followed closely in all new appointments, that all staff are supported in developing their academic profile, and that mentoring is put in place to ensure that, for example, all academics are aware of pathways to enhance their career development.

### ***Strategic and curriculum planning***

There was a reported decline in the intake on the CK101 programme for both History and History of Art, although retention rates from Year 1 to 2 have shown recent improvement due to student-centred teaching and learning initiatives in the first year. The Panel was of the opinion that there is a debilitating impact on the School in having to recruit and retain students across the programme every year – especially from 1st year to 2nd year – and that the indication was that it would be difficult to maintain sustainable staff-student ratios if future undergraduate intake continued to be channelled primarily through CK101. The Panel suggest that the newly proposed denominated programme would make it possible to address current perceived weaknesses around pathways for student progression and the alignment of graduate attributes with programme goals, learning outcomes and assessment, and should also include modules oriented explicitly towards employability, transferable skills, and career development etc. in order to attract and retain additional students.

While recognising the objective to provide diversity and choice, the Panel identified a need for rationalisation of programmes and module choice which reflects student numbers, staffing constraints, staff workloads and new programme development. Furthermore, it was clear from meetings with undergraduate students especially that one of the impacts of semesterisation on complex and flexible programmes like CK101 has been to reduce actual student choice within disciplines (due to the severe restrictions of the timetable). Taking account of on-going programme development, it is suggested that the School plan more strategically in relation to curriculum development. It was considered that the choices open to students were not always fully understood or actually available to all students, resulting in low uptake on many modules, clashes in timetabling, and a concern that breadth would impact on depth of learning. Rationalising the programme as a whole would allow more small-group discussion-based delivery and tutorial-style teaching throughout the whole programme, which was perceived as a key area for improvement in the SER.

At postgraduate level, the Panel was of the opinion that there were too many MAs on offer and that, even though overall postgraduate numbers are strong, the way the School is packaging current offerings makes it look like they are not particularly successful – (five MAs programmes have 5 or less students). There appears to be a need to streamline, reinforcing the idea of a flagship programme across the School with core common modules which would attract national and international students, and the option of specialist streams. This specifically relates to History (as opposed to History of Art). Public and Irish history would also be areas of strong potential recruitment at MA level, due to burgeoning local interest in Public History as reported in meetings with stakeholders, with the US also being a potential market.

### ***Teaching, learning and assessment***

There were examples of highly commendable practice in relation to Teaching and Learning and assessment in evidence throughout the report and review; with particular strengths perceived in the incorporation of field trips into student learning; the quality of first year tutorial teaching; the use of flipped classroom activities; experience and object-based learning, enhanced cultural experiences and interdisciplinary learning through internal and external engagement with other programmes. Some students were encouraged to undertake work-placement (although the reports from students on work-based learning in CK101 were not universally positive).

In relation to History of Art, there was a lot of reference to rich and fruitful collaboration with art institutes around the city and with practitioners within the College and there appears to be a real opportunity to collaborate further with other disciplinary programmes, such as Film and Screen Media, and institutions such as the Crawford College of Art and Design.

Staff reported their sense of a tension between the need to focus on research at the expense of scholarship in Teaching and Learning, and many were of the view that the latter should be recognised for the purpose of promotion. Furthermore, although the School's commitment to research-led and research-based teaching was clear and strong across all areas, the current focus of delivery through specialist modules reflecting the research interests of individual staff members was considered both to contribute to inequitable and unmanageable workloads and to limit opportunities for innovation in teaching and learning through the sharing of good practice in a more cooperative and collaborative environment. Students mentioned more tutorial teaching as being desirable; however, the Panel noted with some concern that staff are delivering a large number of modules, with the result that

hours devoted to some modules are often insufficient to include tutorials as well as lectures – particularly in the final years of the BA programmes.

The Postgraduate students, who were themselves tutoring to undergraduates, appeared to be unaware of the support for Teaching and Learning available to them through the OVPTL, including an accredited module. The Panel would recommend that all Postgraduate students engaging in tutoring should take this accredited module.

#### ***Student support (academic and pastoral)***

The Postgraduate students reported high levels of access to and support from their supervisors and highly commended the academic and pastoral support from all staff. There appears to be a genuine open-door policy for students within the School. However, in discussions with PG students, the Panel noted an absence of a unified postgraduate culture in terms of seminars, career development, external engagement, employability, and structured support for tutoring.

Undergraduates reported that navigating the complex choices of possible pathways, electives, and combinations with other disciplines, was a significant challenge, and there was a sense that they were often working in a vacuum without clear guidance. In addition, some students reported that there was not adequate support for students with disabilities to access materials and other supports for their learning as well as delays around registration and limited subject choices. Many students were of the opinion that Panopto (or other such supports for accessing lecture notes) should be available for all students, and not just those with a diagnosed disability.

#### ***Student achievement and employability***

There was a lack of clarity in the History SER in terms of the potential career destinations and transferable skills for graduates. This was somewhat clearer in the History of Art SER. It was noticeable that most of the post-graduates came from within the School and that there were not significant numbers coming from other Colleges or from outside the University.

#### ***Staff Development***

There was a sense that staff did not have uniform understanding of or access to the benefits of peer-mentoring and there was an identification of a need for support beyond that provided to early career academics. Currently there appears to be a heavy burden on the Head of School to mentor and support staff and it would help to introduce a proper mentoring framework. Another issue for female staff was access to committees across the College. Female staff reported experiencing difficulty getting on Boards and Committees and they believed that this diminished their influence in relation to the decision-making processes at College level.

#### ***Resources (staffing, physical, technical, other)***

The Panel recommends that the School should reconsider its relationship with and place within the CACSSS conceptual plan. The School needs to have a central school office for the benefit of students and should consider collocation within the College, with common spaces for PGRs and shared administrative supports. The Panel considered that the road separating the University and the School presented not only a safety issue, but also a symbolic divide from the rest of the University. The safety aspects for students having to cross a busy road when coming from the main campus were of particular concern. While the current arrangements may have been appropriate when the School was separated into different discipline areas, the Panel was of the view that having the School scattered across a number

of residential houses impacts on the functioning of the School as a cohesive whole, and could, in time, impact on the School's competitiveness in a national and international context. In the interim, it would be helpful within the current structure to move the History of Art administration into the same building as staff, in order to ensure the activities of the unit can be more effectively supported.

Staff reported a critical lack of access to materials and primary sources for the purposes of historical research. While a significant sum has been allocated for library holdings across the College, this is allocated on the basis of FTEs and consequently, is unlikely to provide sufficient resources for the School.

### ***External relations***

The feedback from stakeholders was universally positive although generally relationships were forged through individual connections. There is a lot of activity in terms of publications and there was a visibility internally within the University of these achievements (in particular, high-profile publications such as the Atlases). However, aside from these particularly high-profile initiatives, the Panel had some concern that other excellent work within the School might not be as visible due to the lack of a clear and effective public engagement strategy. The Panel was of the view that the School would benefit from dedicating specific resources (such as a Public Engagement and/or Impact champion) within the School for engaging with external national and international stakeholders, including government, local history groups, and the general public etc. There is a need for broader dissemination of the impact of research and teaching, and stronger articulation of existing links to public history and community should be considered as a broader strategic aim of the School.

### ***Case Study of Good Practice***

The Panel commended the Case Study of Good Practice which outlined the process of conceptualising, designing and implementing the MA in Strategic Studies. This on-line programme, which was developed with the support of the OVPTL, is considered a flagship programme across the University in terms of instructional design and on-line delivery. The Panel was of the view that the case-study itself should conclude with an evaluative or reflective element, based on the experience of delivering the programme, in advance of publication on the Quality Enhancement Unit (QEU) website. The QEU will liaise with the School to conclude this piece of work.

### ***Confirmation that programme provision is still located correctly on the National Framework of Qualifications (NFQ)***

Undergraduate programmes that the School contributes to:

- CK101 BA (Hons)
- CK108 BA International (Hons)
- CK118 BA (Hons) Digital Humanities and Information Technology
- CK104 BA (Hons) (Arts-Music)
- CK106 BA (Hons) Applied Psychology – 1st Year only
- CK109 BA (Hons) English – 1st Year only
- CK113 BA (Hons) Criminology – modules in both Second and Third Year
- CK116 BEd (Hons) Sports Studies and Physical Education – Years 1-3

Postgraduate Programmes delivered by the School of History

MA in International Relations

MA in the Irish Revolution

MA in Local History

MA in Medieval History

MA in History

MA in Renaissance Latin Culture

MA in Strategic Studies

MA in Modern and Contemporary Art History, Theory and Criticism

Postgraduate Programmes that the School contributes to:

MA in Digital Arts and Humanities

MA in Irish Studies

MA in Politics

The Panel agree that all programmes are located correctly on the NFQ.

***Compliance with European Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area – Part 1***

The School is in compliance.

## **Recommendations to the School**

1. The Panel recommends that the School articulates a clear and coherent mission and vision which takes account of the different disciplinary interests within the School.
2. The Panel recommends that the School examines its strategic academic and administration management in the light of imminent retirements and succession planning and creates a rolling 5 year staffing plan to manage retirements, transitions, sabbaticals, leave and succession, and this should include the appointment of a School Manager.
3. The Panel recommends that the School develops a strong, integrated school structure with an executive team holding frequent meetings (suggest monthly) that reflects the integration of the different interests within the School.
4. The Panel recommends the implementation of a context sensitive workload model that will enable the School to deliver its programmes in a sustainable way.
5. The Panel recommends that a supportive mentoring framework for staff is introduced to support their career development.
6. The Panel recommends that the School implements a recommendation from the previous periodic review: “To establish a working group on equal opportunities practice and to feed output into the university equality committee.”<sup>2</sup>
7. The Panel recommends that the School reconsiders its offering on the undergraduate programmes with a view to rationalising undergraduate module offerings in History and History of Art; for example, exploring alternative credit weightings for modules; integrating study-abroad students into existing modules (rather than delivering separate modules).
8. The Panel recommends that the School implements the plan for a specialised denominated undergraduate History programme.
9. The Panel recommends that the School rationalises the suite of postgraduate programmes in History with a view to developing a flagship, marketable programme.
10. The Panel recommends that the School produces a strong business plan for the two MAs in Art History, with particular focus on the resourcing of the proposed MA in Global Gallery Studies, in order to ensure sustainable staffing and resources.
11. The Panel recommends more integration between the disciplines to enable cohesive, proactive and strategic development, such as:
  - Interdisciplinary programmes

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<sup>2</sup> Periodic Review of the School of History (2010)

- Joint posts
- Shared modules
- Interdisciplinary engagement

12. The Panel recommends that the School devises a support system and clear information/advice for students on the selection of modules.

13. The Panel recommends the creation of a working group to look at employability and placements at UG and PG level involving stakeholders at local, national and international level. It was clear from discussions with stakeholders that many would be open to stronger and deeper relationships with the School in order to facilitate collaboration over student learning, placements, research, public engagement etc.

14. The Panel recommends that the School implements current UCC best-practice for facilitating learning for DSS students.

15. The Panel suggests that the School needs to become more strategically effective at external engagement vis-à-vis College, city, region, nationally, internationally.

### **Recommendations to the College**

The Panel recognises the importance of aligning the strategic planning for the School in the context of the overall strategic plan for the College, and envisages that the College will play a key role in advising and supporting the School through the current period of transition and development. In that light, the following recommendations are made to the College:

1. The Panel recommends that Head of College plays a critical role in managing the engagement for integrating Schools and disciplines.
2. The Panel recommends that the College provides leadership for key strategic inter-disciplinary and inter-school initiatives (such as the Centre for International Relations).
3. The Panel recommends that the College needs an ambitious strategy for attracting research leaders (including professorial appointments in areas of research strength to attract postgraduate recruitment, enhance research performance, raise public profile etc.).
4. The Panel recommends that the College and University analyses and monitors the impact of semesterisation on module choice, delivery and timetables.
5. The Panel recommends that the College looks at a pre-registration mechanism for students to enrol on their modules prior to September.
6. The Panel recommends that CACSSS supports an Athena Swan initiative for the School.

7. The Panel restates a recommendation from the 2005 Review of the Department of History as follows: “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”.
8. The Panel recommends that the College must consider the position and location of the School within the CACSSS spatial plan especially in the light of opportunities that collocation might bring.
9. The Panel recommends the College considers the appointment of an Impact Officer at College level to coordinate public engagement and support Schools in realising maximum impact of research and publications.

### **Recommendations to the University**

1. The Panel recommends that the University commits to having a Chair in Irish History in post by the end of 2018.
2. The Panel recommends that the University considers raising the profile of senior lecturers by adopting titles of Associate Professor.
3. The Panel recommends that the School invites the new Director of Development and Alumni Relations to explore philanthropic funding to support the work of the Chair of Irish History and the Irish historians currently researching and publishing within the School.
4. The Panel recommends that the University consider mechanisms for promotion to recognise the contribution of staff who demonstrate excellence in teaching and learning.



## Appendix 1: Site Visit Timetable

### SCHOOL OF HISTORY PEER REVIEW PANEL SITE VISIT TIMETABLE

Tuesday 3 October 2017	
12.00 – 13.30	Convening of Panel members. Briefing by 2 x Quality Enhancement Advisors, Quality Enhancement Unit, followed by lunch.
13.30 – 14.30	Private meeting of Panel
14.30 – 15.30	Meeting with Head, School of History (to be joined at 15.00 by Professor of History and Acting Head, History of Art) <i>Discussion regarding developments to date, strategic priorities of the School and overview of educational provision.</i>
15.30 – 16.00	Tea/coffee <i>Panel agree tasks and prepare for meetings with Head of College and Stakeholders</i>
16.00 – 16.50	Meeting with Head of College (to be joined by the College Financial Analyst at 16.30) <i>Panel discuss College strategy and priorities. The links between College/School financial resource allocations process, staffing resources and infrastructure.</i>
17.00 – 18.00	Meeting with Stakeholders  Head of Fine Art, Crawford College of Art and Design Graduate Cork City and County Archivist Former member, History Teachers' Association Emeritus Professor of Italian at NUI Galway National Sculpture Factory, Cork OSB, Glenstal Abbey, Murroe, Co. Limerick  <i>The Panel meets with past graduates, employers of graduates and other stakeholders as appropriate to discuss views on the quality of education received and the quality of the graduates.</i>
19.00	Informal dinner for members of the Panel & staff members of the School

Wednesday 4 October 2017		
09.00 – 09.15	Convening of the Panel	
09.15 – 10.15	Meeting with School staff <i>Discuss issues such as strategy, communications, research &amp; education, staffing, teaching &amp; learning, curriculum &amp; assessment.</i>	
10.15 – 10.45	Tea/coffee	
10.45 – 11.30	Enhancing Student Learning Experience <i>Opportunity for the School to showcase good practice and enhancements to the student learning experience (e.g. student feedback, staff development, graduate outcomes).</i>	
11.30 – 12.30	Tour of School facilities	
12.30 – 13.00	Meeting with Senior Vice President Academic & Registrar <i>Discussion of University academic and development strategy</i>	
13.00 – 14.00	Lunch and private meeting of the Panel	
14.00 – 14.30	Representatives of 1 <sup>st</sup> and 2 <sup>nd</sup> year students  1st Year – 3 x student representatives 1st Year, History of Art – 2 x student representatives 1st Year - International student  2nd Year – 4 x student representatives 2nd Year, History of Art - 2 x student representatives	Representatives of final year students  3 <sup>rd</sup> Year – 5 x student representatives 3 <sup>rd</sup> Year, History of Art – 3 x student representatives  European Studies: 4 <sup>th</sup> Year
14.40 – 15.10	Representatives of Postgraduate students  History PhD student – 4 x student representatives History of Art, PhD student History of Art, MRes student	
15.15 – 15.45	Tea/coffee	
15.45 – 16.30	Meeting with Senior Officers of the University:  Senior Research Officer, Office of Vice President for Research & Innovation Vice President for Teaching & Learning	
16.30 – 17.30	Meeting with Programme Directors/Chairs of Boards of Studies  <i>Discussion on monitoring and review of programmes to include indicatively, student progression, assessment, External Examiner reports, external accreditation/ recognition (where appropriate), supports for learners, placement (where appropriate).</i>	

19.00	Working private dinner for members of the Panel to commence drafting the report.
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Thursday October 5 2017	
08.45 – 09.00	Convening of the Panel
09.00 – 09.50	Meeting with Head of School & Acting Head, History of Art <i>Clarification and discussions of main findings by Panel.</i>
09.50 – 10.20	Tea/coffee and private meeting of Panel
10.30 – 11.00	Exit presentation <i>Exit presentation to all staff, to be made by the Chair or other member(s) of Panel as agreed, summarising the principal findings of the Panel. This presentation is <u>not</u> for discussion at this time.</i>
11.15 – 15.00	Further work on drafting the final report (lunch)