

**University College Cork
National University of Ireland, Cork**

Quality Improvement/Quality Assurance

Peer Review Group Report

Department of Geography

BSc Degree - Earth Science

BA – European Studies

Academic Year 2001/02

Members of the Peer Review Group

Professor D. Gillmor, Department of Geography, TCD, Dublin

Professor B. Bluck, Division of Earth Sciences, University of Glasgow, UK

Professor J. Burgess, Department of Geography, University College London, UK

Professor D. Lucey, Department of Food Business & Development, UCC

Professor G. Kiely, Department of Civil & Environmental Engineering, UCC (Chair)

Timetable for the Site Visit.

The timetable for the site visit of the Peer Review Group is appended as Appendix A.

Peer Review

Methodology

Areas of responsibility of each member of Peer Review Group

- Professor Lucey wrote sections on
 - Department details
 - Department Organisation & Planning and
 - Teaching and learning
- Professor Gillmor wrote the background on historical context in which the UCC Department of Geography has evolved and also sections on:
 - Dept. description and building needs
 - Organisation and planning
 - Teaching and learning
 - Research and scholarly activity
 - Staff development and
 - External relations
- Professor Bluck wrote sections on:
 - Organisation and planning
 - Research and scholarly activity and
 - Essential points as he sees them
- Professor Burgess wrote sections on
 - Teaching issues
 - Research issues and
 - Space and resources
- Professor Kiely wrote sections on
 - Teaching and learning
 - Research and scholarly activity
 - Staff development

- External relations and
- Support services

In essence each of the panel members compiled individual reports under the above headings, which were then coordinated by Professor Lucey and the Chair.

Self-Assessment Report

A Departmental co-ordinating committee chaired by Dr. Kevin Hourihan prepared the self-assessment report. The work, which started in February 2001, was completed in February 2002. It included 17 committee meetings. The final SA report reflected the views of all participants.

The Peer Review Group found the Self-Assessment Report to be detailed and honest and supported by information obtained during interviews over the two-day visit. The Peer Review Group did not find any significant omissions in the report. Further requests for information by the chairman of the Peer Review Group prior to the visit were dealt with expeditiously.

The Departmental Co-ordinating committee and its Chairman are to be congratulated for an excellent report and for being most helpful, forthcoming and honest with the Peer Review Group.

Findings of the Peer Review Group

Department Details

Over the past quarter century the Department of Geography has grown from a very small base to become the largest geography department in the country. Within UCC it is the fifth largest (of 17) department in the Faculty of Arts with a current student FTE of 364. The department's student numbers have grown in distinct phases as it responded positively to the University's policy of expansion of undergraduate student intake, guided by Governments' requests and incentives. The department, like many others in Ireland, would have seen their primary responsibility as providing the best possible education for the rapidly expanding numbers of our young people aspiring to attend third level, while maintaining the widespread international recognition of the quality of the department's graduates. The Peer Review Group notes the very favourable comments of the extern examiners about the high quality of the department's students, the care given to the students by the staff of the department and the range of opportunities offered by the department's programmes, given its small staff size. The Peer Review Group wishes to commend the department for the superb accomplishment in managing the growth so successfully, especially in an environment where expansion was encouraged in spurts sometimes accompanied by conflicting signals between the exhortations and provision of resources. While growing the undergraduate student numbers, the department has simultaneously increased its research and postgraduate base, which the Peer Review Group notes as a major accomplishment.

The nature of the department's growth pattern over the past two decades has immediate implications for its human and physical resources. The Peer Review Group notes that the age profile of academic staff is now too mature and that substantial issues of staff renewal are required to be addressed in the short term. Furthermore, 63% of the student numbers are female while only 2 of the academic staff (one permanent and one on a one-year temporary contract) are female. This is a human resource issue requiring immediate attention.

Although academic staff numbers have expanded over the past two decades, the Peer Review Group finds it anomalous that while the Geography department functions as a semi-Science discipline, it now has the second highest student-staff ratio within the Arts Faculty (21.0 compared to an average in Arts of 15.7)¹.

The department has received additional space over the past two decades but regrettably in a piecemeal way and not as part of an overall strategic plan for the department. The department functions over four separate space locations, which is a source of inefficiency. Three (and sometimes four) of the administrative staff are housed in one room (area approx. 12m²). This deficiency needs immediate attention. The Cartographer and department operative share a common space. Subdivision of this space is required to improve working conditions. Consideration should be given to transferring the Map library to the main University library. Access for disabled people should be accommodated in any building refurbishment. A staff/postgraduate room for formal meetings, seminars etc is required. Upgrading of the laboratory space is required as well as the laboratory instrumentation. It is very clear to the Peer Review Group that there is an urgent and immediate need for a single consolidated building to house all Geography staff under the one roof.

The Peer Review Group notes that the University Strategic Plan does not include a new consolidated building for Geography. In these circumstances the Peer Review Group recommends that the Department begin the consultation process with the Buildings and Estates Office and with the Vice-President for Planning, Communications & Development. The object is to consider all possibilities for a consolidated building, including a total refurbishment of the existing building including the consideration of an additional floor within/above the existing Geography building (noting the high ceiling of existing floors).

The broad thrust of the Peer Review Group's recommendations (itemized in later sections of this report) are aimed at stabilising the undergraduate numbers while enhancing and growing the existing research culture, as the formula for the next phase of the department's development.

Capping the first year intake, increase of academic staff number, consolidation and enhancement of physical space are the three key issues requiring immediate attention by the department, by the Dean of Arts and by the University.

¹ The actual student:staff ratio for 2001/02 is 22.3 when the vacant post left by the resignation of one of the lecturers is taken into account. This will be addressed when the replacement post (which has been approved) is filled.

Department Organisation & Planning.

Management Structure. Within Geography the structure is traditional to UCC and hierarchical in nature with the Head of Department being the manager. This has worked very successfully over the years. Administrative loads are increasing inordinately due to devolution from central administration and the administrative burden on HODs is becoming excessive. It is timely to review the management structure. A flat administrative structure in which as many staff as possible can take part in decision making, might be examined, wherein policy should involve as many staff as possible, but implementation of it is handed to a designated few. The Peer Review Group commends the department on its Strategic Plan, and suggests that the plan be updated regularly and lodged with the VP for Development. A person with responsibility for the executive administration, at the level of administrative officer with the title of Office Manager is required.

Budgets. Allocation of budgets should be made at the beginning of the year. The extra financial needs of Geography as a part-science department, located in the Arts Faculty, should be addressed by the University and the Arts Faculty. This includes the provision of resources for physical laboratories and their equipment and supplies, the expenditure on GIS and the cost of fieldwork for the Department as well as better financial provision for the large practical demonstration/tutorial work. It is clearly evident that these needs are not being met adequately. For increased efficiency, the BA in European Studies should have a separate budget.

Communications. The Peer Review Group were impressed with the loyalty and openness of staff throughout the Department. There are effective structures for organisation and planning in the Department but there should be a regular review and thinning of the 11 departmental committees. It is now time to reconstitute a Research Committee. More frequent but *shorter* staff meetings are recommended. Better integration of the academic support staff into the operation of the Department by inclusion at staff meetings is recommended. All staff should be computer literate and regular retraining in computer needs (e.g. ECDL) may be required.

Workloads. The two issues that arose in interviews with staff were excess teaching and excess administration. We address the issue of teaching in a later section (recommend reducing the number of elective modules as well as capping the first year student intake). As for excess administration, all staff perceive an ever increasing administrative load emanating from the University's central administration. The Arts Faculty and the University must, if it serious about efficiency, streamline its housekeeping as the increasing burden of administration faced by academics in particular is seriously compromising the academic output in teaching and research and placing inordinate levels of stress on all staff. Furthermore, the management at University level is perceived as being divorced from the 'coal face' of teaching and research. Issues that should be addressed by the University include: clashing of core modules in the timetable, which the Arts Faculty has failed to address; in the administration of research grants the finance office is seen as adding to the bureaucracy when it should be promoting research by enabling the grant holders.

Administration of Interdisciplinary Courses. The Department is central to two additional interdisciplinary degrees and the Peer Review Group recommends that:

- The Earth Science degree should have its own coordinator and administrator
- The BA in European Studies should have a separate budget for efficiency reasons

Appointments. In the 01/02 student staff ratio document, there are 13² full time academic members plus 4.3 part-time academic members with a total student FTE of 364. This gives a student staff ratio of 21.0 by comparison with an Arts Faculty average of 15.7. If the first year student intake is capped at 250, a substantial increase in new academic staff members is still required to get the FTE's to the Arts faculty average. The Peer Review Group recommends that the Department, in consultation with the Dean of Arts and the Director of Human Resources, prepare a three year strategic plan of hiring new staff. This strategy should address the age and gender issues as well as particular research niches that the Department wishes to develop.

Administrative Staff. A person with overall responsibility for the executive administration should be appointed, at the level of administrative officer with the title of Office Manager. Such a person would enhance the department's administration. The Office Manager should be responsible for distributing the workload amongst the executive assistants.

Teaching & Learning

In 01/02 there were a total staff FTE of 17.3³ and a student FTE of 364 (with 62 foreign students). **The FTE ratio for Geography at 21.0 is the second highest of the 17 Departments in Arts⁴.** The average in Arts is 15.7 with some Departments as low as 7.4. While Geography in UCC is in the Arts faculty, several of its functions are 'science' type. The laboratories and field trips are more akin to a Science department. On an FTE basis, Geography is severely penalised. It is clear to the Peer Review Group that all the staff in Geography are working at their limit because of the huge number of undergraduate students. When interviewed by the Peer Review Group, the Dean of Arts was aware of the FTE ratio and suggested that the foreign student numbers be reduced. The Department is not keen to reduce the foreign student numbers as it considers this student cohort an asset to the student learning experience. The Peer Review Group agrees that the foreign student cohort should be maintained. As a first step in bringing the FTE ratio in line with norms, the Peer Review Group asks that the Dean of Arts in consultation with the Head of Geography, find a mechanism to hold the quota of first year entry to Geography at 250 (the 00/01 first year entry was 312). This would reduce the FTE ratio to about 19. So maintaining the quota at 250 goes only part way to remedying the problem. To reduce the FTE ratio from 21.0 to the Arts average of 15.7 would require a very significant investment of additional academic members. The Peer Review Group wishes to emphasise that the excessive number of first year undergraduate students should be addressed. The Peer Review Group does not support the action of the Arts Faculty in admitting to first year

² In fact the number of fulltime academic staff decreased to 12 during the academic year due to the resignation on a lecturer. Approval has been granted by the university for a replacement post to be advertised and filled. This will restore the total staff FTE to 17.3.

³ See footnote 2

⁴ See footnote 1.

Geography all those students with geography as their first and second choice. This has resulted in excessive first year student numbers, a policy that is compromising the entire teaching arrangement of the department. The first year student intake must be capped at a maximum of 250.

Modularisation has resulted in module inflation. There appears to be too many core modules and electives for the teaching staff to manage effectively. The knock on effects include: additional assignments; field work; consultation with students; examining, etc. The excess modules encourage more teaching but less emphasis on independent student learning. The examination period stretches over 5 months (May to September). This is frustrating to academics looking for a block of time for research. The Department should be creative in its efforts to free up time and make the examination period shorter and the University should also address this.

As a result of the large numbers of students, the Department has introduced a major change (the main project will be elective from October 2002 onwards). The Peer Review Group has grave reservations about this. This is a negative knock-on effect of not holding down the quota in first year entry. The students in the Earth Science degree identified a lack of integration of courses in their final year and also a lack of identity as they had no common space, laboratory or otherwise for 'Earth Science'.

We recommend to the Department:

- To undertake a review of its curriculum and thin out the number of modules while encouraging methods of independent learning. New modules should be only added on the basis of replacing existing modules.
- To consider reinstating the major project as compulsory
- To look at ways to increase opportunities for small group work in the 2nd and 3rd years to enable students (particularly young women) to do better
- That the Earth Science degree should have a dedicated coordinator who is a permanent full time academic staff member. A dedicated multipurpose room /laboratory/computer room/common room should be found for this degree.
- That the marks from the 2nd year be added (via some appropriate formula) to the 3rd results for the award of the overall degree result
- That two externs be appointed: one in human geography and EDS; the second in physical geography

We recommend to the University:

- That timetabling be arranged to minimise clashes and also that some flexibility be permitted to timetabling (which is perceived as being too rigid)
- That the first year quota must be held at 250 or below
- That additional academic staff must be recruited. Consideration should be given to new full time staff as well as joint appointments. The student-staff FTE speaks for itself
- To review the inordinately long and frustrating examination period lasting from May to September with the goal of shortening this process

Research & Scholarly Activity

The Department has increased its research activity very substantially in the last two decades as evidenced by the increased number of postgraduates, the increased number of international journal peer reviewed papers and the increase in research income. Up to about 1985 the Department graduated 1 to 2 postgraduates each year. In 2001, out of a total postgraduate population of 46, the number that graduated was 14, including 4 PhDs. Also in 2001 the Department secured 4 Government of Ireland postgraduate scholarships out of a college wide success of 33. The Department has a Departmental Graduate Studies Committee, which monitors the supervision of postgraduates. The number of peer reviewed international journal papers in the last five years stands at 49, plus 7 books, 30 book chapters and 18 research reports. This success is highly commendable. The research income in the last five years was reported as approximately €2.5 million for the department and its associated research centres.

We commend the Department for its excellent track record in research. However there is evidence that the overload of staff with undergraduate teaching and tutoring is compromising research output. There is room for increased output in research. The undergraduate programme is now strong, having been built up very successfully over the past two decades and will not be compromised by a shift of emphasis towards a more research ethos within the Department. In fact, international evidence suggests that undergraduates benefit enormously from *research led teaching*.

We recommend to the Department:

- To enhance and extend a culture of research, which accommodates all different research modes including: the large funded research; the network type research; the lone scholar; the collaborative research, etc.
- To establish a Departmental Research Committee to
 - Develop a strategic plan of research across the department
 - Ensure better development of individual research via the mentoring of new younger staff by more senior members
 - Be pro-active in promoting information about opportunities for research
 - To establish a prominent notice board with copies of first pages of publications for a two year roll-over period
 - To establish a weekly seminar series which would include
 - Reports of research activity of all staff members for the previous year
 - Reports of research activity of all postgraduates doing research degrees
 - Lectures by outside researchers
 - Lectures on research grant applications by personnel from funding agencies to include the office of the VP for research
 - The 'load' of organising the weekly seminar series should be treated as equivalent to 'one module' of teaching
 - Consider designating one staff member as the 'postgraduate officer' with overall responsibility for the sector
 - Develop a mechanism to ensure that postgraduates are not over-used for undergraduate teaching purposes

- Develop mechanisms to ensure that postgraduates are given adequate computer hardware and internet connections and access to adequate laboratory, field infrastructure and library requirements

We recommend to the University:

- To develop an equation that determines the *earning power* of a Department's FTE's plus research income. Then this earning power should be balanced with the cost of running the Department. Otherwise, the spectre looms that resource changes may run Departments into deficit.
- To develop realistic overhead receipts with funding agencies, as the inadequacy of the 20% overhead and in some cases 0% overhead, severely compromises the University in enabling Departments to meet their strategic research goals.

Staff Development

The fundamental resource of the University and its Departments is its people. The staff in Geography are amongst the most productive and loyal in UCC. However, recent developments in the administration of the University are testing the will of many staff members to perform at their optimum. Excessive teaching loads, oversized classes, timetabling conflicts, inadequate infrastructure for teaching laboratory and field work, excessive administration burdens, non-reward for generating research contracts, not having a consolidated building and gender issues are some of the points of concern raised by staff members. Staff indicated that their points of concern are by and large with the administration of the University and not with the administration within the Department. Staff members are unsure what the role of the HR Department is in the University but felt that HR should assist in staff development. To support staff members at this time we recommend that staff development be addressed by the Department and by the University.

We recommend to the Department:

- That a mentoring system be introduced by the Department, whereby young staff members are guided in their teaching and research career by more senior members. Encourage that younger staff have a career plan and arrange that the department facilitate this where possible

We recommend to the University:

- That the HR Department whose brief includes...'*...support the staff of the University...*' should be proactive in assisting the Geography Department with its staff development requirements.
- To examine the ratio of female students to female staff. Currently 63% of the student population are female while only 2 of the 12 full-time academic staff are female. This should be addressed. As a start, the University should establish a support group for female academics intent on breaking through the 'glass ceiling'.
- Staff development courses be organised by Human Resources, outside of the teaching and examination periods.

- Opportunities for promotion of the technical staff are few and infrequent. This should be addressed.
- The existence of half time teaching posts is a recipe for future problems. The university should consider ways of reducing and ultimately moving to a situation where all teaching posts in the department are full time.
- That the University address the elongated examination period, which currently begins in May and finishes in September. The Autumn examination process (preceded by a consultative process for students where staff members are required to be on campus) effectively stunts the opportunity for summer research efforts.
- That sabbatical leave be encouraged as a means of staff development. Globally it is well proven that scholars who avail themselves of sabbatical leave are amongst the most innovative and productive.
- A formula for sabbatical leave be implemented college-wide that will not burden the recipient with excessive teaching commitments either prior to or on return from leave and furthermore that the recipient is not compromised financially in the process.

External Relations

The Department is particularly successful in developing and maintaining links with national and international institutions. Currently there are 62 non-Irish visiting students (34 from the USA). At 7% of the total student population in Geography this is commendable and the Irish students benefit from the interaction with their international peers. The Peer Review Group strongly supports these links and recommends that they be maintained and expanded.

Support Services

1. *Library.* The library came in for a lot of criticism by undergraduate students, postgraduate students and academic staff. Complaints included: lack of textbooks, lack of journals, essentially no access to interlibrary loans and inadequate photocopying facilities. When the Peer Review Group visited the library we were horrified to be informed that funding to the UCC library has been running at about 2/3rds that of other Irish Universities. We were also informed that the Geography Department subsidises book purchases in the library. Academic staff members are allowed only 3 interlibrary loan tokens per year or about one token per postgraduate student. Some postgraduates informed us that they go to other Irish Universities for their library needs, and one student informed us that he goes to the UK for his library needs. All in all we were given a very dim picture of the library. Staff and students are loud in their praise for the library staff who are considered to be at all times very helpful.

The external members of the Peer Review Group expressed the strong view that UCC cannot publicly claim to be a research led Teaching University while privately letting the library wallow in poverty.

2. *Computer Centre.* The support offered by the Computer Centre was considered as adequate by staff. However, some staff members highlighted the need for better

maintenance of email and internet facilities. Students interviewed by the Peer Review Group (particularly the postgraduates) were very unhappy with the hardware, software and internet facilities available to them. One student complained that he was waiting for 12 months for an email connection

3. *Buildings and Estates.* Very high levels of dissatisfaction were levelled at this office. Maintenance of the Geography building was felt by staff to be inadequate and they considered that the building is currently suffering from the high volume of student traffic.
4. *Audiovisual Services and Catering & Cleaning.* High levels of satisfaction were expressed with these services.

We recommend to the University:

- To immediately implement resources increase to the Library. The University should look at all options to increase resources to the library including the (no cost) possibility of sharing hardcopy journals within the Irish Universities group. It may be possible that at least *one* copy of the more important journals be held by at least one Irish University with rapid access by others
- To initiate a programme of building refurbishment to the Geography building in line with recommendations for space and buildings consolidation
- That a senior member of the Computer Centre visit the Department and assist and advise the Department in its computing needs.

We recommend to the Department:

- To take a proactive role with the Buildings and Estates Office with regard to refurbishment of the Geography building.
- To take up the Computer Centre's invitation to provide courses (e.g. ECDL) for some staff members so that all staff members are computer literate. It is unacceptable in this day and age that administrative staff be expected to do emails for some staff members.
- Academic staff with postgraduates must take responsibility for computing facilities for their students. It is unacceptable that access to postgraduate offices and computing is denied after 6pm in some cases.

Overall Analysis

On the surface the department is performing very well, with a very high student/staff FTE, by and large a satisfied student population, and an annually increasing research income. Staff work hard and are loyal. However, below the surface there are many systemic problems: too many undergraduates; too few academic staff; cramped administrative offices; inadequate laboratory space and inadequate laboratory equipment; excessive administrative loads and a split department housed in four separate locations. If these ailments are allowed to continue, the Peer Review Group considers that the deliverance of teaching within the department is not sustainable and the potential for widening the research base is also not possible.

Recommendations for Improvement - to the Department

1. Review the curriculum with the objective of thinning out the excessive number of modules making sure not to add new modules without cutting existing ones.
2. Reinstate the final year project as compulsory.
3. Find a mechanism to add some % of the second year marks to the third year marks in arriving at the total marks for the award of the degree.
4. Appoint two undergraduate externs for the BA in Geography: one in Human Geography and the second in Physical Geography.
5. The BSc in Earth Science should have a dedicated coordinator with a separate budget and a dedicated multipurpose room/laboratory.
6. Thin out the number of Department Committees.
7. Establish a Departmental Research Committee with the goal of enhancing and extending the culture of research to include **all** academic staff members (see details in section on Research and Scholarly Activity). A five-year strategic plan for research should be developed which is wide and loose enough that researchers may alter direction depending on available funds or research questions of interest.
8. Set up a mentoring system whereby younger academic staff members are guided in their teaching and research career by established senior members.
9. Review the policy of computers for postgraduates, making sure that adequate computers are available to all postgraduates and that access times to computers are increased to include night time and weekends.

Recommendations for Improvement - to the University

1. Cap the first year student intake at 250 students or below.
2. Increase the academic staff numbers (full time and/or joint appointments) to attain a student/staff FTE ratio closer to the Arts faculty average.
3. Initiate a programme of building refurbishment to the Geography Building in line with recommendations for space and building consolidation to be achieved by 2005. Such a strategy should include comprehensive disability access.
4. Set up an Academic Council Committee with the objective of reducing the excessively long exam period (starts in early May and finishes in September).
5. Develop an equation that determines the *earning power* of the Departments which includes research income so that a research active departments such as Geography are rewarded.

6. Develop and implement a strategy for the increase in the University research overhead to at least 30% by the year 2005.
7. The Human Resources department should be more proactive in assisting the department with staff development requirements.
8. 63% of the students and 2 of the 12 full-time academic staff are female. The gender imbalance should be urgently addressed.
9. While the HOD has always encouraged sabbatical leave as a means of academic staff development, the staff member on return is often burdened with excessive teaching to make up for the time away. The University should understand the benefits of sabbatical leave and should introduce a more enabling sabbatical leave policy college wide.
10. The University should immediately address the financial crises in the Library particularly regarding journals. A system of planned sharing of journals amongst Irish University (at little or no extra cost) might go a long way to help students and research staff.

Timetable for conduct of Peer Review Group Visit

Department of Department of Geography
BSc Earth Science Degree;
BA European Studies

Wednesday 6 March 2002

- 18.00 – 19.30 Meeting of members of the Peer Review Group
Briefing by Director of Quality Promotion Unit, Dr. N. Ryan.
Group agreed final work schedule and assignment of tasks for the following 2 days.
Views were exchanged and areas to be clarified or explored were identified.
- 20.00 Dinner for members of the Peer Review Group, Heads of Departments of Geography & Geology, and representatives of staff.

Thursday 7 March 2002

- 08.30 – 09.00 Convening of Peer Review Group in Seminar Room, Geography Department, second floor, Geography & Geology Building
- 09.00 – 13.00** Consideration of Self-Assessment Report and other inputs along with all department staff, including administrative / technical / support staff, as appropriate. Time will be allowed for private meetings of members of the Peer Review Group with members of staff.
- 09.00 – 09.30 Professor W. Smyth, Head of Geography Department
- 09.30 – 10.15 Departmental Co-ordinating committee/staff of Department of Geography
- 10.15 – 10.30 Informal gathering for tea/coffee
- 10.30 – 11.00 Staff of BSc Earth Science
- 11.00 – 11.30 Staff of BA European Studies
- 11.30 – 13.00 Meetings with individual members of staff

O’Connell Seminar Room

11.30 Ms Rose Walshe, Ms Noreen McDowell, Ms. Suzanne O’Sullivan,
Ms. Sheila Hyde (Departmental Executive Assistants)

11.50 Dr. Eileen O’Rourke

12.00 Mr. Darius Bartlett

12.20 Dr. Jim McLaughlin
 12.30 Dr. Una Ni Chaoimh
 12.40 Mr Brendan Dockery (Departmental Operative)
 12.50 Mr. Piaras Mac Einri

P. Bruck's Office

11.30 Dr. Denis Linehan
 11.40 Prof Pat O'Flanagan
 11.50 Prof. Robert Devoy
 12.00 Mr. Michael Murphy (Departmental Cartographer)
 12.10 Ms. Helen Bradley (GIS Development Officer)
 12.20 Mr. Raymond O'Connor
 12.30 Dr. Barry Brunt
 12.40 Ms. Roisin Murphy, Ms. Mary Murphy (Technicians)
 12.50 Dr. Kevin Hourihan

13.00 – 14.00 Working lunch for members of Peer Review Group

14.00 – 15.00 Visit to core facilities of Department, including Main Building, Muskerry Villas, Connolly Building, Bloomfield Terrace

15.00 – 17.00 Meetings with representative selections of students
 15.00 undergraduates in Geography programmes
 15.30 undergraduates in BA European Studies programme
 16.00 undergraduates in BSc Earth Science programme
 16.30 postgraduates in Geography

18.30 Meeting of Peer Review Group to identify remaining aspects to be clarified and to finalise tasks for the following day. Working dinner for members for the Peer Review Group

Friday 8 March 2002

08.30 – 09.00 Convening of Peer Review Group in Seminar Room, Geography Department, second floor, Geography & Geology Building

09.00 – 09.30 Professor Pat Fitzpatrick, Chair, Academic Council Committee on Research & Dr. Ruth Davis, Research Support Officer, Office of Vice-President for Research Policy & Support

09.30 – 10.00 Professor Patrick O'Flanagan

10.00 – 11.00 Visit to Q + 3, Boole Library. Meeting with Ms. Margot Conrick, Head of Information Services and Ms. Olivia Fitzpatrick, Subject Librarian

11.00 – 11.30 Professor Peter Woodman, Dean of Arts

11.45 – 12.15 Professor Aine Hyland, Vice-President and member of Executive Management Group

- 12.20 – 12.30 Dr. Elizabeth Gebreurs, Vice-Dean of Faculty of Science
- 12.30 – 13.00 Professor W. Smyth, Head of Department of Geography to clarify any outstanding issues concerning the Department of Geography
- 13.00 – 13.15 Professor W. Smyth, Head of Geography Department and Professor K. Higgs, Head of Geology Department to clarify any outstanding issues concerning the BSc Earth Science programme
- 13.00 – 14.00 Working Lunch for members of PRG
- 14.00 – 17.00 Preparation of first draft of final report
- 17.00 – 17.30 Exit presentation was made to all staff of the Department by the Chair of the Peer Review Group, summarising the principal findings of the Peer Review Group. (Note: This presentation was not for discussion at this time by the staff of the department.)
Venue: Jackson Library, Geography/Geology Building
- 19.00 Working dinner for members of the Peer Review Group to complete drafting of report and finalisation of arrangements for speedy completion and submission of final report.

Saturday 9 March 2002

Externs depart