

## QUALITY REVIEW FOLLOW-UP MEETING

### DEPARTMENT OF GERMAN

A meeting to discuss progress made in implementing recommendations for improvement arising from the quality review of the Department of German was held on 6 November 2009.

Present: Professor David Cox, Head, College of Arts, Celtic Studies & Social Sciences  
Dr Manfred Schewe, Head, Department of German  
Dr Rachel MagShamhráin, Department of German  
Ms Christine Bremer, Department of German  
Dr Norma Ryan, Director, Quality Promotion Unit  
Ms Deirdre O'Brien, Administrative Officer, Quality Promotion Unit

#### Abbreviations

*PRG: Peer Review Group*

*VP: Vice-President*

*QPC: Quality Promotion Committee*

*QIP: Quality Improvement Plan*

*HR: Human Resources*

*ACSSS: Arts, Celtic Studies & Social Sciences*

*BL: Business & Law*

*UMT: University Management Group*

*T&L: Teaching & Learning*

*CLT: College Language Teacher*

<b>PRG Recommendation</b>	<b>QPC Recommendation</b>	<b>Follow-up Report Nov 2009</b>
<b>Recommendations to the University</b>		
1. There is a need for a media room, which should have a facility for German satellite TV programmes and film screenings.	This is a space allocation issue for the Head of College ACSSS.  QPC noted that any action on this recommendation should be made in the context of the comments of the Head of College of ACSSS, and recognising the agreement between the Department of German, the Head of College and UMT for the development of the Department of German over the next 10 years.	Not implemented  The Head of College is unable to accommodate the department in this regard due to a lack of appropriate space in the O'Rahilly Building.  The Department is extremely anxious to secure a media room and is willing to improvise in order to find a solution.  The Head of College believes that the incoming Head of School of Languages, Literature & Culture could consider possible alternatives such as a rearrangement of space or a shared media room for all language subjects.

<b>PRG Recommendation</b>		<b>QPC Recommendation</b>	<b>Follow-up Report Nov 2009</b>
2.	The Chair of German should be replaced when resources permit	<p>The QPC recognised the agreement between the Department &amp; Head of College ACSSS with UMG for the development of German.</p> <p>The QPC also noted the importance of having a leader in the discipline at the appropriate level if the discipline is to develop and deliver on the objectives of the university.</p>	<p>Not implemented.</p> <p>This has not been implemented due to the current HEA moratorium on staffing.</p>
3.	The Language Laboratory facilities should be reviewed and upgraded	<p>Resourcing and equipping issue</p> <p>QPC recommended Head of College ACSSS seeks means, in discussion with all language departments, to determine the requirements and possibilities for funding these. This is a major quality issue for teaching and learning.</p>	<p>Not implemented.</p> <p>This has not been implemented. A decision needs to be taken regarding the equipment needed. The Head of College suggested that the incoming Head of School may take a role in the implementation of this recommendation.</p> <p>The VP for Teaching &amp; Learning is chairing a sub-committee to look at this issue on a university-wide basis. Dr Ryan will write to the VP T&amp;L to request an update for the department and for Governing Body.</p>
4.	That there is a review and re-evaluation of the role of the College Language Teachers in the University with particular reference to career development and retention	<p>QPC noted that a report on this has been prepared by the Head of College ACSSS and sent to the Registrar. This is an ongoing issue which is being dealt with at the appropriate level in the University.</p>	<p>Not implemented.</p> <p>UCC cannot change the terms and conditions under which people are employed in the university unless an agreement is reached nationally.</p> <p>The terms and conditions of the CLTs remain an ongoing issue for morale.</p> <p>It was noted that there is no difficulty with retention and that the employment contracts provide full security to the CLTs, as for all permanent staff of UCC.</p>

<b>PRG Recommendation</b>		<b>QPC Recommendation</b>	<b>Follow-up Report Nov 2009</b>
5.	The University should look closely at the criteria applied to the research status of Humanities departments in general.	<p>Endorsed</p> <p>This is already underway and the Research Quality Review planned for 08/09 and for which preparations are already underway will provide significant evidence of appropriate measures of research activity.</p> <p>Academic Council has agreed metrics which will also help inform the criteria and metrics for humanities disciplines.</p>	<p>Implemented.</p> <p>The recent Research Quality Review (2008/09) provided significant evidence of appropriate measures of research activity, as proposed by the AC.</p>
<b>Recommendations to the Department</b>			
6.	<b><i>Strategic Plan</i></b>		
	<p>The Department should develop a clear strategic plan, including reference to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- ‘Schoolification’</li> <li>- The identity of the Department (e.g. the tension between applied (i.e. language, commerce) and academic (i.e. literature, critical analysis).</li> <li>- Funding opportunities</li> <li>- Space needs and requirements</li> <li>- Staffing</li> <li>- Identification of research areas that are attractive to postgraduate students.</li> </ul>	<p>Strongly endorsed the recommendation that the Department should integrate its strategic plan with that of the University taking cognisance of the development of a School of Languages and the role of German within that School.</p> <p>QPC welcomed the detailed and positive response of Department to engage with process of strategic planning and noted the need to ensure that the strategic plan is in line with the University strategic plan when it is published.</p> <p>QPC noted the need to make the new appointments in the context of the plan, rather than making the appointments and then developing the plan.</p>	<p>Implemented.</p> <p>The Department have completed their Strategic Plan.</p> <p>The Department are currently in negotiation with Professor Dermot Keogh to develop European Jewish culture and history studies within the department. It is envisaged that a conference on European Jewish culture and history will take place in 2010 followed by a lecture series. The next step will be to develop a centre and an MA programme.</p> <p>Funding remains an issue but the Department is focused on future plans and confident in their ability to attract funding.</p>
7.	<b><i>Staffing</i></b>		
	The Department should build its team around its strategy and recruit the two new permanent staff accordingly.	<p>Endorsed.</p> <p>The Head of College ACSSS confirmed that one of the posts will be in the area of Commerce and German.</p>	<p>Implemented.</p> <p>2 additional lecturers have been appointed since the review.</p>
8.	<b><i>Teaching Provision</i></b>		

<b>PRG Recommendation</b>	<b>QPC Recommendation</b>	<b>Follow-up Report Nov 2009</b>
<p>The German Department should develop modules that meet the needs of Commerce students more closely in acquiring business German and developing a knowledge of the German business environment.</p>	<p>Strongly endorsed.</p> <p>QPC noted and welcomed the positive response of the Department and the willingness to consider ways to achieve the aim of this recommendation.</p> <p>QPC recommended that the Department also engages with the College of BL in this regard</p>	<p>Implemented and ongoing.</p> <p>New modules have been introduced which are of immediate relevance to commerce students.</p>
<p>In First Year BComm (International with German) there should be an increase in language teaching contact hours from three hours per week to five hours per week. The additional hours should be used for the development of the students' oral skills. One contact hour should be supervised in the language laboratory.</p>	<p>Endorsed.</p> <p>QPC noted the plans the Department is putting in place to implement the recommendation and recommended that the Department includes discipline-specific language in its language teaching contact hours.</p>	<p>Not yet implemented.</p> <p>The Department is working towards addressing this recommendation in full.</p>
<p>The Department should develop a clear policy on teaching through the target language.</p>	<p>Endorsed.</p> <p>The QPC would welcome details of the policy referred to in the departmental response and requested that it be appended to the quality improvement plan when developed.</p>	<p>Implemented.</p>
<p>The Department should find ways to increase student fulltime equivalents by extending the provision of popular modules to other students (e.g. Holocaust Studies).</p>	<p>Endorsed.</p>	<p>Partially implemented.</p> <p>The Department is working hard to introduce modules of interest and to create links with other departments. Modules on holocaust studies and film studies are being introduced. Curriculum innovation is also a focus of the Department with modules in Berlin studies being developed.</p>

	<b>PRG Recommendation</b>	<b>QPC Recommendation</b>	<b>Follow-up Report Nov 2009</b>
	The Department should consider making the newly designed MA programme in German Studies accessible to evening students.	Endorsed. QPC welcomed the commitment of the Department to implementation when students are accepted into the MA.	Not implemented. This has not been implemented although the Department currently facilitates MA students with timetabling difficulties. Market research will be conducted to assess the demand for evening courses.
	The University should consider changing the name of the degree in Language and Cultural Studies to BA International, a degree course with a built-in Third Year abroad.	QPC recommended that this is examined by College ACSSS	Not implemented. This is an issue for the School of Languages, Literature & Culture to consider when it is fully established.
	The Department should utilise the Erasmus mechanisms to ensure that all students go abroad.	Endorsed	Implemented. The Department feels that the Erasmus mechanisms already in place are quite satisfactory. The Department has a good network of partner universities and a further cooperation, with the Herder-Institute Leipzig, has been initiated recently.
	The Department should ensure that students are aware of library facilities and take part in library tours at the beginning of their courses.	Endorsed The QPC noted the response from the Department ( <i>the Department has a clear policy in this regard as stated under <u>Library</u> in Handbook pages 27–30</i> ).	Implemented
	The Department should review its H Dip programme and ensure the quality of the structure and of the teaching of the programme.	Endorsed	Not yet implemented. Discussions as to the involvement of the Department in the H Dip programme will be initiated in the current term 2008.
9.	<b><i>Collaborative Work</i></b>		

<b>PRG Recommendation</b>	<b>QPC Recommendation</b>	<b>Follow-up Report Nov 2009</b>
<p>That the Department, in developing its future strategy, continues to actively pursue links with larger, student full-time equivalent-rich departments/schools in UCC in order to extend their range of interdisciplinary modules and in so doing increase the student full-time equivalent allocation to the Department.</p>	<p>Endorsed in the context of the strategic needs of the university. Only viable modules should be considered.</p>	<p>Ongoing</p> <p>New modules are being created and contacts in other departments are being explored.</p> <p>Student numbers have increased this academic year.</p>
<p>Department should forge tighter bonds with the secondary schools in the area.</p>	<p>Endorsed</p>	<p>Ongoing</p> <p>The Department was successful in obtaining funding from Ionad Bairre to finance a project on Berlin. This project will be researched by undergraduate students. The students will prepare a presentation on Berlin and present it to secondary school students.</p>
<p>In the context of the new appointments at Lecturer level, the Department should seriously consider including representatives on the interview panel from stakeholders with an interest in the applied side of the Department's activities such as Commerce and Law.</p>	<p>Endorsed in principle but noted that, in this case, the interview Board has already been established and approved by Academic Board.</p>	<p>-----</p>
<p>The Department should actively consider the formation of an interdisciplinary centre for literary and media research which might attract research funding and appeal to postgraduate students.</p>	<p>Endorsed consideration of this at a School and College level.</p>	<p>Ongoing.</p> <p>The Department has applied for funding for such a project through PRTL.</p>

<b>PRG Recommendation</b>	<b>QPC Recommendation</b>	<b>Follow-up Report Nov 2009</b>
<p>That the Department consider the further expansion of their outreach activities to include other national and international institutions.</p>	<p>Endorsed. Recommended that implementation of this recommendation must not be at the expense of core departmental activities. Recommended that collaboration in first instance should be with other Departments of German nationally to determine what areas are lacking at a national level and to ensure coverage of the discipline to an excellent standard within the whole of Ireland.</p>	<p>Ongoing The Department organised a conference recently for third level teachers of German.</p>
<p>10. <b>Funding</b></p>	<p>All of the following recommendations were endorsed subject to being within the context of the School and College's strategies.</p>	
<p>That staff apply for external research funding and seek the support of the Research Office in doing so.</p>	<p>Endorsed</p>	<p>Implemented and ongoing The College of ACSSS has established its own research office and is in process of staffing it. The VP for Research Office has also designated someone with responsibility for Arts and Humanities. The Head of Department has met with the research representative in the CACSSS to discuss the next round of PRTLL.</p>
<p>That the Department should seek research funding for library acquisition funds.</p>	<p>Endorsed.</p>	<p>Ongoing. The Department intends to contact 'Pro Helvetia' – the Swiss academic/cultural exchange service – in order to seek funding for library acquisition funds.</p>

<b>PRG Recommendation</b>	<b>QPC Recommendation</b>	<b>Follow-up Report Nov 2009</b>
<p>That the Department pursue funding options for national and international students as outlined in the body of the text of this report.</p>	<p>Endorsed</p>	<p>The Department plans to have further discussions with the International Education Office re this recommendation. The Department has also recently been in discussion regarding a possible cooperation with the Herder Institute Leipzig.</p> <p>For the new “Berlin” module, the Department will try to negotiate with Aer Lingus in order to get funding as a trip to Berlin trip might become an integral compulsory element of the module.</p>
<p>That the Department should actively seek opportunities for funding via the UCC Development Office.</p>	<p>Endorsed in the context of the University strategy. Should be undertaken in collaboration with the Development Office and Departments of German nationally.</p>	<p>Ongoing.</p> <p>The Department will contact the Development Office and discuss further steps.</p> <p>Staff will continue to actively pursue external research funding and research grants. The creation of an interdisciplinary centre would help to secure more research funding.</p>
<p>Put together list of alumni in consultation with Alumni Office for professional development.</p>	<p>Endorsed</p>	<p>Partially implemented and ongoing.</p> <p>The Department are in the process of devising (with the Computer Centre) a data collection system for their website. The students will input their contact details which the Department can then use as a database. The students will be able to keep in touch with the Department and will have access to testimonials and information on the career paths of former students.</p>