



# UCC

University College Cork, Ireland  
Coláiste na hOllscoile Corcaigh

## Fheabhsú Cáilíochta Quality Enhancement



QUALITY REVIEW

PEER REVIEW PANEL REPORT

SCHOOL OF PUBLIC HEALTH

*“To support the University’s mission and strategy for excellence in learning, research and related services through developing and embedding a culture of quality enhancement based on the outcomes of robust expert peer review and informed by ongoing analysis of key quality indicators.”*

(UCC Quality Enhancement Committee Aim)

**May 2024**

## Contents

Context.....	3
Methodology and Site Visit.....	3
Panel Members .....	4
Objectives of Quality Review .....	5
Commendations and Recommendations .....	6
Commendations.....	6
Summary Recommendations.....	8
Recommendations – Further Detail.....	9
Priority Recommendations .....	9
Medium-term Recommendations .....	10
Long-term Recommendations .....	11
Observations .....	12
Overall Analysis of Self-Evaluation Process .....	14
Self-Evaluation Report (SER) .....	14
SWOT.....	14
Benchmarking .....	15
Good Practice Case Study .....	15
School of Public Health Overview .....	16
Facilities.....	16
Conclusion.....	17
Next Steps .....	17
Appendix A – Panel Profiles .....	18
Appendix B – Timetable .....	21

## Context

The [School of Public Health](#) in UCC is one of six schools situated in the College of Medicine & Health. It previously formed part of the School of Medicine as the Department of Epidemiology and Public Health and achieved its School status in November 2017. The School is currently the only standalone School of Public Health in the Republic of Ireland, paving the way as a leading provider in Public Health education with an international student body. This is the first internal quality review that the School has participated in since becoming a standalone School in UCC. The previous internal quality review for the [School of Public Health](#) was as a Department in the 2012/13 School of Medicine review. During this review, the research activity in the Department was deemed excellent and of leading international standard by the peer review Panel. The [School of Public Health](#) continues to be very successful in its research and academics in the School and have established various research themes, including public health nutrition, perinatal and developmental epidemiology, health services research, environmental epidemiology, chronic disease epidemiology, public mental health, occupational health, implementation science and clinical trial methodology. The recruitment of research students into the School is facilitated by a longstanding programme known as SPHeRE (Structured Population health, Policy and Health-services Research Education) and staff in the School have also recently been successful in leading on various PhD programmes, including MHAINTAIN and CDP.

From 2020 to 2022, the School underwent a detailed independent quality review by the Agency for Public Health Education and Accreditation (APHEA), resulting in institutional accreditation in December 2022. The [School of Public Health](#) in UCC is the 8<sup>th</sup> School/Institute globally to receive this accreditation. The [School of Public Health](#) offers one undergraduate degree programme, six Master's degree programmes, Doctoral programmes (including three nationally funded, structured PhD programmes) and five professional certificate/diploma programmes. The most recent figures in the School's Self-Evaluation Report (SER) refer to the academic year 2023/24 and correspond to a student FTE of 239.5. The SER reported 216 new student enrolments (40 Undergraduate, 93 Masters, 3 Doctoral and 80 Postgraduate Certificate/Diploma) with 179 continuing enrolments (101 Undergraduate, 62 Master's and 16 Doctoral) for the 2023/24 academic year.

Staff in the School are situated on the fourth floor of the Brookfield Health Sciences Complex, Western Gateway Building with a range of modern classroom and learning facilities available for teaching the current programmes. The staff total reported in the SER refers to 61 (17 full-time and 44 part-time staff members), which equates to a staff FTE of 49.6. The gender mix for staff in the [School of Public Health](#) that are on permanent contracts is 65% female and 35% male. The School received its departmental Athena Swan Bronze award in 2020 and is the second School in the College of Medicine and Health to achieve this.

## Methodology and Site Visit

A model for conducting site visits virtually was developed in 2020 to enable completion of Quality Reviews under the prevailing public health restrictions owing to the COVID-19 pandemic. This model ensured continuity in the operation and delivery of quality review and enhancement activities. In 2022 the model moved to a hybrid review comprising of a 2 day on-campus site visit and 2 half-day virtual meetings.

This review took place under the hybrid review process over 2 weeks during April 2024. During the site visit the Panel met with staff, students, senior officers, and relevant internal stakeholders. During the virtual meetings the Panel focused on writing the Report with a particular emphasis on the commendations and recommendations. The sequencing of meetings was organised to ensure coherence and progression in the conduct of the review. The platform used for the virtual meetings was MS Teams. The timetable for the site visit afforded appropriate time to engage with the broad variety of stakeholders. The timetable is included as Appendix B.

The Panel brought together internal and international peer reviewers (Panel profiles can be found in Appendix A). The internal reviewers provided knowledge of institutional and organisational structures with the external Panel members contributing their subject-specific expertise. The student Panel member brought valuable insights and perspectives on student issues. At the end of the site visit, the Panel presented its initial findings, both commendations and recommendations, to the staff of the School.

To support the Peer Review Panel and facilitate effective engagement throughout the site visit, additional guidance and support was provided by staff of the Quality Enhancement Unit (QEU) in UCC. This included technical support, as well as briefing and advisory support prior to and throughout the review. Review coordination was provided throughout by a Review Coordinator to facilitate the review process and to support the Peer Review Panel in formulating and agreeing the final Panel Report. The Report was compiled collaboratively, and the entire Panel contributed to the production of the final Report.

## Panel Members

Refer to Appendix A for detailed Panel profiles.

Name	Position/Discipline	Institution
Professor Margaret Barry (Vice-Chair)	Established Chair of Health Promotion and Public Health, School of Health Sciences	University of Galway
Professor Luigina Ciolfi	School of Applied Psychology	University College Cork
Professor Steven Cummins	Head, Department of Public Health, Environments & Society	London School of Hygiene & Tropical Medicine
Professor Liam Marnane (Chair)	School of Engineering & Architecture and INFANT Research Centre	University College Cork
Mr Khushal Paryani (Student Reviewer)	Cork University Business School	University College Cork
<b>Review Coordinator</b>		
<i>Ms Seugnet Kritzinger</i>	<i>Quality Enhancement Unit</i>	<i>University College Cork</i>
<b>IT and Logistics Coordinator</b>		

<i>Ms Marie O'Regan</i>	<i>Quality Enhancement Unit</i>	<i>University College Cork</i>
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### Objectives of Quality Review

The overarching objectives of academic quality review at UCC are to enable Schools, through evidence-based self-evaluation, to:

1. Reflect on and promote the strategic enhancement of their academic activities to ensure an outstanding learning experience for all students (enhancement dimension).
2. Evaluate the effectiveness of their processes for assuring academic standards and provision, in line with the University's academic mission and strategy (assurance dimension).

Thus, peer review goes beyond quality assurance to also embrace continuous quality enhancement. The Peer Review Panel Report reflects these objectives in the recommendations and commendations outlined to support the [School of Public Health](#) in further refining its priorities and optimising its activities in the pursuit of its ambitious drive for excellence within the international and national arena of higher education.

## Commendations and Recommendations

### Commendations

Based on the information obtained from the Self-Evaluation Report and meetings with multiple internal, as well as external [School of Public Health stakeholders](#), the Panel commends the School for the following:

1. The production of a concise, accessible, and honest Self-Evaluation Report, accompanied by impressive collegiality and honesty from staff in the School of Public Health throughout the process. The Panel was particularly impressed with the engagement of the School with the Quality Review process especially since it was the School's first internal quality review.
2. The leadership, transparency and continuous thoughtful stewardship of the Head of School, specifically relating to the ongoing success and organisation of the School.
3. The School Executive team for their dedication and commitment to supporting staff and students and their work to date in reviewing and improving workload allocation processes, governance and management structures within the School.
4. The enthusiasm, dedication and continuous hard work of Staff in the School in ensuring that methodological excellence and rigour is at the centre of their work. Based on feedback from multiple internal and external stakeholders, the excellence of all academic, research and administrative staff in the School of Public Health are central to the School's success.
5. The high esteem in which the School is held by leadership within the College of Medicine and Health as well as the wider University.
6. The leadership efforts of staff within the School relating to their national contribution during Covid19.
7. The external reach of the School of Public Health in terms of collaboration in teaching and research and community engagement activities with key stakeholders (HSE, Alcohol Action Ireland, National Suicide Research Foundation, HIQA, etc.). The Panel was particularly impressed by the positive feedback received on the School from various external stakeholders.
8. The twelve-week placement block, accompanied by the high calibre of Public Health students provided for placement by the School. External stakeholders commented that UCC is the preferred partner for multiple organisations in terms of student placements and that the students provided are considered to be the best in Ireland.
9. The positive feedback received from both undergraduate and postgraduate students on the high quality of their programmes overall and, more specifically, the support received from staff in the School. The extensive, ongoing support to postgraduate students in the School was especially notable.
10. The distinctive identity and positive culture within the School. The Panel recognised that the decision to become an independent School has been very successful.
11. The welcome establishment of various committees within the School that are currently in start-up phase. The Panel was particularly impressed by the plans for setting up and activating a student-staff committee.
12. The work done by the School, and teaching innovations that were introduced, as a result of programme review. The panel particularly commended the success of the School of Public Health in being pioneers in the introduction of online teaching at UCC which is now standard practice across the wider institution.
13. The commitment of the School to developing clear and equitable workload allocations, specifically relating to administrative and teaching tasks in the School.

14. The impact of the School in terms of the amount of high-quality research being done and the nurturing of a positive and enabling research environment. The Panel was particularly impressed by the School's success in bringing in external research grants and supporting fellowship applications and using these as vehicles for conducting world-leading research and developing future research leaders.
15. The hard work and success of the School in obtaining APHEA accreditation which reflects the international standing of the School of Public Health.

## Summary Recommendations

The recommendations made by the panel were signalled by a combination of elements, including recommendations by the School in the SER, combined with internal and external stakeholder discussions during the review. Considering this, the panel has identified the below key areas for the [School of Public Health](#) to focus on, to enable the further growth and success of the School.

1. The Panel recommends that the work on programme review in the School be continued, as a matter of priority.
2. The Panel recommends that, in collaboration with the Head of College and College Financial Analyst, a proactive, sustainable plan be developed to manage the consolidation and payment of part-time staff roles in the School.
3. The Panel recommends that alternative avenues be considered for the supervision of MSc and MPH dissertations to fulfil the current required research component in these Master's programmes.
4. The Panel recommends that a clear plan be developed to systematically set out the vision of the School specifically in relation to the investment of time and resources in terms of teaching, research and administrative duties, and its future advancement.
5. The Panel recommends that consideration be given to an extension of the existing excellent work on Athena Swan to encompass a broader set of elements related to EDI.
6. The Panel recommends that the current School management structure be reviewed as a continuous process for improving internal and external communication as well as cohesion within the School and to reduce admin workload.
7. The Panel recommends that further opportunities be considered to develop a more streamlined and consistent placement system internally and with placement partners to secure, on a continuous basis, in collaboration with placement partners, the availability and allocation of undergraduate placements.
8. The Panel recommends that the current workload allocation continues to be reviewed to ensure fair and equitable distribution of duties among staff within the School.
9. The Panel recommends that consideration be given to ways of more effectively communicating the School's APHEA accreditation status.
10. The Panel recommends that consideration be given to how the student voice and engagement with staff in the School will be used in future quality reviews and the development of the Self-Evaluation Report.



## Recommendations – Further Detail

### *Priority Recommendations*

The panel considers the following as priority recommendations for the School to act upon over the next 12 to 18 months:

1. The Panel recommends that the work on programme review in the School be continued, as a matter of priority.

The Panel learned of the Programme Directors' intentions to undertake programme reviews in the coming year and supports this objective, as a matter of priority. As part of the planned programme review, the Panel thus further recommends:

- That the School consider the rationalisation of certain modules within the curriculum and how these benefit students in preparing them for real-life practice.
- That the engagement, specifically with undergraduate students, be accelerated to utilise the student feedback in curriculum enhancement and programme optimisation for future.
- That the School reconsider the use of SPSS in teaching to align better with statistical packages/software used in industry and by placement organisations e.g. Stata or R.
- That the School considers introducing anonymous marking of continuous assessment as a matter of good practice.

This recommendation should be led by the School's Teaching and Learning committee. This recommendation should be implemented within 12 to 18 months following receipt of the Panel report.

2. The Panel recommends that, in collaboration with the Head of College and College Financial Analyst, a proactive, sustainable plan be developed to manage the consolidation and payment of part-time staff roles in the School.

The Panel perceived a potential risk for the School based on the reliance on research overheads to pay part-time teaching staff in the School. The Panel recommends that the implications of relying on research overheads to pay part-time staff in future should be considered, as a matter of urgency and that continued discussions should be held for the approval of necessary consolidated posts to reduce the number of part-time staff.

This recommendation should be led by the Head of School and supported by the School Manager. This recommendation should be implemented within 12 to 18 months following receipt of the Panel report.

3. The Panel recommends that alternative avenues be considered for supervision of MSc and MPH dissertations to fulfil the current required research component in these Master's programmes.

The Panel heard of a general concern regarding the demands on academic staff for supervising a large number of Masters dissertations. The panel considered that this places a serious risk on academic staff workload, staff morale and the quality of research dissertations. The Panel thus recommends:

- That additional pathways be explored in collaboration with relevant stakeholders to provide more options to students for their final projects e.g. practice-based/work experience project portfolio offering or research dissertation.
- That the School considers how other programmes have addressed this issue in UCC e.g. Masters in Biotechnology.

This recommendation should be led by all the Masters Programme Directors and supported by the School's Teaching and Learning committee. This recommendation should be implemented within 12 to 18 months following receipt of the Panel report.

### *Medium-term Recommendations*

The panel considers the following medium-term recommendations for the School to act upon over the next 18 to 24 months:

4. The Panel recommends that a clear plan be developed to systematically set out the vision of the School, specifically in relation to the investment of time and resources in terms of teaching, research and administrative duties, and its future advancement.

The Panel perceived that there was limited articulation of the strategic future ambition for the School across education and research. The Panel thus recommends:

- That an open forum be created for input from School staff, students and key stakeholders in shaping the strategic development and future-proofing the School over the coming years.
- That a dialogue be opened with the College and wider UCC about the potential for consolidation and alignment of teaching and research.
- That resources required for sustainability and growth of the School over the next 5 years be considered.
- The Panel recommends that the research narrative between the School/College level and UCC Senior Management be strengthened to better frame the relationship with Futures and the broader UCC.

This recommendation should be led by the School Executive in collaboration with staff members leading in relevant areas. This recommendation should be implemented within 18 to 24 months following receipt of the Panel Report.

5. The Panel recommends that consideration be given to an extension of the existing excellent work on Athena Swan to encompass a broader set of elements related to EDI.

The Panel heard of an ambition by staff to work towards achieving an Athena Swan Silver Award. The Panel considered that these efforts should be approached in a way that enables the School to think more broadly around equity, diversity and inclusion and to engage with structures and supports based around EDI that are in place within the wider UCC.

This recommendation should be led by the Chair of the School's Athena Swan committee and supported by the School Executive. This recommendation should be implemented within 18 to 24 months following receipt of the Panel report.

6. The Panel recommends that the current School management structure be reviewed as a continuous process for improving internal and external communication as well as cohesion within the School and to reduce admin workload.

- The Panel recommends that consideration be given to amalgamating the current management group and School Executive into one smaller management group for the School.
- The Panel recommends that the School regards how existing management structures will work to most optimally utilise the newly established committees and workload allocation as well as decision making.
- The Panel recommends that the School continues to develop mechanisms for strengthening internal communication between various committees and external communication to provide an applicable forum for staff, students and stakeholders' voices to be heard.

This recommendation should be led by the School Executive. This recommendation should be implemented within 18 to 24 months following receipt of the Panel report.

### *Long-term Recommendations*

The panel considers the following long-term recommendations as **ongoing and should be a reoccurring item** on the School's agenda:

7. The Panel recommends that further opportunities be considered to develop a more streamlined and consistent placement system internally and with placement partners to secure, on a continuous basis, in collaboration with placement partners, the availability and allocation of undergraduate placements.

The panel recognises the importance of protecting student placements by acknowledging the current challenges in securing placement opportunities for undergraduate students as a first step to improved internal organisation and arrangements. This should be accompanied by more consistent staffing of the Placement Coordinator post.

This recommendation should be led by the undergraduate Programme Director and supported by the School's Teaching and Learning committee. This recommendation is ongoing and should be a reoccurring item on the School's agenda.

8. The Panel recommends that the current workload allocation continues to be reviewed to ensure fair and equitable distribution of duties among staff within the School.

The Panel heard of general concern regarding the additional burden being taken on by senior members of staff within the School in order to cover gaps elsewhere. The Panel perceives the resulting uneven distribution and increasing volume of workload puts senior staff members at risk of burnout.

The Panel thus recommends:

- That the School considers the planned programme review referred to in recommendation 1 when continuing the workload allocation among staff in the School.
- That the workload allocation of administrative duties be framed in light of the necessity of these duties for the efficient functioning of the School as a Unit and for academic promotion.

- The School should continue to engage in discussions with College management and UCC leaders to ensure they have sufficient resources to deliver on its activities.

This recommendation should be led by the Head of School and Deputy Head of School and the implementation should be supported by all staff in the School. This recommendation is ongoing and should be a reoccurring item on the School's agenda.

9. The Panel recommends that consideration be given to ways of more effectively communicating the School's accreditation status.

The Panel perceived that the School wasn't fully exploiting its current APHEA accreditation. The Panel is of the view that the School should be putting to good use the hard work they have put in to obtain this accreditation in enhancing the student experience and induction into the School. This should also be communicated to all current and prospective students in terms of what this accreditation means for their current and future endeavours and how this will benefit them and set them apart.

This recommendation should be led by the Head of School in collaboration with the UCC Marketing and Communications team. This recommendation is ongoing and should be a reoccurring item on the School's agenda.

10. The Panel recommends that consideration be given to how the student voice and engagement with staff in the School will be used in future quality reviews and the development of the Self-Evaluation Report.

Based on conversations with students and staff in the School, the Panel perceives that the current Self-Evaluation process and Self-Evaluation Report (SER) would have been enhanced by greater student engagement as well as broader staff involvement in developing the report. The Panel thus recommends that a Self-Evaluation Committee be developed for the next quality review to provide staff with an option to participate more actively in this task and that the student voice be fully incorporated into the Self-Evaluation Report.

This recommendation should be led by the Head of School. This recommendation is ongoing and should be a reoccurring item on the School's agenda.

## *Observations*

Additional to the recommendations, the Panel identified some observations for further consideration on issues that the Panel believes fall outside of the School's remit. The Panel suggests that these observations be shared with the appropriate units to agree on a plan for addressing these accordingly.

### Observation to the Head of College of Medicine and Health

1. The Panel notes that the facilities of the School Public Health should be considered in terms of any potential future growth and improving the space available for collaboration and meetings.

The Panel welcomed the input and clarification regarding vacant posts in the [School of Public Health](#) and how these will be affected by the University's current financial position (Project Alpha). To this

end, the Panel formulated the above Recommendations and Observation contingent on specific stipulations under Project Alpha which may impact any of these.

## Overall Analysis of Self-Evaluation Process

The School's Self-Evaluation process was extensive and the School reported that all staff had the opportunity to engage in the process. The Self-Evaluation Committee (SEC) was chaired by the Deputy Head of the [School of Public Health](#) and was made up of staff members in the School Executive.

All members of the SEC and the SEC Chair volunteered for the task of coordinating the Self-Evaluation process. The Self-Evaluation Report and Appendices were written and prepared by the Head of School, Deputy Head of School and other members of the SEC. The SEC provided timely updates at School Board meetings.

### Self-Evaluation Report (SER)

The Panel was impressed by the many strengths of the School in terms of its research, teaching programmes and wider public health contribution that is evident from the Self-Evaluation Report (SER). Comprehensive information was provided in advance of the Site Visit, allowing the Panel to get a good overview of current challenges and opportunities in the [School of Public Health](#). The Panel perceived feedback from the SER to be very positive with legitimacy to address issues and planned improvements.

The Panel would have appreciated more strategic information, especially relating to the future plan and direction of research in the School. It was unclear from the SER the extent to which the wider group of staff in the School were engaged in the development and interpretation of the Self-Evaluation exercise. The student views appeared to be missing from the SER.

### SWOT

The initial step in the Self-Evaluation process was an in-person SWOT analysis for all staff in the School, to gather the information which would form the base for the recommendations from the SEC in the SER. The SWOT workshop was facilitated by the Quality Enhancement Manager in the Quality Enhancement Unit (QEU), who is independent from the [School of Public Health](#). The in-person workshop occurred on 17 November 2023, 25 staff members attended the workshop. An online survey was made available to staff who were unable to attend the SWOT workshop and 51 staff members completed this survey. The outcomes from the SWOT workshop were used, in collaboration with the outcomes from the School's APHEA accreditation, to develop detailed recommendations for the School to progress on.

Based on the presentation of the SWOT outcomes in the SER and discussions with internal and external stakeholders, the Panel perceived the SWOT exercise to be useful for the School in terms of participation and developing realistic recommendations for themselves to deliver on in the SER. The SWOT highlighted numerous issues that were reiterated during the Site Visit.

## Benchmarking

The SEC selected two benchmarking institutions to interview, one national and one international. The School of Population Health at the Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland was selected as the national institution due to their similarity to the UCC [School of Public Health](#) in size, ambition and context. For the international benchmarking institution, the School selected the Department of International Health at Maastricht University in the Netherlands due to being a larger unit and a target for what the [School of Public Health](#) in UCC aspires to grow into. A set number of questions were asked during both benchmarking interviews which focused on discussion around public health challenges, workloads, curriculum content, administrative support, and quality teaching. The School gained some useful information from these exercises.

The Panel perceived the benchmarking exercises as interesting and useful in terms of providing useful insights into the SER which were discussed during the Site Visit.

## Good Practice Case Study

The Case Study of Good Practice presented by the [School of Public Health](#) focused on the support provided to career fellowship applicants. The School provides extensive supports to these applicants that have proven to be very successful. The main funding schemes, all funded by the Irish Health Research Board (every 2 to 3 years), include the Applying Research into Policy and Practice (ARPP) postdoctoral fellowships, the Emerging Investigator Awards (EIA) and the Research Leader Awards (RLA). The [School of Public Health](#) provides three-way support to applicants which include:

1. Providing general information about the awards to ensure applicants understand the various timelines.
2. Showcasing the experience of previously successful applicants, who are asked to discuss their experiences.
3. Providing standardised mock interviews which prepare candidates accordingly for the actual interviews.

The first two objectives are delivered through open seminars in hybrid format, organised by the health services research cluster. These seminars are open to anyone in the School of Public Health to attend. The third objective is delivered through mock interviews, provided to candidates who succeeded in the initial screening phase. These interviews are designed to both challenge and encourage candidates.

The Panel thought that the Case Study of Good Practice was interesting and would also have liked to see a Case Study from a project by the School focusing more around students and enhancing the student learning experience.

## School of Public Health Overview

The [School of Public Health](#) became an independent School in 2017 and the Panel perceived this decision to have had a positive outcome for the School. The positive culture and work environment was impressive, as well as the commitment of School leadership and staff to delivering excellence. The Panel heard ongoing praise from internal and external stakeholders, and it was clear that the majority of students in the School value the staff for their availability, support and quality of teaching. There appeared to perhaps be some misalignment between undergraduate and postgraduate student support as the Panel got a sense that some undergraduate students didn't feel as heard and supported in their curricula.

The [School of Public Health](#) was one of the pioneers in online teaching in UCC and the Panel was particularly impressed by the School's lasting contributions during the Covid-19 pandemic. The Panel also heard much enthusiasm from staff on their stakeholder engagement and external reach within the broader public health community, this is one of the strengths in the School. The Panel also heard of the APHEA accreditation that the School recently obtained, something that the School is very proud of. The Panel was, however, mindful of the School's aspiration to make this external reach and their accreditation status more visible and to find ways for growth in this sense.

The Panel perceived the [School of Public Health](#) to be entering a new chapter with new leadership and that it would be important for the School to develop a strong sense of where it would like to position itself within UCC and the public health community nationally and internationally over the next five to ten years, especially in terms of teaching and research. In this respect, it would be important for the School to have a clear vision and plan for its sustainable growth and development into the future.

The Panel heard of and welcomed plans to establish various School-level committees, accompanied by enthusiasm around the development of clear and equitable workload allocations within the School. The Panel felt, however, that a clearer and more explicit approach to EDI needs to be developed.

The Panel considered all discussions and matters raised carefully, cognisant of the current financial position of the University. Recommendations made by the Panel in this Report are based on the School's own recommendations provided in the SER, combined with evidence from discussions with internal and external stakeholders throughout the Site Visit.

## Facilities

The Panel undertook a guided tour of the office and meeting facilities of the [School of Public Health](#) and received video footage of the ASSERT Centre from the School after the tour. The Panel enjoyed the tour and wishes to thank the staff member who facilitated this for the hospitality and consideration shown.

The Panel was impressed that PhD students also had use of the space and available facilities in the School. The Panel was, however, surprised at the limited common/hot-desking space. The Panel acknowledged the School's work-around, given the fact that they only have a small meeting room for ad hoc meetings, interviews and discussion relating to sensitive data, apart from the general meeting rooms in Brookfield that need to be booked through Resource Booker. The Panel was cognisant that



the display of sensitive data on screens in the communal space, could potentially become an issue, however, the Panel acknowledged that swipe access encouraged privacy relating to this matter.

## Conclusion

The Peer Review Panel for the quality review of the [School of Public Health](#) found the review process to be insightful and comprehensive. The Panel considered this as an opportunity for the School to acknowledge and celebrate their achievements, as well as for the Panel to engage with stakeholders external to the School, to reflect on the work that the School is doing and the impact of the School in the broader field of public health. The Panel gained a more thorough understanding of the School's contribution to the broader UCC, as well as the wider health community nationally and internationally, among which the UCC [School of Public Health](#) is held in high esteem. The collaborative input and engagement of staff throughout the Site Visit was greatly appreciated by the Panel. All enhancement-focused feedback received was directed at processes and procedures, rather than staff and it is evident that the School is performing to a high-standard and is well-respected, and highly considered within the College of Medicine and Health and UCC.

## Next Steps

The Panel Report will next be presented to the Quality Enhancement Committee (QEC), chaired by the President, and subject to QEC approval, will be subsequently published on the Quality Enhancement Unit (QEU) website.

The School will prepare a Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP) which will outline the timeframes for implementation of the recommendations and a detailed report on progress. Implementation will happen after the QEP is considered and approved by the QEC, at which stage the QEP will be published on the QEU website.

## Appendix A – Panel Profiles

<p>Professor Margaret Barry</p>	<p>Professor Margaret M. Barry holds the Established Chair in Health Promotion and Public Health at the University of Galway, where she is also Director of the World Health Organization Collaborating Centre for Health Promotion Research. Having published widely in health promotion, she works closely with policymakers and practitioners on the development, implementation and evaluation of interventions and policies at a national and international level. Professor Barry has extensive experience of coordinating international mental health promotion initiatives and has acted as expert adviser on mental health promotion policy and research development in a number of countries around the world. Professor Barry served two terms as a member of the European Commission Expert Panel on Effective Ways of Investing in Health (2013-2016; 2016-2019) and was elected global President of the International Union for Health Promotion and Education (2019-2022).</p>
<p>Professor Luigina Ciolfi</p>	<p>Luigina Ciolfi is Professor of Human Computer Interaction and Vice-Head of School in the School of Applied Psychology, University College Cork (Ireland). At UCC, she is also the Chair of the Academic Council Research &amp; Innovation Committee. Professor Ciolfi holds a Laurea degree from the University of Siena (Italy) and a PhD from the University of Limerick (Ireland). She researches human practices and experiences of digital technologies in everyday settings. She is an academic member of Lero – The SFI Research Centre for Software. Professor Ciolfi has extensive academic experience internationally. She was previously Professor of Human-Centred Computing at Sheffield Hallam University (UK), and has held visiting roles at Maynooth University Social Sciences Institute and at the University of Rome Tor Vergata. She has served in a number of leadership roles, particularly in the areas of research and innovation. She has published extensively in the fields of Human-Computer Interaction and Computer-Supported Cooperative Work and participated in many national and international research projects. Professor Ciolfi is an ACM Distinguished Speaker and she has been an invited speaker and keynote presenter in fifteen countries. She is an Associate Editor of the CSCW Journal, and a scientific referee for many conferences and journals in her field. She has worked as an expert evaluator for many research funding bodies, including the European Commission. Professor Ciolfi is a senior member of ACM SIGCHI, and member of EUSSET – the</p>

	European Society for Socially Embedded Technologies and of the British Psychological Society.
Professor Steven Cummins	<p>Professor Steven Cummins is Head of the Department Public Health, Environments &amp; Society at LSHTM, Co-Director of the Population Health Innovation Lab and Lead/PI of LSHTM's membership of the NIHR School for Public Health Research. Outside of LSHTM, Mr Cummins is Panel Chair of the NIHR Doctoral Fellowships Programme and a ECR mentor for a range of research and science organisations. He has also been School Governor for the past 10 years in both the primary and secondary sector.</p> <p>Research interests include the social and environmental determinants of population health and health inequalities; evaluation of complex population health interventions, complex systems thinking, use of natural experiments in evidence-based policy, and the research-policy interface. Much of this work is focused on food retail system transformation and population diet, particularly the impact of technology-driven changes (delivery, advertising, retail, sustainability). Other current projects are focused on green infrastructure and health, and the physical activity and environmental benefits of active transportation. Mr Cummins' team is increasingly making use of large-scale consumer and public secondary data, and exploring machine-learning and agent-based modelling approaches to better understand and intervene in food and transport systems.</p>
Professor Liam Marnane (Chair)	<p>Professor Liam Marnane received the B.E. Degree in Electrical Engineering from University College Cork in 1984 and the D. Phil Degree from University of Oxford in 1989 studying test vector 17 generation and design for test of VLSI designs. He was a lecturer in VLSI design at the School of Electronic Engineering Science, University of Wales, Bangor from 1989 to 1993. In 1992 he was a Visiting Researcher and Marie Cure Fellow at the Institute de Recherche en Informatique et Systemes Aleatoires, at the University of Rennes, France. In 1993 he was appointed as lecturer in Digital Signal Processing in the Department of Electrical &amp; Electronic Engineering at University College Cork, as senior lecturer in 1999 and as Professor in 2014. In 1999 he was a visiting researcher to the Electronic Devices Research Group, Department of Physics, University of Linköping. He has been awarded the "Giner de Los Ríos" Visiting Research Fellowship of the University of Alcalá, Madrid, Spain, for 2007 and 2020. His research interests include Biomedical Signal Processing and digital design for DSP, coding and cryptography. He is PI in the SFI funded research centre Irish Centre for Fetal and Neonatal Translational Research (INFANT). He was</p>

	Dean of Graduate Studies for UCC from 2013-2016 and Head of School of Engineering from 2016-2019. He is a member of the IEEE and Engineers Ireland.
Mr Khushal Paryani <i>(Student Reviewer)</i>	<p>Mr. Khushal Paryani is currently pursuing MSc in Corporate Finance at the College of Business and Law, University College Cork. As a dedicated post-graduate student, he has actively contributed to the UCC Skills Centre and Access Centre. Mr. Paryani has played key roles in various student representation and support functions, showcasing his commitment to enhancing the student experience.</p> <p>An engaged member of the UCC Indian Society, Mr. Paryani is passionate about addressing the concerns and suggestions of international students. His involvement in peer reviewing accounting firms in India has provided him with a comprehensive understanding of the entire review process.</p> <p>Through his active participation in University student societies and academic structures, Mr. Paryani has gained valuable insights into the diverse needs and expectations of students. This experience positions him well to serve as a Student Reviewer for the Quality Review of the School of Medicine, where he can leverage his understanding of university operations and student perspectives to contribute meaningfully to the review process.</p>

## Appendix B – Timetable

### In Summary

26 March – Briefing:	Panel Briefing from the Director of Quality Enhancement (online).
10 April - Site Visit Day 1:	The Panel meets with the Head of School and School Management Team. This is followed by a meeting with School staff, students and visit to the School's facilities.
11 April - Site Visit Day 2:	The Panel meets with the Head of College, Senior Management, Programme Directors and key internal stakeholders of the School
16 April - Online Day 3:	The Panel meets with external stakeholders and prepare their key commendations and recommendations
18 April - Online Day 4:	The Panel meets with the Head of School. A closing presentation is given by the Panel to all members of the School. Panel members depart.
26 March – Briefing:	Panel Briefing from the Quality Enhancement Manager and Review Coordinator (online).

<b>Tuesday, 26 March 2024</b>	
11.00 - 12.30	Briefing of the Panel by Quality Enhancement Manager and Review Coordinator.

### **Site Visit to UCC – first week**

<b>Tuesday, 9 April 2024</b>	
During the day	Panel members arrive in Cork
19.00	Dinner for Panel members hosted by Director of Quality

<b>Wednesday, 10 April 2024</b>	
09.00 – 09.30	Convening of Panel members – private meeting
09.30 – 10.30	Meeting with Head of School (School Manager to join at 10.15)
10.30 – 11.15	Meeting with Organisational Management Group and School Executive
11.15 – 11.45	Coffee Break
11.45 – 12.15	Meeting with HR Business Manager, College of Medicine & Health
12.15 – 13.00	Meeting with Undergraduate students

13.00 – 13.45	Lunch
13.45 – 13.55	<b>Walk to Western Gateway Building</b>
13.55 - 14.25	Tour of unit facilities
14.25 - 14.30	<b>Walk to Brookfield Health Sciences Complex</b>
14.30 – 16.00	Meeting with all staff
16.00 – 16.45	Meeting with Postgraduate students
16.45 – 17.15	Private meeting of Panel
19.00	Informal dinner for members of the Panel

<b>Thursday, 11 April 2024</b>	
09.00 – 09.30	Convening of the Panel – preparation for the day ahead
09.30 – 10.15	Meeting with Head of College of Medicine & Health (College Financial Analyst to join at 10.00)
10.15 – 11.00	Meeting with Dean of Undergraduate and Postgraduate Studies and Dean of Doctoral Studies
11.00 – 11.20	Coffee break
11.20 – 11.45	Meeting with Chair of Quality Review Self-Evaluation Committee (SEC)
11.45– 12.15	Meeting with Senior Leadership Team members - Vice-President for Learning and Teaching - Vice-Dean for Research and Innovation at College of Medicine and Health
12.15 – 12.45	Meeting with Deputy President & Registrar
12.45 – 13.30	Case Study of Good Practice
13.30 – 14.15	Lunch
14.15 – 15.00	Meeting with Chairs of Committees <i>Chair Teaching &amp; Curriculum Committee</i> <i>Co-Chair Health &amp; Safety Committee</i> <i>Co-Chair Research Committee</i> <i>Chair Ethics Committee</i> <i>Chair Athena Swan Committee</i>

	<i>Co-Chair Health &amp; Safety Committee</i> <i>Co-Chair Staff &amp; Student Committee</i> <i>Vice-Dean Graduate Studies College of Medicine &amp; Health</i> <i>Vice-Dean Research College of Medicine &amp; Health</i> <i>Co-Chair Staff &amp; Student Committee</i> <i>Chair Civic &amp; Community Engagement Committee</i>
15.00 – 15.45	Meeting with Programme Directors and Programme Advisory Board members
15.45 – 16.30	Enhancing the Student Learning Experience (CPD and Placements)
16.30 – 17.00	Private meeting of Panel

#### Online meetings – second week

Tuesday, 16 April 2024	
09.30 – 09.45	Convening of the Panel – preparation for the day ahead
09.45 – 10.30	Meeting with External Stakeholders
10.30 – 11.30	Panel meeting to draft the recommendations and commendations
11.30 – 12.00	Break for Panel
12.00 – 13.30	Panel meeting to draft the recommendations and commendations

Thursday, 18 April 2024	
09.15 – 10.00	Meeting of Panel to finalise recommendations and commendations
10.00 – 10.30	Meeting with Head of School
10.30 – 11.00	Break for Panel
11.00 – 12.30	Panel meeting; consider the closing presentation
12.30 – 13.00	Closing presentation
13.00 – 13.30	Panel – wrap up meeting