

SCHOOL OF NURSING & MIDWIFERY

PEER REVIEW GROUP

- Professor S. Ryan, Department of Occupational Therapy, School of Clinical Therapies, UCC (Chair)
- Dr D. Dooley, Department of Philosophy, UCC (Co-ordinator of Health Care Ethics in UCC)
- Ms M. McCarthy, Chief Nursing Officer, Department of Health & Children, Dublin, Ireland
- Professor D. Sines, Dean of Faculty of Health and Social Care, London, South Bank University, UK

SITE VISIT

The site visit was conducted over 2.5 days from 6-8 February 2005 and included visits to departmental and library facilities and meetings with

- Head and staff of the School as a group and individually
- Representatives of undergraduate and postgraduate students
- Representatives of employers, past graduates and other external stakeholders
- Professor Áine Hyland, Vice-President
- Mr. Michael Kelleher, Secretary & Bursar
- Professor Michael Murphy, Dean, Faculty of Medicine & Health
- Professor Joyce Fitzpatrick
- Ms Áine Foley, Finance Office

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

DESCRIPTION OF SCHOOL

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

Head of Department: Professor Geraldine McCarthy
Staff: 36 Academic Staff, 9 Administrative Staff, 1 Project Manager, 1 Allocations Officer, 1 Clinical Skills Technician
Staff Academic FTE: 41.87 (39.00 FTE academic staff; 2.87 FTE part-time budget)
Location of Department: Brookfield Health Sciences Complex
Degrees/Diplomas offered: BSc, Dip, HDip, MSc, PhD

NUMBER OF STUDENTS

The School has 864.43 Student FTEs distributed as follows:

Undergraduate Student FTEs

Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Total U/G	Economic
102.35	366.00	167.33	0.00	635.68	0.93

Postgraduate Student FTEs

HDip	Master Taught	Master Research	PhD	Total P/G
188.75	39.50	0	0.50	228.75

MISSION STATEMENT

“Establish a reputation of excellence in teaching, provide a range of programmes responsive to local and national health care requirements; establish partnerships for education, research and practice development ventures and initiatives, produce high quality research, and form closer inter-faculty and inter-disciplinary collaboration.”

GENERAL COMMENT ON QUALITY REVIEW

The PRG complimented the School on the production of a most satisfactory Self-Assessment Report. Overall, the PRG appreciated the critical stance in the SAR that was adopted by the School when analysing their activities. In a number of areas the PRG felt more detailed analysis of the emergent themes could have been undertaken.

Benchmarking: The School had undertaken a relevant benchmarking exercise in partnership with the University of Nottingham in England. They had also engaged with this School in additional peer review discussions. These provided a satisfactory base line from which to validate their performance.

Teaching & Learning: The PRG was fully aware of the difficult learning environments and circumstances that the school underwent consistently prior to entry to the new facilities in 2004. No one of the people that were interviewed criticised these circumstances and many praised the efforts made by the teaching staff to maintain the high standard of education. Everyone complimented the outcome of the taught undergraduate programmes. It was confirmed that the students’ “fitness for practice” as an outcome was achieved. The PRG endorsed the School’s view that clinical practice learning was central to its mission.

The recommendations made in the Report were made whilst acknowledging that the new learning/linking systems have been set up in an unprecedented short period of time and only recently.

Of equal importance was the School’s acknowledgement of ensuring that members of the existing qualified workforce enhance their skills in clinical reasoning and reflection as it is applied to practice. Health service managers also indicated their interest in working with academic staff to develop joint appointments and in identifying knowledge and competencies for specialist advanced practice.

Research & Scholarly Activity: The PRG was most impressed with the volume of scholarly activity, recorded and evidenced in Appendix H of the SAR. This was noted in light of the heavy teaching and difficult learning environments the staff had endured as well as the transitional challenges that they have just faced in moving from multiple sites to this new facility. The research portfolio compares favourably with other Schools of Nursing in Ireland. The PRG applauded the inception of a relatively new research strategy / programme that will encourage staff to fulfil these research requirements.

PROGRESS MADE ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF PRG RECOMMENDATIONS

A meeting to discuss progress made in implementing recommendations for improvement arising from the review of the School of Nursing was held on 31 October 2006.

Present: Professor Michael Murphy, Head, College of Medicine & Health
Professor Geraldine McCarthy, Head, School of Nursing & Midwifery
Dr. Eileen Savage, School of Nursing and Midwifery
Ms. Regina Murphy, School Manager, School of Nursing and Midwifery
Dr. Norma Ryan, Director, Quality Promotion Unit
Mr. Gerard Horgan, Executive Assistant, Quality Promotion Unit

The considerable amount of work carried out by the School of Nursing & Midwifery in relation to the implementation of recommendations from the Quality Promotion Committee was noted.

A Strategic Plan 2006-2011, developed collaboratively within the School, has been developed, along with the appointment of a senior lecturer with specific responsibility for leading education matters in the School. It was noted that the School is currently seeking to appoint a Fulbright Professor and has received strong expressions of interest.

Staff development for research activities is co-ordinated through a Research Committee and, in addition, a visiting Research Professor is assisting individual staff with writing research proposals and grant applications. There has been a substantial increase in the number of publications in peer reviewed journals while research projects have commenced in areas such as: children's nursing, care of older adults, cancer, nutritional assessment of adults in hospital and wound care. The School is interested in establishing two annual research bursaries that will serve to further develop and strengthen its research activities.

Collaboration and communication both internally among staff and between staff and student has improved greatly while significant in-roads have been made in areas such as staff training and development. Staff are playing an active role in University wide activities such as participation in an Inter-Faculty Research conference (2005), the Research Fora and Teaching & Learning seminars.

The depth and extent of the work of the School was noted along with its proactive engagement with the Quality Review process as a whole.

Abbreviations

PRG: Peer Review Group

QPC: Quality Promotion Committee

HR: Human Resources

PR: Public Relations

EU: European Union

VP: Vice-President

QIP: Quality Improvement Plan

MH: Medicine & Health

IT: Information Technology

Recommendation of PRG	Recommendation of QPC	Follow-up Report October 06
<p>That the School introduce a more participatory model of collaboration with internal and external stakeholders</p>	<p>Recommendation strongly endorsed.</p> <p>Actions proposed by School are welcomed <i>(School will</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>Invite more student representatives onto Committees.</i> ▪ <i>Invite Staff from other Department /Schools and Health Service Providers to Research meetings</i> ▪ <i>Encourage staff to participate in other activities across College e.g. HR Training, Teaching and Learning, Seminars etc.).</i> 	<p>Implemented</p> <p>Collaboration and communication have improved. PR literature has been highly effective in attracting students. Greater inroads have been made into research and practice developments.</p> <p>Internal stakeholders: a biannual Student Affairs Committee has been set up to work on having more student representation on School committees. This will be progressed further.</p> <p>External stakeholders: Research Presentations at lunchtimes and an Annual Research Conference have been implemented.</p> <p>Number of committees operating i.e. Standing Committee (meets 4 times a year), Clinical Practice Committee which includes participation from stakeholders.</p> <p>Staff participation in UCC wide activities: two members of staff were involved in organising the Inter-Faculty Research conference in November 2005.</p>
<p>A review should be undertaken of the number of committees within the School.</p>	<p>Recommendation endorsed.</p>	<p>Implemented</p> <p>A review has been undertaken and a number of sub-committees on curriculum development and clinical practice have been disbanded, with matters now addressed through Standing Committees. The School is seeking a reduction in the numbers of working groups and to establish clear terms of reference on an ongoing basis.</p>

Recommendation of PRG	Recommendation of QPC	Follow-up Report October 06
<p>That the School consider establishing a new Staff Development Committee with a remit to identify and respond to specific academic, clinical and research related needs to encourage and support academic progression and advancement within the University system.</p>	<p>Recommendation endorsed.</p> <p>The QPC noted and commended the efforts made by the School to date in staff development, both in the area of teaching and also that of research.</p>	<p>Ongoing.</p> <p>However, staff development specific to teaching and research is being addressed through the relevant School Standing committees.</p> <p>A Training Needs and Analysis tool has been tailored for the School by the Department of HR and a survey will be prepared by the end of December 2006.</p> <p>Staff development for research activities is to be co-ordinated through the Research Committee. A visiting Research Professor, Professor J. Fitzpatrick, is working with individual staff towards peer reviewed publications, writing research proposals for grant applications, and advising on research projects. Research Report No.2 is due for publication in December 2006.</p> <p>Individual staff members are encouraged to indicate their goals for staff development and negotiate these with the Head of School at the outset of each academic year, facilitated through performance appraisal.</p>
<p>A full review be undertaken of the School Strategy, incorporating a review of the School's mission, values and business plan in the context of the University's new corporate planning.</p>	<p>Recommendation strongly endorsed.</p> <p>QPC would welcome seeing the outcomes of the 'Staff Away Day', including the strategic plan, in the QIP.</p>	<p>Implemented.</p> <p>The Strategic Plan 2006-2011 has been developed collaboratively within the School at away days.</p>
<p>The School should consider the development of congruent teaching, learning and assessment strategies</p>	<p>Recommendation endorsed.</p> <p>QPC noted and welcomed actions to be taken (a Senior Lecturer is to be appointed to lead Teaching and Learning and to develop further Teaching, Learning and Assessment Strategies).</p>	<p>Implemented and ongoing.</p> <p>Mr John Sweeney has been appointed as Senior Lecturer with specific responsibility for leading education in the School and for leading a review of the School curricula.</p> <p>A major review of the programme by Professor Áine Hyland is scheduled to commence in January 2007. Currently awaiting An Bord Altranais criteria.</p>

Recommendation of PRG	Recommendation of QPC	Follow-up Report October 06
That systems be put in place to monitor academic attendance and skills training.	Recommendation endorsed.	Implemented. A School Policy on attendance has been finalised. The 'pen and paper' method of recording attendance was deemed to be the most effective method.
The assessment schedule for each course should be reviewed and mapped within the context of the student year and of a complete programme.	Recommendation strongly endorsed.	Implemented. The assessment schedule for each programme is reviewed annually at end of year Board of Studies taking account of the views of relevant parties – students, extern examiners and internal academic assessors. The outcome of this review is documented in the Annual Report for each programme.
Benchmarks for timely feedback for students should be developed and published	Recommendation strongly endorsed.	Implemented. Feedback on assessments is now returned no later than 6 weeks after the submission date. The return dates are also communicated to students in advance.
That the role of the link-lecturer be further developed to include explicit guidance on the engagement of academic staff in both clinical practice and in the assessment of student competence.	Recommendation endorsed.	Implemented. Guidelines have been revised and circulated to staff. The role of the link lecturer in the assessment of competence is now documented as being in the context of students commencing Supportive Learning Plans and guidelines regarding this context are included in Assessment of Practice Booklets. The role of the Link Lecturer in relation to Audit has also been developed and is documented in Audit Procedures Guidelines.

Recommendation of PRG	Recommendation of QPC	Follow-up Report October 06
<p>That the School, in partnership with Health Service colleagues, should develop an agreed “survival pack” for students’ first exposure to these learning experiences and this should be made explicit to all parties concerned.</p>	<p>Recommendation endorsed.</p>	<p>Implemented.</p> <p>Substantial changes have been made to the curriculum to facilitate student ‘survival’ e.g.: a module specific to Infection Control Nursing was moved from 2nd year to 1st year; ‘Principles of Moving and Handling’ now taught in Period 1 of 1st year and not Period 2; Placement Preparation Sessions now include an open clinical lab revision day.</p> <p>The School also runs a well-attended Preparation Day, an Open Day Skills Laboratory where students can practice skills (monitored by health official) before going out to clinical area.</p>
<p>That the School reflect on modes of delivery of programmes, with a view to increasing flexibility.</p> <p>For example, the introduction of part-time study routes and the accreditation of prior learning and exemptions should be considered. Less face-to-face lecturing and more opportunities for independent, self-directed learning in certain areas is recommended as this would provide staff with more time for their other research responsibilities</p>	<p>Recommendation strongly endorsed.</p> <p>The QPC noted the high number of formal teaching hours and the demands this places on staff. The School is encouraged to avail of all possible means to reduce the amount formal teaching with students and replace it with more self-directed and problem-based learning. The increased use of new technology such as Blackboard.com and other similar tools is recommended, where possible.</p>	<p>Implemented</p> <p>A major review is underway as mentioned above.</p> <p>The numbers of formal teaching hours have been reduced with each 5 credit module in years 1 & 2 reduced by between 5-10 hours.</p> <p>Teaching staff have:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Availed of Blackboard training; ▪ Collaborated with Claire O’Brien, Nursing Librarian on Information Literacy sessions at varying levels; ▪ Participated in College Seminars on Problem Based Learning; ▪ Introduced innovative ways of teaching, there is a movement towards more student centred approaches to learning. <p>The School is also exploring e-learning and self-directed learning using IT laboratory resources as means of teaching.</p>

Recommendation of PRG	Recommendation of QPC	Follow-up Report October 06
<p>The extension of research activities into applied evidence based practice, the demonstration of innovation in teaching and learning and in the transaction of research evidenced through publication through peer reviewed journals</p>	<p>Recommendation strongly endorsed.</p> <p>The QPC would encourage the School to continue its efforts to develop research programmes in all appropriate areas and noted the efforts of the School in this regard to date.</p>	<p>Implemented</p> <p>There has been a substantial increase in the number of publications in peer reviewed journals.</p> <p>A report is compiled annually on the research activities of the School and Research Report No.2 will be published in Dec 2006.</p> <p>Most academic staff are now recorded on the Research Information System (RIS).</p> <p>Links between the Research Committee and the Faculty Research Officer have been developed and strengthened.</p> <p>The Visiting Professor, Professor J. Fitzpatrick is assisting staff with their publications as mentioned above.</p> <p>The existing School research strategy has been revised in collaboration with the visiting professor.</p> <p>The School Research Committee is co-ordinating and reviewing work specific to research activities on an ongoing basis.</p>
<p>Staff should be encouraged to identify opportunities in research in clinical practice.</p>	<p>Recommendation strongly endorsed.</p> <p>The QPC would encourage the School to continue its efforts to develop research programmes in all appropriate areas and noted the efforts of the School in this regard to date.</p>	<p>Implemented and ongoing.</p> <p>Research projects have commenced with colleagues in practice in the areas of children's nursing; care of older adults; nutritional assessment of adults in hospital; wound care.</p> <p>Collaboration with the Nursing & Midwifery Planning & Development Unit is ongoing to continue research work into clinical practice arising out of the Research Priorities. Funding on "Discharge Planning" has been received.</p> <p>Staff are making ongoing efforts to obtain research grants with themes appropriate to clinical areas.</p>

Recommendation of PRG	Recommendation of QPC	Follow-up Report October 06
<p>All staff should be invited into membership of the thematic research groups and be facilitated to demonstrate their contribution to research and scholarly activity.</p>	<p>Recommendation strongly endorsed.</p> <p>The QPC suggested that the School should contact the Research Office to establish links with the Office and avail of any assistance the staff of the Office can offer.</p>	<p>Implemented and ongoing.</p> <p>The area of research is also covered in points above.</p> <p>The School is interested in establishing two Annual School Research Bursaries: €1,000 individual award and €5,000 team award from the Staff Development Fund.</p> <p>The School has received a significant research grant (€50,000 per annum) from the Development Account, which is to be competed for internally and will support staff members to undertake PhD level research.</p>
<p>The partnership with Health Care providers be strengthened.</p>	<p>Recommendation strongly endorsed.</p>	<p>Implemented and ongoing.</p> <p>A Health Service provider representative is now included on the appointment board for all clinically related appointments e.g. lecturer practitioners.</p> <p>Good working relations with the HSE continue to be developed and maintained.</p>
<p>The promotion of European and international links should be actively encouraged and pursued by the School</p>	<p>Recommendation strongly endorsed.</p>	<p>Implemented and ongoing</p> <p>The School continues to develop international student links. The first non-EU student commenced the Masters programme in October 2006.</p>