



UCC

Coláiste na hOllscoile Corcaigh, Éire
University College Cork, Ireland

**UNIVERSITY COLLEGE CORK
NATIONAL UNIVERSITY OF IRELAND, CORK**

QUALITY IMPROVEMENT/QUALITY ASSURANCE

PEER REVIEW GROUP REPORT

SCHOOL OF PHARMACY

ACADEMIC YEAR 2009/10

6th November 2009

PEER REVIEW GROUP MEMBERS

1. Dr. Declan Farrell, Retired Pharmaceutical Executive, Ireland (Chair)
2. Professor Richard Greene, Head, Department of Anatomy, University College Cork
3. Professor Stephen Hudson, Professor of Pharmaceutical Care, University of Strathclyde, Scotland
4. Professor Claus-Michael Lehr, Head, Department of Biopharmaceutics & Pharmaceutical Technology, Saarland University, Germany
5. Dr. Jean van Sinderen-Law, Director of Development, Development & Alumni Office, University College Cork (Rapporteur)

TIMETABLE OF THE SITE VISIT

The detailed timetable for the site visit is attached as Appendix A.

The Peer Review Group found that the schedule was well thought out and facilitative towards good team work from the beginning. Against that backdrop, the Peer Review Group make the following minor suggestions:

- Presentation of a summary/key points of the Self-Assessment Report by the Head of School would have been of benefit.
- Some minor adaptations were made to the schedule to free up time for reviewers to share their thoughts and to devote time to preparation of the peer review report.
- The Peer Review Group felt it more appropriate to meet students in smaller Peer Review Group configurations to facilitate exchange of views and active participation by the students.

PEER REVIEW

Methodology

The Group acted as a team throughout the review and all recommendations were as a result of discussion and consensus. At the initial meeting of the Group Dr. Farrell was appointed the Chair of the Group and Dr. van Sinderen-Law as the Rapporteur.

Site Visit

The Peer Review Group found the site visit to the facilities of the School of Pharmacy remarkable. One of the external peer reviewers observed that it was the most impressive facility of this type that he has visited worldwide. The level of commitment by industry and the commercial/professional sector in sponsoring portions of it was impressive. The relevance of the building to the wider profession was evident and the Peer Review Group strongly encouraged the Executive to consider the array of opportunities for external engagement which the facilities provide. The library and study areas were found to be student-focussed and of a high standard.

Peer Review Group Report

Notes were taken by each reviewer at the sessions which he/she attended. The two international peer reviewers (Professors Stephen Hudson and Claus-Michael Lehr) contributed expert views from the perspectives of patient-focussed practice and pharmaceutical sciences/industrial pharmacy, respectively. Each person contributed individually to the text in an electronic version of the master document which was always at the disposal of the team. The Group reconvened after each session and shared notes, matters arising and recommendations were committed to the report. The draft report was jointly edited by the entire group using data projected from a lap top.

OVERALL ANALYSIS

Preface

The Peer Review Group was incredibly impressed by what they read and heard over the intensive two-and-half day review. The Group wishes to state that the achievement in establishing such a state of the art, well run School of Pharmacy in six years is

enormous and truly compliments the team on their commitment and enthusiasm for the “project”. The level of professionalism shown by all staff and students was of the highest order. It was very clear to the Peer Review Group that the students were well taught and supported within the School and on leaving were valued by their employers. In all, the School has achieved in what it set out to do i.e., produce outstanding graduates well trained to adapt to a clinical or industrial setting. After a strong foundation phase, the School needs to extend its recognition internationally. This recognition relates to the development of its reputation in both teaching and research in both the clinical and industrial spheres of the pharmacy profession. University College Cork can take great pride in the School of Pharmacy and look forward to a very exciting next phase in its development.

Self-Assessment Report

While the whole document including the self-assessment report was detailed and clearly a lot of work had gone into its preparation by the team, it was unnecessarily long and difficult to navigate. Quantitative data was not easy to locate, particularly in relation to financial analysis and benchmarking. An organisational chart for the School of Pharmacy would have clarified the reporting relationships.

SWOT Analysis

The Peer Review Group was of the opinion that the SWOT analysis was not critically interpreted to serve the development of the strategy and therefore the process is incomplete and that it would be beneficial to revisit it.

The Peer Review Group perceived enormous opportunities and strengths which were not clearly differentiated in the documentation. As the School of Pharmacy revisits its mission statement and its strategy for the next five years, following this quality review, a more detailed analysis and interpretation of the data available is required particularly at this critical point.

Benchmarking

The chosen Schools were appropriate for the benchmarking exercise. The exercise was quite comprehensive but the Peer Review Group felt that more value from the

exercise could have been obtained by better interpretation of the findings, for example through the comparison of quantitative data on teaching modes, scientific output and external party funding.

FINDINGS OF THE PEER REVIEW GROUP

School Details

The organisational structure below the level of the “School Head” and “Executive Committee” was not obvious. In the light of the School’s remarkable growth during the past six years, it is now timely to describe the internal structure more precisely.

School Organisation & Planning

There is a good committee structure in operation which seems to be working effectively and efficiently. Opportunities for improvement have been identified and each committee is looking at means of delivering better on their objectives.

However, it was not entirely clear to the Group what decision-making mandates these committees have. As a consequence, the Peer Review Group recommends that the powers of the committees be defined.

Teaching & Learning

The Peer Review Group were impressed by the excellent teaching which the students receive and were impressed by the fact that three of the staff members took a course in teaching and learning provided by the University. This was further manifestation to the Group of the commitment of the staff of the School, which was observed throughout the review. The Peer Review Group recommends that problem-based learning and case-based learning options be further employed and found that the students felt that this approach in conjunction with lectures was very effective.

The teaching loads of staff are heavy and there are challenges facing the School in the context of providing a five year integrated degree, the MPharm. If that is adopted there will be staffing and resource issues. A good business model for provision of the course must be devised.

A review of teaching hours is recommended from a student perspective in each year of the course since it is the Peer Review Group's perception that the volume and content of the syllabus may require adjustment. Some comparison of data from the benchmarking schools may assist in this process.

As the basic degree is now in place and arguably the most challenging task over, the Peer Review Group felt that there may be more opportunity now to focus on research and on spearheading the expertise that exists in clinical pharmacy through strategic support.

Research & Scholarly Activity

The research output is impressive as is the growth in student numbers over the last few years. There are excellent facilities at the disposal of staff and sound evidence of intra and interdisciplinary collaborations.

Research teams are well embedded in national structures for example the role in the drug delivery cluster and the solid state cluster. There are good interactions with other universities. There is also an emerging trend of disciplines within the School partnering with each other.

Improvement however is required in the development of international partnerships. Until recently there has been a reliance on national research funding but recently there has been a growth in participation in FP6/7 European Union projects including the Marie Curie Programme. This should be continued and strengthened.

The Peer Review Group concluded that the research load is being carried by too few staff members and a change in staffing at that level would seriously erode the research output. There needs to be more encouragement of staff to engage in research.

Staff Development

The University provides courses for staff to develop their teaching skills, three staff members have participated on a voluntary basis in these courses.

Issues were raised about promotion and the Peer Review Group realise that the University needs to tackle the issue and to give consideration to distributing teaching

loads while taking consideration of commitments to teaching/supervising postgraduate students.

The Peer Review Group recommends mandatory use and implementation of the IUQB guidelines for supervisors of research graduate students as the Group noted a discrepancy between levels of commitment to supervision amongst staff.

External Relations

External stakeholders were impressed by the calibre of graduate and the Peer Review Group noted the respect the School holds amongst its range of stakeholders. Laboratory training was specifically cited. Interpersonal skills such as ability to work in teams, confidence levels and communication skills were also recognised.

The School of Pharmacy is viewed as a hugely positive regional and national asset by external stakeholders and there is potential for further development as a response to opportunities. Continuing Professional Development was presented as one such potential opportunity.

There is no formal strategy to engage with industry, the other two Schools of Pharmacy in Ireland, the commercial pharmacies and the hospitals. While this currently happens it is generally based on informal networks/personal contacts rather than as part of a systematic School of Pharmacy strategy. The Peer Review Group recommends that an external relations strategy for the School of Pharmacy be developed to include:

- Interactions with funding agencies, philanthropists, graduates, industry, hospital clinical pharmacists and commercial pharmacists.
- Development of a robust undergraduate and post graduate placement programme.
- A relationship/partnership campaign with fundraising as an objective.
- A CPD suite of courses be developed not excluding on-line possibilities.

Facilities at the School of Pharmacy were viewed as outstanding and the potential for industry to use them in return for a fee was reiterated. The opportunity to develop CPD courses was also cited by several individuals.

External stakeholders would welcome increased engagement and would add greatly to the resources available to the School of Pharmacy (access of students to role models). Peer Review Group commented on the absence of a key stakeholder i.e., hospital chief pharmacists and hospital teacher-practitioners.

Support Services

The capacities of the administrative staff (currently one senior and 2 secretaries) are approaching their limits, especially in view of the high amount of acquired extramural funding and projects. Employment of an additional secretary should be considered.

Departmental/School Co-ordinating Committee & Methodology employed in the preparation of the Self-Assessment Report

The Self-Assessment Report, while exceptionally detailed, lacked oversight. The information was collated, but in some areas such as the SWOT, was not analysed.

Governance

As the School of Pharmacy moves from establishment to development, the Peer Review Group recommends that the School should revise the governance structure to recognize explicitly the four disciplines i) clinical pharmacy, ii) pharmaceutical chemistry, iii) pharmaceuticals and iv) pharmacology. The PRG recommends revision of the terms of reference of the Executive Board with the objective of empowering its leadership function, while continuing to ensure that each of the four disciplines of the School should be represented on the newly formed Executive Board.

The appointment of a Professional Advisory Board would be beneficial in building the dialogue with all stakeholders.

Services

Peer Review Group did not examine this aspect.

Staffing

Staff are very committed and have given a lot to enable the development of the curriculum and the research programmes. The technical and administrative staff were cited as being very supportive. The proposals which could have resulted in the appointment of Stokes professors should be considered for funding from other sources. As part of the Schools fundraising strategy consideration should be given to how revenue could be found for these appointments. If the MPharm is adopted, serious consideration will have to be given to ensuring that the staffing is adequate to provide the students with the necessary building up of clinical training.

Financing

A mortgage is outstanding on the Cavanagh Pharmacy Building, as is a sum of €1M which must be raised through philanthropy. The Peer Review Group recommends that the funding model for the School be made available to staff.

Sharing of information relating to the allocation of research overheads is recommended.

Communications

There are excellent informal mechanisms of communication within the School and excellent structures in place to enable exchange of information. However the Peer Review Group have identified room for improvement to formally exchange information vertically and horizontally in an environment that recognises all contributions from staff in an open and respectful environment.

Compliance with European Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area – especially relevant sections of Part 1 of the ESG

As the BPharm is externally accredited by the Pharmaceutical Society of Ireland, the Peer Review Group accepts that these standards are met.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR IMPROVEMENT

The Peer Review Group have considered carefully the specific recommendations made by the School in its Self-Assessment Report and have incorporated them as deemed appropriate into its recommendations as outlined below.

The Peer Review Group recommends:

1. Revise the mission statement to underline the dual mandate of producing graduates fit to enter health care teams and industry.
2. Revisit the SWOT analysis; clarify and prioritise its outcomes.
3. Highlight the special features of the School of Pharmacy that differentiate UCC from its competitors.
4. Revise the governance structure to explicitly recognize the four disciplines i) clinical pharmacy, ii) pharmaceutical chemistry, iii) pharmaceuticals and iv) pharmacology.
5. As the School of Pharmacy moves from establishment to development, the Peer Review Group recognises that the Executive Board in its present form may not suit the next phase. The Peer Review Group recommends revision of the terms of reference and membership of the Executive Board with the objective of empowering its leadership function, while continuing to ensure that each of the four disciplines of the School should be represented on the newly formed Executive Board.
6. Consolidate the committee structures within the School which will enable the School to respond to internal and external opportunities and demands and facilitate better flow of information between staff.
7. Appoint an advisory board representing the pharmacy profession.
8. Ensure that all staff members provide information to the Research Office as sought by them to track publications, PhD students etc., otherwise the University master documents will not accurately reflect the extent of research performance in the School of Pharmacy.
9. Ensure financial issues be more transparent.

10. Encourage the School to build its international reputation in research and scholarship by taking into account such activities as the amount of time spent on supervising masters and PhD students as part of the distribution of work loads.
11. Critically review the curriculum with the aim of increasing efficiencies and reducing volume without compromising quality. Consider more problem based learning or case based learning models as opposed to direct lecture style teaching.
12. Develop an **external** relations strategy to include engagement with all stakeholder groups including the graduate network, and potential funders in the future. The benefits are many and include the provision of work placements for undergraduate and postgraduate students.
13. Consider the potential for international student recruitment particularly in the context of playing to the School's strengths in clinical pharmacy and the industrially relevant facilities at the disposal of the School.
14. Develop the current strong **internal** relations and explore the possibility of sharing clinical education facilities with other Schools in the College of Medicine and Health.
15. Exploit UCC's innovative teaching of clinical practice in the context of a future MPharm and devise a coherent Continuing Professional Development (CPD) strategy for Irish pharmacists.

APPENDIX A

SCHOOL OF PHARMACY

PEER REVIEW GROUP SITE VISIT TIMETABLE

In Summary

- Tuesday 13 October: The Peer Review Group (Peer Review Group) arrives at the Kingsley Hotel for a briefing from the Director of the Quality Promotion Unit, followed by dinner and an informal meeting with staff members from the School of Pharmacy.
- Wednesday 14 October: The Peer Review Group considers the Self-Assessment Report and meets with school staff and student and stakeholder representatives. A working private dinner is held in the evening for the Peer Review Group.
- Thursday 15 October: The Peer Review Group meets with relevant senior officers of UCC. An exit presentation is given by the Peer Review Group to all members of the School. A working private dinner is held that evening for the Peer Review Group in order to finalise the report. This is the final evening of the review.
- Friday 16 October: External Peer Review Group members depart.

Tuesday 13 October 2009	
16.00 – 18.00	Meeting of members of the Peer Review Group Briefing by Director of Quality Promotion Unit, Dr. Norma Ryan. Group agrees final work schedule and assignment of tasks for the following 2 days. Views are exchanged and areas to be clarified or explored are identified. Venue: Kingsley Hotel
19.00 – 21.00	Dinner for members of the Peer Review Group, accompanied by the Director of Quality Promotion Unit Venue: Kingsley Hotel
21.00 – 22.00	Informal meeting for members of the Peer Review Group, Head of School of Pharmacy and School of Pharmacy staff. <i>School of Pharmacy Staff:</i> Dr Michael Cronin Dr John Cryan Professor Julia Kennedy Professor Anita Maguire Ms Noreen Moynihan Professor Caitriona O’Driscoll Venue: Kingsley Hotel

Wednesday 14 October 2009		Venue: Tower Room 1, North Wing, Main Quadrangle <i>(unless otherwise specified)</i>	
08.30 – 09.00	Convening of Peer Review Group		
09.00 – 09.30	Professor Anita Maguire, Head of School		
09.35 – 10.30	<u>Group meeting with all School of Pharmacy staff</u> Dr Caroline Blackshields Dr Abina Crean Dr John Cryan Dr Eoin Fleming Dr Brendan Griffin Dr JJ Keating Dr Suzanne McCarthy Dr Anne Moore Ms Aisha Murphy Dr Tom O'Mahony Dr Katie Ryan Professor Peter Weedle Dr Stephen Byrne Dr Michael Cronin Dr Ken Devine Dr Cormac Gahan Ms Aine Healy Professor Julia Kennedy Professor Anita Maguire (Head) Ms Noreen Moynihan Professor Caitriona O'Driscoll Dr Tim O'Sullivan Dr Laura Sahn Ms Kathleen Williamson Venue: Council Room, North Wing		
10.30 – 11.00	Tea & coffee		
11.00 – 13.00	<u>Private meetings</u> Dr. Declan Farrell 11.00: Dr Caroline Blackshields 11.15: Dr Abina Crean 11.30: Dr John Cryan 11.45: Dr Eoin Fleming 12.00: Prof Julia Kennedy 12.15: Ms Noreen Moynihan Venue: Tower Room 1	<u>Private meetings</u> Professor Steven Hudson 11.00: Dr Stephen Byrne 11.15: Dr Michael Cronin 11.30: Dr Ken Devine 11.45: Dr JJ Keating 12.00: Dr Anne Moore 12.15: Prof Caitriona O'Driscoll Venue: Tower Room 2	<u>Private meetings</u> Professor Claus-Michael Lehr 11.00: Dr Katie Ryan 11.15: Prof Peter Weedle 11.30: Dr Suzanne McCarthy 11.45: Dr Tim O'Sullivan 12.00: Dr Laura Sahn 12.15: Ms Kathleen Williamson 12.30: Dr Brendan Griffin Venue: Rm 255, O'Rahilly Building
13.15 – 13.35	Professor Peter Kennedy, Vice-President for Research Policy & Support		
13.35 – 14.30	Working lunch		
14.30 – 15.15	<u>Representatives of 1st and 2nd Year Students</u> David Walsh – 1 st year Marie O'Halloran – 1 st year Fergus Lynch – 1 st year Kenneth Howick – 2 nd year Justin Daly – 2 nd year Ita Walsh – 2 nd year		

15.15 – 16.00	<u>Representatives of 3rd and 4th Year Students</u> Jennifer Hurley – 3 rd year Michelle Hogan – 3 rd year Sheila O’Loughlin – 3 rd year Nicole Cosgrave – 4 th year Ruth Creaven – 4 th year Tim O’Brien – 4 th year
16.00 – 16.45	<u>Representatives of Graduate Students</u> Rakesh Dontirredy – PhD4 - Pharmaceutics Sinead Milner – PhD5 - Pharmaceutical Chemistry Philip Murphy – PhD2 – Clinical Practice Richard O’Connor – PhD2 - Pharmacology Aoife O’Mahony – PhD2 - Pharmaceutics Martin O’Neill – PhD5 - Pharmaceutics Fabian Sweeney – PhD2 - Pharmacology
17.00 – 18.30	<u>Representatives of stakeholders, past graduate and employers</u> Ms. Katie Cooke, Past Graduate Mr. Gary Johnson, Johnson’s Pharmacy Mr. Diarmuid O’Donovan, O’Donovan’s Pharmacy Mr. Keith O’Hourihan, Tower Pharmacy Investments Ltd., Mr. Tadhg O’Leary, Blackpool Bridge Pharmacy Ms. Máire O’Reilly, Pfizer Ireland Pharmaceuticals Dr. Melanie Walsh, Eli Lilly Venue: Staff Common Room, North Wing, Main Quadrangle
19.00	Meeting of Peer Review Group to identify remaining aspects to be clarified and to finalise tasks for the following day, a followed by a working private dinner. Venue: Kingsley Hotel
Thursday 15 October 2009	
Venue: Tower Room 1	
08.30 – 09.00	Convening of Peer Review Group
08.45 – 09.00	Mr. Cormac McSweeney, Finance Office
09.00 – 09.20	Professor Grace Neville, Vice-President for Teaching and Learning
09.25 – 10.00	Visit to Library at Brookfield Health Sciences Complex, meeting with Mr. Cathal Kerrigan, Clinical Therapies and Basic Sciences for Medicine Librarian.
10.10 – 11.00	Visit to core facilities of the School of Pharmacy, escorted by Professor Anita Maguire and Dr Michael Cronin, Chief Technical Officer, School of Pharmacy.
11.15 – 11.45	Professor Paul Giller, Registrar & Senior Vice-President Tea/coffee
11.45 – 12.15	<u>Internal stakeholders</u> Dr. Kieran Doran, School of Medicine

	<p>Dr. Eoin Fleming, Department of Biochemistry Dr. Elizabeth Gebruers & Dr. Farouk Marcos, Department of Physiology Dr. Florence McCarthy, Department of Chemistry and ABCRF Dr. Humphrey Moynihan, Department of Chemistry</p>
12.15 – 13.00	Professor Michael Berndt, Head, College of Medicine & Health
13.00 – 14.00	Working lunch
14.00 – 16.30	Preparation of first draft of final report
16.30 – 16.45	<p><u>Executive Board of School of Pharmacy</u></p> <p>Dr John Cryan Professor Julia Kennedy Professor Anita Maguire (Head) Ms Noreen Moynihan Professor Caitriona O’Driscoll</p>
16.45 – 17.00	Professor Anita Maguire, Head of School
17.00 – 17.30	<p>Exit presentation to all staff of the School made by the Chair of the Peer Review Group, summarising the principal findings of the Peer Review Group.</p> <p>This presentation is <u>not</u> for discussion at this time.</p> <p>Venue: Council Room, North Wing, UCC</p>
19.00	<p>Working private dinner for members of the Peer Review Group to complete drafting of report and finalisation of arrangements for completion and submission of final report.</p> <p>Venue: Kingsley Hotel</p>