



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 FOOD & NUTRITIONAL SCIENCES

ACADEMIC YEAR 2009/10

5th March 2010

ABBREVIATIONS

AFF: Agriculture, Food & Forestry

CAO: Central Admissions Office

ESG: European Standards & Guidelines for Quality Assurance in Higher Education

FITU: Food industry Training Unit

FNS: Food and Nutritional Sciences

FP7&8: Framework Programme 7&8

HRB: Health Research Board

IRCSET: Irish Research Council for Science and Engineering Technologies

PAL: Peer Assisted Learning

PMDS: Performance Management & Development System

PRG: Peer Review Group

QPU: Quality Promotion Unit

SAR: Self-Assessment Report

SFI: Science Foundation Ireland

SWOT: Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats

PEER REVIEW GROUP MEMBERS

Name	Position/Discipline	Institution
Professor Jan Delcour	Chairman Leuven Food Science and Nutrition Research Centre (LFoRCe)	Katholieke Universiteit, Leuven, Belgium
Dr Denise Gabuzda	Senior Lecturer, Department of Physics	University College Cork
Mr Paul Moriarty	Head, Student Counselling & Development	University College Cork
Ms Catherine Murphy	Assistant National Director	Population Health - Health Promotion, Health Services Executive, Ireland
Mr Declan Troy	Head of Centre	Teagasc, Dublin

TIMETABLE OF THE SITE VISIT

The timetable is attached as Appendix A.

Suitability and adequacy of the timetable.

The Peer Review Group (PRG) overall found the timetable to be suitable and adequate.

In this particular review, time had been tentatively allocated to have private meetings with up to 10 individual staff members, but only three had expressed an interest in such a meeting. Further, due to the SIPTU “work to rule” action that was in effect during the visit of the PRG, which prevented administrative and technical staff from participating directly in the site visit, one of these withdrew from her individual interview. This left only 2 individual meetings of a potential 13. The PRG was surprised at the apparently low interest in these individual meetings among the staff, and accordingly asked the Quality Promotion Unit (QPU) to organise further meetings. The PRG very much appreciated the fact that this was done, but unfortunately, this resulted in last-minute adjustments to the timetable for the second day of the review, which made the second day schedule quite tight.

The PRG suggests that the QPU consider requiring for all site visits some minimum fraction of the staff to have individual meetings with the PRG. This would ensure that the PRG for each site visit hears a range of views from various staff, and would avoid last-minute additions to the timetable such as those this PRG experienced.

PEER REVIEW

Methodology - Areas of responsibility for each member of the PRG

The PRG was chaired by Jan Delcour. Denise Gabuzda was selected as the Rapporteur, and took the lead on issues relating to the organisation of the School, while Paul Moriarty concentrated on teaching and learning topics as well as on the performance of support services. Catherine Murphy took the lead on matters of external relations, while Declan Troy concentrated on the School's research and scholarly activity as well as on developments and actions taken since the last quality review. All members of the PRG participated in all discussions and unanimously agreed on the content of the present report.

Report on Site Visit

Tour of School of FNS facilities:

A comprehensive site visit to research and teaching facilities of the School of FNS was conducted by Professors Cashman and Arendt. The School has extensive spatial capacity (over 5876 square metres) located on three floors of the Food Science and Technology Building and Biosciences Institute.

Overall, the PRG was impressed with the capital resources, laboratories and equipment. However, some laboratories were inadequately equipped for the purpose of teaching and demonstrating to undergraduate students. Some were extremely old, run down and poorly equipped. It is recommended that these laboratories be refurbished to higher and more uniform standard, as a matter of urgency, to augment the quality of teaching in the School.

The PRG was very impressed with the extensive pilot scale and processing facilities available within the school. The new nutrition study suites are most appropriate and should contribute to the important strategic research area of food and health.

Library visit:

The Library visit was conducted on February 3rd 2010. One external and one internal member of the PRG met with Ms. Margot Conrick, Head of Information Services, and Ms. Catherine Clehane, Engineering & Food Science Librarian.

The PRG acknowledges the preparation of the Library staff who provided comprehensive information on:

- Resources available to students and staff
- Library Information Skills Training
- Library Support overview
- Library materials budget with specific reference to the School of Food and Nutritional Sciences

The Library facilities are of a very high standard. However the funding available through the Irish Research Electronic Library (IREL) Programme has been reduced and this will impact on the student resources and in particular on post graduates and researchers.

The PRG recommends that the above deficit in funding be addressed in light of the importance of access to the highest quality resources.

Peer Review Group Report

Each member of the PRG took notes as he or she felt appropriate during the various activities of the site visit. During the afternoon of the last day of the site visit, the PRG members spent several hours drafting the sections of the PRG Report for which each was responsible. The Rapporteur then collected these sections and inserted them into a Master draft report. This draft was inspected together with Norma Ryan of the QPU, in order to verify that the entire group was in agreement with the draft text, and to identify gaps or deficiencies that remained to be addressed. The latter were assigned to various members of the PRG, who then relayed these additional pieces of text by email. The Rapporteur added this text, made a final check for consistency within the report, and submitted the final report to the QPU.

OVERALL ANALYSIS

Self-Assessment Report

Overall, the PRG was satisfied with the quality of the Self Assessment Report (SAR). However it noted that a true benchmarking exercise was not performed and that the SWOT analysis concentrated on strengths, weaknesses and trends, but unfortunately not on opportunities.

SWOT Analysis

The PRG appreciates the way the SWOT analysis has been carried out both for the teaching and learning activities as well as for the research component of the School. With regard to the teaching and learning activities, it is clear that the students are very positive about their lecturers. The low CAO points of the students entering the food science program are a problem. The PRG agrees with the statement in the Self-Assessment Report that large areas of the research infrastructure are in urgent need of extensive refurbishment. A further weakness is that the School, to date, has not adequately exploited its talent base to secure major funding opportunities (including SFI clusters). As noted in the Self Assessment Report, a significant threat is the increased national competition in the area of food science, nutrition and food and health research.

Benchmarking

The report of a complete benchmark exercise was not made available to the PRG.

FINDINGS OF THE PEER REVIEW GROUP

School Details

The PRG appreciates that the School, together with many of the other Departments and Schools in the College of Science, Engineering and Food Science, is undergoing significant change and restructuring. This can be very disruptive to the School, and can be particularly

difficult in the current situation, when the structure of the College of SEFS is itself still evolving and changing. One concern felt by the PRG is that the School may be trying to keep pace too closely with developments in the College structure. Trying to match these developments “in real time” as they evolve could lead to an unnecessarily high administrative burden.

Recommendation: *The School should consider whether it would be more efficient and less disruptive to adjust structures in the School to match the College structures at a somewhat slower pace, to allow the School to focus on its core teaching and research activities, while remaining fairly closely in step with the College structures as they evolve.*

School Organisation & Planning

The PRG understands that the School structures are still in a state of flux associated with restructuring. However, the PRG feels it is an omission that the decision-making structure in the School was not made clear in either the SAR or during the PRG site visit. Furthermore, while a strategic plan in general terms was included in the SAR, the PRG did not see evidence of a clear vision about how to realise this plan in practice through an “operational plan”.

The PRG noted that, while some general words about workloads in the School were included in the SAR, there were no specific details about teaching, administration and research workloads supplied in the SAR. (Details on teaching and administration workloads were provided by the Acting Head of School to the PRG during the site visit.)

The SAR states that teaching duties are “broadly equally distributed across academic staff” while “the administrative duties ...will, within reason, be as equally distributed as possible”, and “the amount of research activities undertaken by staff varies greatly”. It was unclear to the PRG whether this was by design or not. Was an academic workload model used in assigning teaching and administrative duties?

The SAR mentions that the following committees will be formally established in 2010: undergraduate teaching and learning committee, research committee, and a Staff-Student liaison/student experience committee.

Recommendation: *To make workloads transparent, possible academic workload models should be discussed within the School. Ideally, a model that is felt to be effective and fair by the vast majority of the academic staff should be adopted.*

Teaching & Learning

The PRG commends the staff of the School of FNS for their commitment to quality in teaching and learning. Overall, students reported being satisfied with their courses and it was particularly gratifying to hear that staff, academic and support, are perceived as being approachable and helpful. The Peer Assisted Learning (PAL) facility was highly valued by students.

The PRG endorses the School's concerns regarding the high failure rates for Food Science in years one and two. The Group particularly noted the low entry level for this course and identified this as a principle reason for worrisome retention rates, generating a situation that requires a lot of extra effort from all staff involved in the teaching process, both within the School and in other Departments. The Group feels that Food Science at UCC has the potential to become a World leader in research in its specific area, but this will not be possible unless the overall quality of the undergraduate students in the School is raised. Increasing quality of student intake would facilitate stronger courses in basic sciences and would ultimately lead to improved postgraduate quality.

Recommendation: *It is essential to effectively raise the bar for entry into the Food Science degree programme. Various options should be considered – not only trying to attract higher quality students to the programme, but also raising the entrance standards, for example, by requiring a minimum grade in Maths or requiring that the incoming students have at least one of Physics, Chemistry or Biology. The PRG feels that it is not fair to accept students who are very likely to fail in the first two years of the programme.*

Recommendation: *The School should have as a goal to make Food Science the first choice for the majority of entrants into that programme from the CAO.*

Research & Scholarly Activity

The PRG fully acknowledges the high calibre research that has been and continues to be carried out within the School. The PRG further notes that the recent research quality review,

undertaken in May 2009, concluded that the research was of excellent standing. The conclusions of this review were not surprising to the PRG.

The PRG recognised that the research carried out by the staff of the school is driven mainly on an individual basis.

Recommendation: *the School should develop a strategic research agenda for the School with a shared vision aimed at world-leading research. The agenda should proactively drive and feed into the appropriate programme of the proposed Food Research Institute. It should form and support alliances within the School and College and with other University colleges.*

The above recommendation should not impact negatively on the existing research programmes but allow more opportunities for greater external funding to be harnessed. Furthermore the PRG believes that by having a well focused research agenda the broader University management structures will acknowledge the research programme more fully. As noted by the Panel conducting the Research Quality Review in 2009, current and future external research opportunities are expected to be scarcer. The strategic planning which will inform the research agenda of this school must take into account the programmes of the relevant funding bodies (AFF, SFI, FP7&8, HRB etc) and the interests of the wider stakeholders of the Agri Food and Health Sectors.

The PRG acknowledges the important lead role which the school must play in the formation of the Food Research Institute. The PRG feels that the School has the capacity to become world-leading institute, but better undergraduate students must be attracted if this is to be realised.

Staff Development

Staff development is an important component in empowering the school to continually deliver high quality degree programmes, post graduate research training, and develop research and teaching activities within its overall mission. The SAR emphasizes the advanced qualifications which all staff have acquired. However staff development should be proactively pursued, and possibly monitored using a Performance Management and Development System (PMDS). The latter should be linked to the goals and objectives of the strategic plan for the school. In this way each staff member would have clear objectives as to obtain their goals in teaching and research. Each member of staff would also have the

opportunity to identify focused training and development needs in terms of knowledge, skills and attributes for their teaching and research components of their job. This link between Staff Development and a robust PMDS was not clearly evident in the SAR.

Recommendation: *A PMDS should be developed and more visibly linked to the goals and objectives of the strategic plan of the School.*

External Relations

The SAR prepared by the Department of Food and Nutritional Sciences for 2004-2008 contained a summary table demonstrating the level of external activities undertaken by staff. This focused on research related/scholarly activity for the period 2003-2008, and included quantifiable information on areas such as visits abroad, presentations at conferences, consultancies, membership of State Agency Boards, Journal Editorships, spin off companies etc.

The PRG gained valuable information on the School's external relationships, both within and external to UCC, during its discussions with undergraduate and postgraduate students, the acting Head of the School, Senior Academic staff within the School, senior Faculty members, including Vice Presidents and the Registrar, and a meeting with a representative selection of stakeholders, past graduates and employers.

In addition, the SAR gave numerous examples of engagement with external agencies.

Recommendation: *The wealth of knowledge within the School of FNS should be disseminated widely to key stakeholders, to inform practice, for example, in the Food and Health sectors. This could be provided through workshops or evening seminars and has the potential to generate income for the School. Seminars could also be provided in collaboration with other Schools/Colleges within UCC.*

Recommendation: *Partnerships with external agencies should be fostered in a variety of ways. At undergraduate level, it is important to foster input to nutrition and food science courses from practitioners in these fields.*

Recommendation: *Consideration should be given to the establishment of a resource hub/centre on Diet and Health, which could function as a consultancy type function to provide accurate scientific information on diet and health to health care professionals.*

Recommendation: *Consideration should be given to the development of modules/courses on specialist nutrition topics, which could include a Public Health Nutrition course, particularly in view of evidence of a demand among nutrition graduates to 'up skill' in their qualifications.*

Support Services

For Students

The School is to be commended for making a point of raising awareness among students of the supports available to them, such as counselling and career advice. Nevertheless, the PRG saw certain areas where support services for students could be improved.

Although the 3rd year students seemed quite happy with the efforts of the work placement coordinator, work placements were nevertheless a serious concern for these students. While it is understood that adverse economic conditions are currently a factor, it seems that clearer communication about options would help alleviate much of the anxiety felt by students. There seemed to be confusion about whether they were discouraged or encouraged to arrange their own placements; some students indicated that they were told *not* to try to arrange their own placements, then had trouble finding good placements later.

First year is clearly a very stressful time, particularly for those in the Food Sciences programme with relatively low entry points. Students were very positive about the PAL (Peer Assisted Learning) initiative and recommended that it be extended where possible.

The PRG was pleased to learn that the School's foreign students generally feel truly at home at UCC and in Cork.

For Researchers

The reduction in funding for the Irish Research Electronic Library (IREL) Programme will impact the resources available to students, and, especially, postgraduates and researchers. The implications of this deficit in funding should be addressed in light of the importance of access to the highest quality resources.

The Technology Transfer Office was identified as a burden rather than a support by one active researcher, who saw the layers of administration a serious draw on time. It was felt by some that the time it takes to process applications through this office, as well as through the Office for the Vice President for Research, caused frustration and was a de-motivating factor.

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

The only information on the methodology employed in the preparation of the SAR was the verbal communication to the PRG that all staff members contributed to writing the Report.

Governance

The PRG sees a need to continue to develop relationships with FITU and the School of Food Business & Development, as well as with the Department of Microbiology. Food Microbiology is a key area for Food Science (e.g., fermentation, food technology, effects of contamination by microorganisms, etc.). The PRG was surprised that Food Microbiology is not embedded in some explicit way in the structure of the School. Given that Food Microbiology is clearly a core discipline of Food Science, this raises questions about the real presence of food microbiology in the teaching and research programmes of the School.

Recommendation: *It is essential that the School develop a formal relationship with Food Microbiology academic staff or develop this core discipline within the School itself. Various possibilities for integrating these staff more closely with the activities of the School should be explored, including enhancing collaborations between the Food Microbiology and FNS staff, investigating the possibility that some Food Microbiology staff move their affiliation to the School of FNS or making one or more new appointments in the area of Food Microbiology within the School of FNS.*

The PRG feels it is an omission that the decision-making structure in the School was not made clear in either the SAR or during the PRG site visit. Is there a “management team” in the School, and if so, who comprises this team and what are its terms of reference?

Further, while a strategic plan in general terms was included in the SAR, the PRG did not see evidence of a clear vision about how to realise this plan in practice through an “operational plan”. This should ideally include a concrete strategic plan for research in the School, including issues such as which primary research areas it is intended to develop.

Recommendation: *The School needs to formulate a strategic plan for the School which should include research goals, and to formulate concrete, practical, implementation plans for the realisation of its strategic objectives.*

Recommendation: *An effective “management team” should be established in the School.*

Recommendation: *In developing its committee structures, the University should include a committee designed to deal with external relationships, which is comprehensive in scope and has relevance for both Colleges and Schools.*

Recommendation: *The appointment of a Head of School without unnecessary delay would greatly help in relation to these issues. A priority task should be the development of the implementation plans referred to above.*

Services

For Students

The School overall provides a supportive atmosphere for its students, however the PRG sees certain areas where support services for students could be improved.

First year is a very stressful time, particularly since the students are taking a heavy load of physical sciences modules whose purpose for their programmes is often not clear to them. This is especially true for those in Food Sciences who have come into the programme with low CAO entry points. Improvement in the services provided for these students could include the availability of additional Peer-Assisted Learning sessions and tutorials, as well as sessions with 3rd and 4th year students to help explain why it is important for them to take the science and maths modules that so many of them have trouble with.

The 3rd year work placement scheme is a strong aspect of the undergraduate programmes, and the School is currently providing very good work-placement assistance through the availability of a work placement coordinator. However, the question of work placements remains a serious concern for the 3rd year students, and the School should consider whether there might be ways to help alleviate the associated anxiety and stress.

Career guidance services are essential for the Nutrition students, many of whom are essentially interested in Dietetics. Since there are far fewer positions in Dietetics than the number of students graduating in Nutrition, other options must be discussed with them.

For Staff and Researchers

Both the Technology Transfer Office and the Office of the Vice President for Research were perceived as difficult to deal with by some of the researchers in the School. The School might consider whether there are ways that it can help alleviate this problem.

The School would also benefit from providing various “services” or activities aimed at improving the collegiality of the atmosphere within the School.

Staffing

As was noted in both the recent Research Quality Review and the SAR, the reduction in staff numbers that has occurred over the last several years has led to a distribution of academic staff that is somewhat “top heavy” and a need for “young blood”. For this reason, the PRG acknowledges the appropriateness of the allocation of two new junior lecturer posts. The addition of these two new positions will have a significant positive effect on the age balance of the academic staff in the School. At the same time, it is not clear to the PRG that there will be a need for further new appointments beyond these two positions, since the staff:student ratio for the School will not be out of line with those for other Schools in the College after these appointments.

Recommendation: *The School should carefully consider its options for how to make use of the two new lecturer appointments, such as the research areas in which it would be most desirable to hire. The School should further strive to integrate the new lecturers into the School in a collegial and supportive atmosphere. The School should evaluate the effect the new appointments have on workloads etc. before considering the possible need for further additional staff.*

Accommodation

The School has extensive spatial capacity (over 5876 square metres) located on three floors of the Food Science and Technology Building and Bioscience Institute. The amount of space is adequate to the School’s needs, however, as is acknowledged in the SAR, the quality of the laboratories and equipment is quite varied. Some undergraduate teaching laboratories were inadequately equipped, and some were very old.

Recommendation: *The undergraduate teaching laboratories should be refurbished to a higher and more uniform standard, as a matter of urgency, to augment the quality of teaching in the School.*

The PRG was very impressed with the extensive pilot scale and processing facilities available within the School. The new nutrition study suites are most appropriate and should contribute to the important strategic research area of food and health.

Financing

The School of FNS has clearly done well in attracting Research Funding, from both within and outside Ireland, and is well financed in this respect.

One trend noted by the PRG was the low success rate for IRCSET applications, particularly for postgraduate fellowships. Since many of these applicants are presumably among the 4th year undergraduate Food Sciences students, this appears to be a knock-on effect of the low qualifications of many of the incoming students to this programme. This is one specific example of how raising the quality of the incoming students to this programme, for example, by requiring some minimum grades in Physics, Chemistry or Mathematics, could directly feed into improving the quality of the research carried out in the School.

Communications

Between Schools, Institutes and Administrative Offices

Given the presence of Food Science activities in several different units within UCC, there is clearly a need for good communications between the various Schools and Institutes involved. This is true, for example, with regard to research in related areas carried out in different units, such as the School of FNS and the Department of Microbiology.

Having met with the Vice-Presidents for Teaching & Learning and for the Student Experience, the PRG feels that greater communication would be beneficial to both these offices and the School.

Within the School of FNS

The PRG also found evidence for a need for improved communications between staff and greater collegiality within the School of FNS.

Between Staff and Students in the School of FNS

The PRG found that, although students in the School of FNS were happy overall with their treatment by the School, students were looking for greater communication and clarity on a number of levels and with regard to a variety of issues.

Students expressed a number of concerns, including delays in receiving feedback on continuous assessment from lecturers; timetabling of classes that sometimes led to large distances between the locations for neighbouring lectures; uncertainty about career outlets for BSc Nutrition graduates; and general anxiety among the 3rd year students about their work placements (there appeared to be confusion about whether they were encouraged or discouraged from trying to arrange their own placements.)

Another communications issue that was raised by students was the question of their expectations about the programmes they had chosen. An appreciable number of the 1st year students, in particular, do not seem to have a clear idea of what to expect academically in their programmes (e.g. the need to take Physics, Chemistry and Mathematics in their 1st year).

Recommendation: *Provide clear and complete information to potential entrants to the Food Science and Nutrition undergraduate programmes about the academic programmes that are required for these courses, possibly through material provided to secondary schools.*

Recommendation: *Consider ways in which 3rd year students could provide information and support to 1st and 2nd years about the need to take Physics, Chemistry and Maths in these first two years.*

In the student questionnaires, a number of students pointed out some problems with being able to understand the speech of their lecturers or tutors, for example, due to a fairly heavy foreign accent. While it may be difficult to avoid such problems altogether, the PRG suggests that known potential difficulties of this sort be taken into account when assigning teaching duties; for example, staff that may be more difficult for inexperienced students to understand could be preferentially assigned to smaller groups of somewhat more advanced students.

Implementation of recommendations for improvement made in Peer Review Group Report arising from last quality review

The 2002 Quality Review Report made in excess of thirty recommendations. The Quality Promotion Committee (QPC) reviewed the recommendations and provided commentary on each. A follow-up report was compiled in October 2004 and each recommendation was reported on.

The PRG commends the School of FNS for the comprehensive response to the 2002 PRG report and the progress made in all areas. The PRG (2009) reviewed the PRG report (2002) and the follow-up report (2004) and concluded that a number of recurring themes are evident and these require a particular focus in the development of the School.

These themes include:

- Teaching of first year students and high failure rates/the low entry requirements for the BSc Food Science.
- The requirement to significantly upgrade facilities.
- The need for harmonisation of the integration of the Department (now School) and the development of a working management and committee structure. This recommendation included the appointment of the 'Head of Department'. Similarly the PRG (2009) has recommended the appointment of the 'Head of School'.
- Comparison of workloads across academic staff/needs analysis. 'Workloads of junior staff in particular should be reviewed carefully to ensure that they are fully in line with career development'.
- Review of approach to student assessment including the possibility of re-introducing Continuous Methods, where appropriate .
- Increased emphasis on staff development needs, performance evaluation (all staff), development of teaching, learning and assessment skills (for new academic staff). The PRG (2009) recommends an induction programme to ensure integration of new junior staff.

As the follow-up report was compiled in October 2004, a review of the Strategic Plan Department of Food and Nutritional Sciences, Food Industry Training Unit (2008) and the

synopsis contained in the Self Assessment Report (2009) was undertaken to assess recommendations against future plans.

The PRG welcomes the proposed strategic initiatives in the Strategic Plan which address some of the themes above and which may contribute to the recommendations of the PRG. The PRG notes that the plan was developed during a challenging time, of considerable change and recommends that a comprehensive Strategic Plan for FNS be developed and that the 'initiative leader', resource implications and target date be identified for each strategic initiative.

Compliance with European Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area

The PRG did not review compliance by the University and the School with the ESG in a detailed way and saw no evidence to suggest that the Standards are not being complied with.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR IMPROVEMENT

Recommendations for improvement made by the School

These have been considered by the PRG, and incorporated into its own recommendations as deemed appropriate.

Recommendations for improvement made by the Peer Review Group

The PRG Recommends that

1. The deficit in funding for library resources be addressed in light of the importance of access to the highest quality resources.
2. The School should consider whether it would be more efficient and less disruptive to adjust structures in the School to match the College structures at a somewhat slower pace, to allow the School to focus on its core teaching and research activities.
3. Academic workload models should be discussed within the School and workloads made transparent.
4. Various options for raising the bar for entry into the Food Science degree programme should be considered

5. The School should have as a goal to make Food Science the first choice for the majority of entrants into that programme from the CAO.
6. The School should develop a strategic research agenda for the School with a shared vision aimed at world-leading research.
7. A PMDS should be developed and more visibly linked to the goals and objectives of the strategic plan of the School.
8. The wealth of knowledge within the School of FNS should be disseminated widely to key stakeholders.
9. Partnerships with external agencies should be fostered in a variety of ways.
10. Consideration should be given to the establishment of a resource hub/centre on Diet and Health.
11. Consideration should be given to the development of modules/courses on specialist nutrition topics, which could include a Public Health Nutrition course.
12. Possibilities for integrating food microbiology staff more closely with the activities of the School should be explored.
13. The School needs to formulate a strategic plan for the School and to formulate concrete, practical, implementation plans for the realisation of its strategic objectives.
14. An effective “management team” should be established in the School.
15. The University should develop a committee designed to deal with external relationships, which is comprehensive in scope and has relevance for both Colleges and Schools.
16. A Head of School is appointed without unnecessary delay.
17. The School should carefully consider its options for how to make use of the two new lecturer appointments, such as the research areas in which it would be most desirable to hire. The School should further strive to integrate the new lecturers into the School in a collegial and supportive atmosphere. The School should evaluate the effect the new appointments have on workloads etc. before considering the possible need for further additional staff.
18. The undergraduate teaching laboratories should be refurbished to a higher and more uniform standard, as a matter of urgency.
19. The School should provide clear and complete information to potential entrants to the Food Science and Nutrition undergraduate programmes about the academic programmes.
20. The School should consider ways in which 3rd year students could provide information and support to 1st and 2nd years about the need to take Physics, Chemistry and Maths in these first two years.

APPENDIX A

SCHOOL OF FOOD & NUTRITIONAL SCIENCES

PEER REVIEW GROUP SITE VISIT TIMETABLE

In Summary

- Monday 1 February: The Peer Review Group (PRG) arrives at Jury's Hotel for a briefing from the Director of the Quality Promotion Unit and dinner followed by an informal meeting with members of the School.
- Tuesday 2 February: The PRG considers the Self-Assessment Report and meets with School staff, students and stakeholder representatives. A working private dinner is held that evening for the PRG.
- Wednesday 3 February: The PRG meets with relevant senior officers of UCC. An exit presentation is given by the PRG to all members of the school. A working private dinner will be held that evening for the PRG in order to finalise the report. This is the final evening of the review.
- Thursday 4 February: External PRG members depart.

Monday 1 February 2010	
16.00 – 18.00	Meeting of members of the Peer Review Group Briefing by Deirdre O'Brien, Administrative Officer, Quality Promotion Unit. 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.
19.00 – 21.00	Dinner for members of the Peer Review Group
21.00 – 22.00	Informal meeting for members of the Peer Review Group, Head of School of Food & Nutritional Sciences and School of Food & Nutritional Sciences staff. School of Food & Nutritional Sciences Staff: Professor Elke Arendt Professor Kevin Cashman (Acting Head) Professor Alan Kelly Dr Mairead Kiely
Tuesday 2 February 2010	
08.30 – 09.00	Convening of Peer Review Group
09.00 – 09.30	Professor Kevin Cashman, Acting Head of School
09.30 – 10.00	Presentation by Professor Kevin Cashman to PRG with all staff present
10.00 – 11.00	Group meeting with School staff members Professor Elke Arendt

	<p>Professor Kevin Cashman (Acting Head) Ms Mary Frost Mr Donal Humphries Professor Alan Kelly Dr Joe Kerry Professor Nora O'Brien Professor Yrjo Roos Dr Eileen O'Neill Mr Maurice Conway</p>
11.00 – 11.30	Tea/coffee
11.30 – 13.00	<p>Private meetings with individual staff members</p> <p>12.00: Professor Elke Arendt 12.15: Professor Nora O'Brien</p>
12.45 – 13.30	Working lunch
13.30 – 14.50	Visit to core facilities of School (Food Science Building), escorted by Professor Kevin Cashman and Professor Elke Arendt.
15.00 – 15.40	<p>Representatives of 1st and 2nd Year Students</p> <p>Aisling Dowling (<i>BSc Food Science II</i>) Ursula Kenny (<i>BSc Nutritional Science II</i>) Yvonne O'Keefe (<i>BSc Food Science I</i>) Niamh O'Sullivan (<i>BSc Nutritional Science II</i>)</p>
15.40 – 16.20	<p>Representatives of 3rd and 4th Year Students</p> <p>Laura Cooney (<i>BSc Nutritional Science III</i>) Regina Galvin (<i>BSc Nutritional Science III</i>) Marzeba Kacynska (<i>BSc Food Science IV</i>) Eve Mulcahy (<i>BSc Food Science IV</i>) Grainne Tynan (<i>BSc Nutritional Science IV</i>)</p>
16.20 – 17.00	<p>Representatives of Graduate Students</p> <p>Sinead Bannon (<i>PhD IV</i>) Lorraine Carrabine (<i>MSc II</i>) Brian McGrath (<i>PhD I</i>) Alexander Mauch (<i>PhD III</i>) Anthony O'Sullivan (<i>PhD II</i>) Kathleen Vallons (<i>PhD IV</i>) Yankun Zhou (<i>PhD II</i>)</p>
17.00 – 18.30	<p>Representatives of external stakeholders</p> <p>Mr. Rory Beavan, Heineken Dr. Teresa Bennett, Senior Health Promotion Officer, HSE Mr. Pat O'Connell, Work Placement Officer Dr. Paul Power, Department of Agriculture Dr. Catherine Stanton, Teagasc</p>
19.00	Meeting of Peer Review Group to identify remaining aspects to be clarified and to finalise tasks for the following day, followed by a working private dinner.

Wednesday 3 February 2010					
08.30 – 09.00	Convening of Peer Review Group				
09.00 – 09.20	Professor Grace Neville, Vice-President for Teaching and Learning				
09.20 – 09.40	Professor Paul Giller, Registrar & Senior Vice-President				
09.40 – 10.40	<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th><u>Group A</u></th> <th><u>Group B</u></th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td> Ms. Catherine Murphy Mr. Paul Moriarty Visit to UCC Library, meeting with Ms Margot Conrick, Head of Information Services and Ms. Catherine Clehane, Engineering & Food Science Librarian, Q+1. </td> <td> Professor Jan Declour Dr Denise Gabuzda Mr Declan Troy 09.40 Prof Alan Kelly 10.00 Prof Paul McSweeney 10.15 Prof Albert Flynn 10.30 Prof Donal Mulvihill </td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	<u>Group A</u>	<u>Group B</u>	Ms. Catherine Murphy Mr. Paul Moriarty Visit to UCC Library, meeting with Ms Margot Conrick, Head of Information Services and Ms. Catherine Clehane, Engineering & Food Science Librarian, Q+1.	Professor Jan Declour Dr Denise Gabuzda Mr Declan Troy 09.40 Prof Alan Kelly 10.00 Prof Paul McSweeney 10.15 Prof Albert Flynn 10.30 Prof Donal Mulvihill
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10.45 – 11.00	Mr Con O'Brien, Vice President for the Student Experience Tea/coffee				
11.00 – 11.15	Mr. Cormac McSweeney, Finance Office				
11.15 – 11.45	Professor Peter Kennedy, Vice-President for Research Policy & Support				
11.45 – 12.30	Professor Patrick Fitzpatrick, Head of College of Science, Engineering & Food Science				
12.30 – 13.00	Panel discussions				
13.00 – 14.00	Working lunch				
14.00 – 14.30	Professor Kevin Cashman, Acting Head of School				
14.30 – 17.00	Preparation of first draft of final report				
17.00 – 17.30	Exit presentation to all staff made by the Chair of the Peer Review Group summarising the principal findings of the Peer Review Group. This presentation is <u>not</u> for discussion at this time.				
19.00	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.				