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**Thematic Review of Placements at UCC**

**Scoping Document**

**1. Background & Introduction**

UCC has a strong commitment to the development of students’ employability skills and to the formation of graduates who are work-ready and world- ready. The Academic Strategy for the Connected Curriculum includes a strong commitment to the development of distinctive Graduate Attributes to further develop the unique qualities of UCC graduates.

Currently a range of placement opportunities are available to students enrolled on programmes at the University, with approximately 4,000 students on placement. A number of key actors across the University including: Careers Office Staff; Work Placement Officers; Academic staff and other liaison staff are involved in the identification, establishment, monitoring and assessment of placements. Placement settings range from small and medium enterprises, to global companies, community contexts, government agencies along with clinical settings in hospitals and other care and health institutions.

Maintaining a high-quality experience for students and placement providers, and all University staff engaged in supporting and managing placements is an important priority for the University. This thematic review is being commissioned by the Deputy President & Registrar and the Director of the Student Experience to provide a University-level view of current good practice in the overall structure and co-ordination of placements, and to identify opportunities to enhance these practices into the future.

**2. Scope of Review**

A thematic review of Placements at UCC will be undertaken to:

* Evaluate the current organisational infrastructure underpinning placements in terms of policy, governance, academic and professional staff responsibilities;
* Assess the suitability of the current organisational infrastructure in relation to the range and scale of placement provision on offer and future scale-up in response to the University’s Academic Strategy for a Connected Curriculum;
* Identify international good practices which can maximise the quality of the student learning experience on placement taking account of the diverse learning needs and contexts of the University’s student population

**3. Documentary Inputs:**

Key internal stakeholders will be asked to submit a short analytical summary of 300 words providing their perspective on current issues for Placements in the form of existing good practices and key areas for development. These will be compiled and provided to the appointed Review Team in advance of a site visit. These accounts will be supplemented by published policy, procedural and information documents related to the University’s organisation of placements.

**4. Structure of the Review**

**Review methodology**

The review methodology will follow the key stages for review, namely:

* Documentary submission
* External review by nominated peers
* Site visit
* Report publication and action planning

**External Peer Panel**

An external Peer Review Panel will be established, with the appropriate expertise and experience of Placements in higher education. The proposed nominations are appended.

**Timing and Coordination**

Following appointment of external reviewers, the review will commence during Semester 2 and conclude before the summer period.

The coordination of the Review will be undertaken by Quality Enhancement Unit and will include appointment of Reviewers, organisation of timetable and coordination of the final Review Report. A Review Coordinator from within the Student Experience Directorate, with expertise in the existing structures to facilitate the teams’ navigation of our current arrangements will be identified to work with the Quality Enhancement Unit to enable successful delivery of the Review.

**5. Outputs**

The proposed outputs are as follows:

1. Recommendations on the optimal organisational structure and configuration to support Placements
2. Recommendations on streamlining and enhancing current policy and procedures for Placements
3. Recommendations on good practice for Placements that can enable distinctive high-quality student learning.

**6. Review Report**

The Thematic Review Report will be received by the Quality Enhancement Committee and approved in line with normal review procedures. The follow-up and implementation of the recommendations will be directed by the Deputy President & Registrar and Director of the Student Experience.

23 January 2020