



University College Dublin

Summary Report of the Periodic Quality Review

UCD School of Archaeology

October 2010

Accepted by the UCD Governing Authority at its meeting on 29 March 2011

Executive Summary

This report presents the findings of a quality review of the UCD School of Archaeology, at University College Dublin. The review was undertaken in October 2010.

The composition of the Review Group was as follows:

- Professor Ciarán Ó hÓgartaigh, UCD School of Business (Chair)
- Dr Anne Drummond, UCD School of Public Health, Physiotherapy & Population Science (Deputy Chair)
- Professor Przemyslaw Urbanczyk, Institute of Archaeology and Ethnology, Polish Academy of Sciences
- Professor Priscilla Renouf, Canada Research Chair in North Atlantic Archaeology, Memorial University of Newfoundland, Canada
- Professor Robin Coningham, Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Faculty of Social Sciences and Health), Durham University

In summary, the Review Group finds that the School has a firm commitment to research and teaching. It has a manifestly strong sense of community as evidenced in the interaction between students and staff and between members of the School as colleagues. Given the current challenges facing the University and the School, this sense of community and belonging has the potential to serve as a magnet for retaining staff and attracting students both nationally and internationally. This is a strength of the School and should not be undermined.

Furthermore, the profile of the School has undertaken a step change since the previous review through the appointment of academic staff in, for example, environmental archaeology and in practical and field-based teaching. This is to be commended as it extends the scope of the School's activities in terms of its disciplinary and international focus.

However, the space constraints faced by the School in the absence of a College Strategic Space Plan significantly limits the School's ability to deliver strategic outcomes (such as growth in postgraduate and international students) consistent with University's Strategic Plan to 2014. The College should consider how best to address the School's space deficit and recognise its need for a common location and the replacement of sub-optimal laboratory, post-excavation and storage space. This will consolidate the School's identity, promote links between teaching and research as well as offering a competitive environment in attracting postgraduate student recruitment.

The Review Group also recommends, *inter alia*, that the School develop an academic workload model to maintain a workload history over time and to facilitate planning, in addition to capturing the current status of teaching and research. Evidence-based benchmarking and publicising of the School's achievements should be a strategic imperative and is particularly important evidence in the context of the School's ambitions to be among the top 30 Schools of Archaeology in Europe.

1. Introduction and Overview of UCD School of Archaeology

Introduction

- 1.1 This report presents the findings of a quality review of the UCD School of Archaeology, at University College Dublin. The review was undertaken in October 2010. The UCD School of Archaeology's response to the Review Group Report is set out in Appendix 1.

The Review Process

- 1.2 Irish Universities have collectively agreed a framework for their quality review and quality improvement systems, which is consistent with both the legislative requirements of the Universities Act 1997, and international good practice. Quality reviews are carried out in academic, administrative and support service units.

- 1.3 The purpose of periodic review is to assist the University to assure itself of the quality of each of its constituent units, and to utilise learning from this essentially developmental process in order to effect improvement, including :

- To monitor the quality of the student experience, and of teaching and learning opportunities
- To monitor research activity, including: management of research activity; assessing the research performance with regard to: research productivity, research income, and recruiting and supporting doctoral students.
- To provide an opportunity for units to test the effectiveness of their systems and procedures for monitoring and enhancing quality and standards
- To provide a framework within which the unit can continue to work in the future towards quality improvement
- To identify shortfalls in resources and provide an externally validated case for change and/or increased resources
- To identify, encourage and disseminate good practice
- To identify challenges and address these
- To provide public information on the University's capacity to assure the quality and standards of its awards. The University's implementation of its quality review procedures also enables it to demonstrate how it discharges its responsibilities for assuring the quality and standards of its awards, as required by the Universities Act 1997.

- 1.4 Typically, the review model comprises of four major elements:

- Preparation of a Self-assessment Report (SAR)
- A visit by a Review Group (RG) that includes UCD staff and external experts, both national and international. The site visit normally will take place over a two or three day period.

- Preparation of a Review Group Report that is made public
- Agreement of an Action Plan for Improvement (Quality Improvement Plan) based on the RG Report's recommendations; the University will also monitor progress against the Improvement Plan

Full details of the review process can be found on the UCD Quality Office website: www.ucd.ie/quality.

1.5 The composition of the Review Group for the UCD School of Archaeology was as follows:

- Professor Ciarán Ó hÓgartaigh, UCD School of Business (Chair)
- Dr Anne Drummond, UCD School of Public Health, Physiotherapy & Population Science (Deputy Chair)
- Professor Przemyslaw Urbanczyk, Institute of Archaeology and Ethnology, Polish Academy of Sciences
- Professor Priscilla Renouf, Canada Research Chair in North Atlantic Archaeology, Memorial University of Newfoundland, Canada
- Professor Robin Coningham, Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Faculty of Social Sciences and Health), Durham University

1.6 The Review Group visited the School from 18 – 21 October 2010 and had meetings with School staff, University students and staff, including: the Head of School; College Principal; College Finance Manager; SAR Co-ordinating Committee; School academic staff; School support staff; external stakeholders (including employers of graduates and state agencies); postgraduate students, taught and research; recent graduates; undergraduate students; UCD Buildings and Services. The site visit schedule is included as Appendix 2.

1.7 In addition to the Self-assessment Report, the Review Group considered documentation provided by both the School and the University.

Preparation of the Self-assessment Report

1.8 The School set up a Self-assessment Co-ordinating Committee in accordance with the UCD Quality Review Guidelines.

The members of the Co-ordinating Committee were:

- Professor Gabriel Cooney, Professor of Celtic Archaeology and Head of School (2008–11) (Chair)
- Professor Tadhg O'Keeffe, Associate Professor
- Dr Aidan O'Sullivan, Senior Lecturer
- Dr Graeme Warren, Lecturer

- Mr Conor McDermott, Research Officer
- Dr Stephen Harrison, Post-doctoral fellow
- Ms Angela McAteer, Administrator

1.9 The UCD School of Archaeology Co-ordinating Committee met on 7 occasions between 10 November 2009 and the site visit. Staff not on the Co-ordinating Committee received regular updates at staff meetings. A day-long discussion of the first draft of the SAR was held on Friday, 9 April 2010.

The University

1.10 University College Dublin (UCD) is a large and diverse university whose origin dates back to 1854. The University is situated on a large, modern campus, about 4km to the south of the centre of Dublin city.

1.11 The University Strategic Plan (to 2014) states that the University's Mission is:

“to advance knowledge, to pursue truth and to foster learning, in an atmosphere of discovery, creativity, innovation and excellence, drawing out the best in each student, and contributing to the social, cultural and economic life of Ireland in the wider world”.

The University is currently organised into 35 Schools in five Colleges;

- UCD College of Arts and Celtic Studies
- UCD College of Human Sciences
- UCD College of Life Sciences
- UCD College of Engineering, Mathematical and Physical Sciences
- UCD College of Business and Law

The UCD School of Archaeology is a school the UCD College of Arts and Celtic Studies.¹

1.12 As one of the largest universities on the island of Ireland, UCD supports a broad, deep and rich academic community in Science, Engineering, Medicine, Veterinary, Arts, Celtic Studies and Human Sciences. There are currently more than 24,000 students (15,400 undergraduates, 6,900 postgraduates and 1,900 Occasional and Adult Education students) registered on University programmes, including over 4,600 international students from more than 120 countries.

UCD School of Archaeology

1.13 The first Chair of Archaeology and History at the Catholic University, Dublin was appointed in 1854 and was thus one of the earliest professors of archaeology in the world. The Chair of Celtic Archaeology was a foundation chair of University College Dublin and since 1908 has been filled by a succession of leaders in the field of Irish and European archaeology. The

¹ While a reorganisation of the College structure has been agreed by the UCD Governing Authority, coming into effect from 1 October 2011, it is not currently envisaged that the School's location in the UCD College of Arts and Celtic Studies will change.

present incumbent was appointed to the Chair in 2008 and is currently Head of School (2008–11).

- 1.14 The then Department of Archaeology, University College Dublin underwent a Quality Assurance/Quality Improvement (QA/QI) review in 2001. As part of the UCD restructuring programme in 2005, the Department of Archaeology became the UCD School of Archaeology. The School is located in the Newman Building on the Belfield campus of University College Dublin and is one of the eight constituent Schools in the UCD College of Arts and Celtic Studies, one of the five Colleges of the University.
- 1.15 The composition of staff in the School reflects both the strong Irish and international profile of the School. The School has a current permanent staff of 12; 9 [one currently on 0.6 of a position] lecturers, an ICT Specialist, a Laboratory and Field Officer, an Administrator and a part-time Graphic Illustrator) and two post-doctoral fellows in 2010-11 (there were five in 2009–10). The widening agenda, changing focus and ambition of the School is highlighted by the appointment of a Laboratory and Field Officer in 2004, an Aegean Bronze Age specialist in 2005 and two Environmental Archaeologists in 2006. These step changes in the School's composition have widened the scope of the School's teaching and research and have internationalised its academic staff. The School's profile is, therefore, potentially more attractive to international students. The School has the largest cohort of archaeological postgraduate students in Ireland, with a growing number from international backgrounds. Adjunct staff, visiting fellows and staff working on School research projects add to the profile of the School.
- 1.16 The introduction of the *UCD Horizons* modular structure has led to greater flexibility in the teaching programme and a growing diversity of the student body. Archaeology is a subject taught at undergraduate level in both the BA and BSocSc programmes (which are both within the remit of the Arts, Celtic Studies and Human Sciences Programme Office). In 2006, a new BSc programme in Archaeology and Geology was launched, the first graduates of which will graduate this year (2010-11). The School continues to make a major contribution to the teaching programme of the UCD Centre for Adult and Continuing Education, offering a Certificate in Archaeology.
- 1.17 The taught MA programme has gone through a number of revisions in recent years and is currently structured as a core programme with options in specialised areas, within which students choose dissertation/research project topics. The School has introduced a Graduate Diploma in Archaeology and also offers a Higher Diploma in Archaeology as a fast track transfer degree for students with little or no archaeological experience. The School has been running a structured PhD/MLitt programme for some years and has embraced the University-wide structured graduate programme as an extension of this.
- 1.18 As a result of the periodic quality review process in 2001, the UCD School of Archaeology consciously developed a strategic approach to research. Strategic Planning processes are in place within the School and the School's approach to research is encapsulated in the School Strategic Plan for Research and Innovation 2007–2012. This strategic approach allows the School to be both coherent and adaptable in its research strategy. UCD has adopted a strategic approach to research activities, with research priorities being organised under a number of major research 'themes'. The School contributes significantly to the 'Global Ireland' major research theme and also to the 'Culture, Society and Change' theme which is a focus of the Humanities Institute of Ireland, the UCD College of Arts and Celtic Studies and the UCD College of Human Sciences.

Report Commendations and Recommendations

A. Organisation and Management

Commendations

- A.1 There is evidence of good communication and a strong sense of loyalty, collegiality and community among the staff in this single discipline School. This is manifest in the excellent relationships members of the School staff have with students at all levels and with external stakeholders. The UCD School of Archaeology is well respected by its stakeholders;
- A.2 The School Executive Committee appears to work well for the School and School roles and responsibilities are clear; and
- A.3 Early identification of the incoming Head and Deputy Head of School has allowed training and shadowing to take place, and is a good example of the proactive strategic approach that the current Head of School advocates.

Recommendations

- A.4 Formalise a rotating term-limited programme of key role allocation (Teaching and Learning, etc.), in order to ensure a spread of systems knowledge across all staff members over time;
- A.5 Develop an academic workload model to maintain a workload history over time and to facilitate planning. This will also allow information on the current status of academic staff teaching, research and leadership contributions to be captured;
- A.6 Undertake evidence-based bench-marking against Archaeology departments in other national and international universities, as University metrics used in comparisons against other Schools in the College do not always reflect the specific needs of the discipline; and
- A.7 Using international benchmarks, formally explore whether the subject weighting allocated to the laboratory-based modules can be reviewed to take account of the recent developments in the Archaeological science component of the School's programmes and of the Archaeological discipline internationally.

B. Staff and Facilities

Commendations

- B.1 The School has successfully extended the scope of research and teaching capacity to include environmental archaeology as a key strength of the School;
- B.2 The School has developed new specialist reference collections to support reaching and teaching capacity in environmental archaeology;
- B.3 The Review Group commends the concept of sharing undergraduate teaching laboratories with the School of Biology; and
- B.4 In the context of the overall space constraints of the School, the conversion of a photographic dark room (K010) into a small wet lab and the allocation of new unsecured storage area in Newman LG are welcomed by the Review Group.

Recommendations

- B.5 The School is encouraged to clarify the current activity profiles of Administrative grades, using as comparators, the academic-related technical/experimental roles present within comparative departments of Archaeology elsewhere;
- B.6 The School is encouraged to reconfirm its excellent reputation in the art and archaeology of Celtic and Early Christian Ireland through the reappointment to the post in Archaeology of the Late First Millennium BC / First Millennium AD in accordance with the UCD College of Arts and Celtic Studies' staffing plans as represented to the Review Group by the College Principal; and
- B.7 The College is encouraged to endorse the approval of the 'gapped' Administrator post to support the student-facing activities of the School and re-engage support for the Head of School; and
- B.8 Given that post-doctoral training provision at University-level appears to be highly generic (and somewhat basic), consideration should be given to mapping institutional training and development opportunities for post-doctoral fellows to their individual needs;
- B.9 The College should address the School's space deficit and recognise its need for co-location and the replacement of sub-optimal laboratory, post-excavation and storage space. This will consolidate the School's identity, promote links between teaching and research as well as offering a competitive environment for postgraduate student recruitment; and
- B.10 The College should finalise plans for the relocation of the School's activities from Crannog and Roebuck when that sector is redeveloped and is encouraged to develop a five year College Strategic Space Plan.

C. Teaching, Learning and Assessment

Commendations

- C.1 The academic staff approach to teaching and learning appears to ensure a friendly and informal teaching atmosphere which is highly appreciated by students at all levels. Graduates of the School interviewed by the Review Group commented that the academic staff in the UCD School of Archaeology taught them how to think and how to effectively navigate the world of published papers and data sources, suggesting a commendable approach to learning;
- C.2 Communication between students and staff is very good. This also includes advice regarding careers;
- C.3 The practical aspects of teaching archaeology are acknowledged and implemented as much as the laboratory space allows. However, the incorporation of students in handling materials is problematic because of space restrictions;
- C.4 All staff are active in research and aim to embed research in their teaching, particularly at higher levels; and
- C.5 There is a plan to introduce innovative assessments.

Recommendations

- C.6 Given the risk of over-assessment noted earlier, an audit of assessments should be carried out by the School with a view to standardising and streamlining the incidence and timing of assessments;
- C.7 As part of University policy, students are requested to formally assess teaching in the School. However, they should be better motivated to participate in student evaluations of learning by, for example, more formalised communication and follow-up regarding actions taken or considered in the light of student feedback;
- C.8 The size of Stage Two classes (which is now up to 91) should be reduced in order to allow better contact with teachers, to meet the needs of e.g. lab teaching, and to develop practical skills (such as fieldwork);
- C.9 Wider use should be made of electronic submission tools (such as Dropbox in Blackboard or SafeAssign) to alleviate the burden on administrative staff;
- C.10 More emphasis should be placed in both teaching and assessment on developing essay and report-writing abilities to match the expectations of potential employers;
- C.11 Obligatory field trips/field work, which is crucial for teaching archaeology, should be extended beyond the current provision of 1-2 weeks;
- C.12 To the extent practicable, an inter-School timetabling plan should be developed to allow for field trips/work to take place during the normal teaching year;
- C.13 To discourage student absenteeism and develop student communication and associated skills, consideration should be given to the introduction of participation/attendance as part of the final grade (10-20%)
- C.14 The School has articulated a strategic structure to undergraduate teaching and module choice which was presented to the Review Group. This should also be communicated to students;
- C.15 To meet the expectations of students who seek a more focused education, consideration should be given to the introduction of specialised MAs and/or the clearer communication of the specialist pathways available on the current MA (which appears to be perceived as a general MA);
- C.16 To enhance the academic development of doctoral students, their involvement in teaching should be increased in a systematic manner; and
- C.17 To further enhance the international experience of students, teaching input by visiting/overseas-academic staff should be increased, even on a casual basis.

D. Curriculum Development and Review

Commendations

- D.1 Students are provided with good information on module content;

- D.2 Students at all levels appreciate the wide choice of thematic modules;
- D.3 The scope of the curriculum developed in recent years to meet the general development of archaeology as a discipline, e.g. landscape and environmental archaeology, is welcomed by the Review Group;
- D.4 The Review Group noted and welcomed an increased desire to focus on theory and method of archaeology; and
- D.5 The School's engagement with Evening, Adult and Continuing Education is commended and if possible, should be maintained. This fulfils a public role for the School and has also served to attract mature students to the undergraduate and graduate programmes.

Recommendations

- D.6 The School should undertake regular systematic evaluation of pathways and modules and modify the module portfolio based on this review. This may include the discontinuation of unpopular modules;
- D.7 The portfolio of modules currently includes a wide range of modules. The School should consider reducing the number of modules offered while trying to balance the development of the discipline and students' interests. In particular, the School should seek to avoid rigidly following "inherited" research interests;
- D.8 There should be a greater exploration of students' opinions regarding the curriculum in general (perhaps through formalised surveys and/or student fora);
- D.9 Module pathways should be much better communicated to students who still think in terms of free module choice. In particular, consideration should be given to improving guidance and visualisation of possible pathways;
- D.10 The School should consider whether specialisation is available too early in the curriculum (Level 2) and the extent to which students are aware of such specialisation;
- D.11 In that context, the School should reflect on the possible fragmentation of archaeological knowledge as a result of too many alternative pathways offered at a relatively early stage in the undergraduate programme. Further, too many modules may result in a decrease in staff awareness of the whole structure and contents of teaching;
- D.12 Modules taught by Occasional academic staff should be avoided if possible, or where they are required, such academic staff should have formal arrangements to teach and meet students during the semester;
- D.13 The External Examiner system should be maintained and enhanced to facilitate periodic assessment of the curriculum by international scholars;
- D.14 In an international context, the School should continue to extend the curriculum and profile of the School beyond the traditional Celtic studies and Irish culture agenda while remembering at the same time that this attracts foreign students; and

- D.15 In that context, the Review Group recommends changing one of the leading research and teaching themes from “Ireland and the world” to “Ireland in the world”.

E. Research Activity

Commendations

- E.1 The Review Group noted the very strong research culture in the UCD School of Archaeology and was impressed with the total amount of annual research funding received by the School;
- E.2 The level of research productivity was considered to be very high, notably the large number of books and book chapters, journal articles, including in peer-reviewed international journals; national and international conference organising; and national and international conference presentations;
- E.3 The hosting of 2008 World Archaeological Conference, held in Dublin, was a huge achievement, bringing the world to Ireland and Ireland to the world;
- E.4 The dynamic and positive research environment, which includes a collegial atmosphere, attracts students at all levels, but in particular PhD students and Post-Doctoral fellows;
- E.5 The School’s degree of strategic research planning shows vision, leadership and foresight; and
- E.6 The high priority that the School gives to increase the internationalism of its collaborations and the global perspective of its results is commendable.

Recommendations (for the School)

- E.7 The Review Group strongly concludes that the single greatest obstacle to further building on the School’s research strength is the sub-optimality and insufficiency of the research facilities, in particular but not limited to wet and dry research labs; collections management; archives and equipment storage and management;
- E.8 The Review Group recognises that a lesser but still significant obstacle is ensuring sufficient protected research time and it agreed that rationalisation of the School teaching programme be undertaken with a view to freeing up time through streamlining module offerings;
- E.9 The Review Group agrees that a high priority is to fill the current gap in the research complement of the School is Celtic Archaeology (specifically Archaeology of the late first millennium BC/first millennium AD) and this gap should be filled;
- E.10 The Review Group recommends that the School continues a more focussed targeting of large-scale multi-year research funding; and
- E.11 The Review Group recommends that the School further internationalises its research by continuing to target peer-reviewed international journals and international conferences as a means of making their research results globally relevant.

Recommendations (for the College and University)

- E.12 The financial and human resources administration of School research grants at the College and University levels should be streamlined to facilitate academic administration; and
- E.13 The space needs of the UCD School of Archaeology, which arise out of the scientific methodology of the discipline, should be given a high priority within a strategic space plan at the College level.

F. Management of Quality and Enhancement

Commendations and recommendations

- F.1 The 2001 Review Group recommended that the position of the Senior Technician should be upgraded;

The School responded that, 'the position of the senior technician was strategically developed and re-aligned to the critical need for co-ordination and leadership in the IT area. This is now led by our IT Specialist;

The 2010 Review Group recommends that consideration be given to clarifying the role and career pathways of the senior technician consistent with the research and teaching needs of the School.

- F.2 The 2001 Review Group recommended that an additional academic post was required to facilitate practical and environmental work;

The School responded that an additional academic was appointed in 2002, with the specific remit of improving and leading practical and field-based teaching;

The 2010 Review Group welcomes this appointment as an articulation of the School's strategy in improving and leading its practical and field-based teaching.

- F.3 The 2001 Review Group recommended that the MA course be restructured.

The School responded that 'this has been done on a couple of occasions over the last decade. With the dramatic changes in the Irish and international economy and the consequences that this has had for the archaeological profession the focus of the taught graduate programme needs to be reviewed again.'

The 2010 Review Group recommends a review and clarification of the positioning of the MA, particularly in the light of the current employment climate and wider opportunities in internationalising the student body.

- F.4 The 2001 Review Group recommended that the department (as it then was) should develop a strategic plan.

The School responded that 'the department adopted a strategic planning process which was recognised as a very positive step by the University, to the extent that the Department was one of the academic units chosen by UCD to meet the OECD team on its site visit when preparing its report on the higher education sector in Ireland in 2004. The strategic planning approach also led to the appointment of two environmental archaeologists in 2006. Since

2008 the focus on strategic planning at School level has decreased as immediate budgetary and operational issues have been the key management concern.'

The 2010 Review Group welcomes the strategic developments reflected in the appointments outlined. In the Roles & Responsibilities of School, College and Programme Board (pp. 11-12), strategic planning takes places at both College and School levels. We recommend that, in the light of the UCD Strategic Plan to 2014, the College and School should develop and implement a research strategy that is congruent with the University research strategy, national policy and emerging trends globally. In particular, we recommend that such a strategic plan should serve to focus the School's research and teaching activities.

- F.5 The 2001 Review Group recommended that the achievements of the department should be more actively publicised to promote the corporate image of the department and of University College Dublin.

The School responded that 'this continues to be a focus of all the activities of the School. A School Development Board was established in 2006 but this has been inactive over the last three years in the context of the University's development and fund-raising priorities and strategies'.

The 2010 Review Group recommends that the evidence-based benchmarking and publicising of the School's achievements remains a strategic imperative. This is particularly important evidence in the context of the School's ambitions to be among the top 30 Schools of Archaeology in Europe.

The 2010 Review Group welcomes and encourages the establishment of a forward planning group with a remit to consider and develop the strategic direction and focus of the School.

G. Support Services

Commendations

- G.1 The School has excellent computing facilities; and
- G.2 In the context of budgetary constraints, the relevant archaeology book holdings of the main library are improving.

Recommendations (for the School)

- G.3 The Review Group recommends that the School continues to update its computing and hardware.

Recommendations (for the College and University)

- G.4 The Review Group recommends that the administrative post of Student Officer, currently vacant, be filled as a priority;
- G.5 The Review Group recommends that access to the relevant electronic journals should be maintained as a matter of priority;

- G.6 The Review Group recommends that administration of grants and associated human resources be streamlined;
- G.7 The Review Group understands that timetabling is undertaken at College level (in the context of a wide range of disciplines) and recommends that specific recognition be given to Archaeology in this regard and that the timetabling and scheduling of courses and course-related activities (e.g. field trips) be rationalised; and
- G.8 The Review Group recommends that the School continue in its efforts to meet its obligations regarding fieldwork safety regulations established through the UCD Safety Office.

H. External Relations

Commendations

- H.1 The Review Group commends the School for hosting major international archaeological events, such as WAC-6 and The Theoretical Archaeology Group (TAG), to showcase the School's activities to academics and potential graduate students;
- H.2 The Review Group welcomes the diversification of the academic staff which has accelerated the internationalisation of the School's research and teaching;
- H.3 The Review Group notes that student placements are viewed as being mutually beneficial to practitioners, academics, policy makers and the students themselves;
- H.4 Graduates of the School are highly valued by employers for their professional and transferable skills;
- H.5 Adjunct positions enhance the capacity of the School and provide valuable contributions to research, teaching as well as additional external stakeholder engagement; and
- H.6 Statutory bodies recognise the key research leadership contributions of members of the School to the development of priorities and strategy, with specific reference to the development of Archaeology 2020 (Repositioning Irish Archaeology in the Knowledge Society) and Research Framework for the Brú na Bóinne UNESCO World Heritage Site.

Recommendations

- H.7 The School is encouraged to continue to develop its International strategy to consolidate undergraduate, postgraduate and academic staff links in North America in consultation with the UCD International Office;
- H.8 The College may wish to develop and disseminate a coherent international strategy supporting individual Schools;
- H.9 The School may wish to review its broad portfolio of national networks and commitments in order to focus on a set of core national priorities;
- H.10 The School may wish to review its broad portfolio of international networks and commitments in order to focus on a set of core international priorities;

- H.11 The School may wish to review its network of relationships with archaeological practitioners, academics and policy makers in order to formalise their input into research and teaching and learning opportunities;
- H.12 The School should further develop a workload models to balance and incentivise the range of activities undertaken by academic staff in the School; and
- H.13 In that context, the School should consider offering research leave and/or arranging workload allocation to maximise research outputs and the development of larger grant bids.

I. Summary of Commendations and Recommendations

- I.1 In summary, the School has a strong commitment to research and teaching. It has a manifestly strong sense of community as evidenced in the interaction between students and staff and between members of the School as colleagues. Given the current challenges facing the University and the School, this sense of community and belonging has the potential to serve as a magnet for retaining staff and attracting students both nationally and internationally. This feature is a strength of the School and should not be undermined.
- I.2 Furthermore, the profile of the School has undertaken a step change since the previous review through the appointment of academic staff in, for example, environmental archaeology and in practical and field-based teaching. This is to be commended as it extends the scope of the School's activities in terms of its disciplinary and international focus.
- I.3 However, the space constraints faced by the School in the absence of a College Strategic Space Plan significantly limits the School's ability to deliver strategic outcomes (such as growth in postgraduate and international students) consistent with University's Strategy Plan. The College is urged to address the School's space deficit and recognise its need for co-location and the replacement of sub-optimal laboratory, post-excavation and storage space. This will consolidate the School's identity, promote links between teaching and research as well as offering a competitive environment in attracting postgraduate student recruitment.
- I.4 The Review Group also recommends, *inter alia*, that the School develop an academic workload model to maintain a workload history over time and to facilitate planning, in addition to capturing the current status of teaching and research. Evidence-based benchmarking and publicising of the School's achievements should be a strategic imperative and is particularly important evidence in the context of the School's ambitions to be among the top 30 Schools of Archaeology in Europe.

Appendix 1

UCD School of Archaeology Response to the Review Group Report

We warmly welcome the Quality Review Report, and wish to record our gratitude to the members of the Review Group for their time, energy, commitment and courtesy. As a School, we found great value in the twinned processes of self-assessment and external review, and we look forward now to working with the UCD Quality Office to develop a Quality Improvement Plan based on this very measured and comprehensive report.

We feel that the report captures the essence of our School. It identifies our strengths and achievements, but also recommends pathways towards improvement. Since November 2010 we have been working as a team to address specifically those issues raised by the Review Group at the end of its site-visit, and we have already made progress with respect to individual workloads and the undergraduate module portfolio. The delivery of the report now allows us to continue the process of improvement more assiduously.

The Quality Review Report also identifies and articulates very clearly the wider challenges that we face, but it also highlights, very valuably, the ways in which our School can, with support from the College and the University, realise its potential as one of the top centres for teaching and research in European Archaeology. We especially welcome these recommendations and we look forward to working with the College and University towards meeting our goals.

Finally, we wish to thank the UCD Quality Office for its guidance and encouragement throughout this process, especially in the preparation of the Self-assessment Report.

Appendix 2



Schedule for Review Visit

UCD School of Archaeology
Date 18-21 October 2010

Pre-Visit Briefing Prior to Site Visit: Monday 18th October 2010

- 17.30-19.00 Review Group meets in the hotel to review preliminary issues and to confirm work schedule and assignment of tasks for the following three days - **RG and UCD Quality Office only**
- 19.30 Dinner for the Review Group - **RG and UCD Quality Office only**

Day 1: Tuesday, 19th October

Venue: K012, UCD School of Archaeology

- 09.00-09.30 Private meeting of Review Group
- 09.30-09.40 Review Group introduction to the School staff
- 09.40-10.15 Review Group meets Head of School
- 10.15-10.30 Break
- 10.30-11.30 RG meet with SAR Co-ordinating Committee:
- 11.30-11.50 Tea/Coffee break – Review Group only
- 11.50-12.35 Review Group meets with Principal of UCD College of Arts and Celtic Studies
- 12.35-12.45 Break
- 12.45-13.30 Review Group meets with technical/administrative/other School support staff
- 13.30-14.15 Lunch – Review Group only
- 14.15-15.00 Review Group meets with representative group of staff to discuss research issues
- 15.05-15.25 Review Group meets with Finance Manager, UCD College of Arts and Celtic Studies
- 15.30-15.45 Tea/Coffee break – Review Group only

15-45-16.45	Tour of outlying School research facilities: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Crannog/Roebuck via Humanities Institute of Ireland (time permitting)
16.45-17.45	Tour of facilities in Newman Building <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Archaeology Corridor including K014 • Lower Ground floor storage area • A104
17.45-18.15	Review Group meets to review key observations
18.15	Review Group Departs*

Day 2: Wednesday, 20th October

Venue: K012

08.45-09.15	Private meeting of Review Group
09.15-10.00	Review Group meets with a representative group of Postgraduate/PhD students
10.00-10.10	Break
10.10-11.10	Review Group meets with representative group of academic staff to discuss teaching & learning issues; curriculum development; assessment etc.
11.10-11.30	Tea/Coffee break
11.30-12.30	Review Group meets with representative group of undergraduate students
12.30-12.45	Private meeting of Review Group to review findings
12.45-13.30	Lunch – lunch with staff
13.30-14.15	Review Group meets with Head of School (2004-08) and staff appointed since 2001
14.15-14.30	Review Group meets with School post-doctoral fellows
14.30-14.40	Break
14.40-15.30	Review Group meets with group of external stakeholders
15.30-15.45	Break
15.45-16.45	Review Group private meeting with School staff (by request – 10 minute intervals)
16.45-17.10	Review Group meets Senior Project Co-ordinator, UCD Buildings and Services
17.10-17.45	Review Group Private meeting and Depart

Day 3: Thursday, 21 October

Venue: K012

09.00-09.30	Review Group private meeting
09.30-10.15	RG meets with recent BA and MA graduates
10.15-10.45	Review Group meets with Head of School, to sweep-up/clarify any outstanding issues
10.45-12.30	(Optional) Review Group meets with unit or University staff to clarify outstanding issues or start preparing draft Review Group Report
12.30-13.15	Lunch – Review Group only
13.15-15.00	Review Group finalises first draft of Review Group Report and prepare exit presentation – and confirm arrangements/deadline for Review Group completion
15.00-15.15	Review Group meets with Head of School, to feedback outline strengths and recommendations on areas for further development
15.15-15.30	Break – reconfigure K012 for exit presentation
15.30-16.00	Exit presentation to all available staff of the School – to be made by an external member of the Review Group (or other member of the Review Group, as agreed) summarising the key findings of the Review Group
16.00	Review Site Visit ends – Review Group depart