



University College Dublin

Periodic Quality Review

UCD School of Education

October 2011

Accepted by the UCD Governing Authority at its meeting on 7 February 2012

Table of Contents

	Page
1. Introduction and Context	3
2. Organisation and Management	6
3. Staff and Facilities	7
4. Teaching, Learning and Assessment	9
5. Curriculum Development and Review	11
6. Research Activity	13
7. Management of Quality and Enhancement	15
8. Support Services	17
9. External Relations	17
10. Summary of Commendations and Recommendations	19

Appendix 1: UCD School of Education Response to the Review Group Report

Appendix 2: Schedule for Review Visit

1. Introduction and Context

Introduction

- 1.1 This report presents the findings of a quality review of the School of Education at University College Dublin. The review was undertaken in October 2011. The UCD School of Education'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 the quality of research activity including management of research activity and assessing the research performance with regard to productivity, income, and recruiting and supporting doctoral students
 - To provide an opportunity for units to test the effectiveness and quality of their systems and procedures for monitoring and enhancing quality and standards
 - To provide a framework within which the School 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
 - Identify, encourage and disseminate good quality practice and to identify challenges and to 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 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 Education was as follows:
- Professor Grace Mulcahy, UCD School of Veterinary Medicine (Chair)

- Professor Anthony Brabazon, UCD School of Business (Deputy Chair)
 - Professor Ian Menter, Professor of Teacher Education, University of Glasgow
 - Professor Ros Sutherland, Professor of Education, University of Bristol
- 1.6 The Review Group wish to thank the UCD School of Education for the courtesy with which they were received, and the co-operation of the Head of School and staff during the visitation.
- 1.7 The Review Group visited the School from 23rd-26th October 2011, and held meetings with School and University staff, including: UCD School of Education academic, administrative, research and technical staff members; the Principal, UCD College of Human Sciences; Head of School; staff representative of School teaching and learning and research; recently appointed UCD staff members; Head of Registry; College Finance Officer; Library staff; students, graduates and employers. The site visit schedule is included as Appendix 2.
- 1.8 In addition to the Self-assessment Report, the Review Group considered documentation provided by the School and the University including details of research applications, programme specifications, minutes of the College Executive and School Executive, and information manuals for students. Material relating to SMARTlab was provided by way of an appendix to the SAR, and included staff profiles and research activities. The College Finance Officer, on request, provided further information on finances.

Preparation of the Self-assessment Report

- 1.9 The members of the SAR Coordinating Committee were:
- Professor Ciaran Sugrue, Professor of Education, Head of School
 - Professor Lizbeth Goodman, Professor of Education
 - Dr. Dympna Devine, Senior Lecturer (Chair)
 - Dr. Deirdre Raftery, Senior Lecturer (Chair)
 - Dr. Judith Harford, Lecturer
 - Dr. Gerry MacRuairc, Lecturer
 - Ms. Lorraine Heffernan, School Office Manager
- 1.10 All members of the Committee contributed to the writing, editing and proof reading of the final version of the SAR and the associated appendices.
- 1.11 The SAR included clear, concise explanations and analysis of all of the activities in the School.

The University

- 1.12 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.
- 1.13 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 38 Schools in seven Colleges:

- UCD College of Arts and Celtic Studies
- UCD College of Human Sciences
- UCD College of Science
- UCD College of Engineering and Architecture
- UCD College of Business and Law
- UCD College of Agriculture, Food Science and Veterinary Medicine
- UCD College of Health Sciences

1.14 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 Medicine, 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 Education

1.15 The UCD School of Education (originally a Department) was established in 1909 and has since grown its education and research offerings to include a range of graduate programmes with professional accreditation and also research-oriented programmes. It is a constituent School of the UCD College of Human Sciences. Over the last few years the School has experienced a number of changes arising from University restructuring. In particular, this has included a short-lived merger with the UCD Centre for Teaching and Learning, Adult Education and Continuing Professional Development. Most recently, the commencement of two new Chairs of Education, and the move to UCD of SMARTlab, have provided the stimulus for new developments and new directions.

1.16 In recent years a new focus on research activity has resulted in an increase in the number of PhD students and also success in the acquisition of competitive research funding.

1.17 Interdisciplinary research with cognate schools (for example in Sociology and Psychology) has proved to be fruitful.

1.18 The advent of SMARTlab within the School provides scope for further development of interdisciplinary research and innovation, for example with the UCD research centres CLARITY and TRIL (Technology Research for Independent Living), and with other institutions such as NCAD.

1.19 The School developed a strategic plan in 2007, and another planning exercise is currently underway to develop the successor of this plan. A recent 2-day staff retreat organised by the new Head of School has provided the initial material and stimulus for the development of this plan.

1.20 The 2007 Strategic Plan included a number of goals, including the promotion of a research culture, to increase the RAM surplus, to commence a PhD in Education Psychology, to recruit and retain leading scholars, and to retain and advance the School's position as the national leader in the Education Sciences.

- 1.21 The SAR provides evidence of substantial progress on many of these goals, including the recruitment of two Chairs of Education, increased research outputs, and an increased RAM surplus.
- 1.22 The RG acknowledges the very difficult financial environment under which the School is operating, especially in terms of current restrictions on staff recruitment.

2. Organisation and Management

- 2.1 The School currently consists of two major operational units, the 'original' School of Education and SMARTlab. SMARTlab came to UCD on the appointment of the Director as a Professor in the UCD School of Education in 2010. SMARTlab has had a personnel and space footprint in the School since June / July 2011.
- 2.2 At present, the core staffing of the School consists of 14¹ academic staff (2 professors, 2 senior lecturers and 10 college lecturers), one School office manager, one part-time administrator, and an executive assistant for SMARTlab. In addition, SMARTlab currently has some 20 staff (approximately 5 FTEs), many of whom are 'fractional' to UCD (some of these staff are currently awaiting work permits).
- 2.3 There is a large cohort (152) of "non-pay" staff, the majority of whom act as school experience supervisors and/or as tutors on the Postgraduate Diploma in Education (PDE)² programme.
- 2.4 Currently the School does not have an operational Research Committee or a Teaching and Learning Committee. It is understood that these did exist prior to 2008.
- 2.5 The process of integration of SMARTlab into the School and the wider University is on-going.

Commendations

- 2.6 There is a strong sense of identity within the School and an evident collegial atmosphere amongst the staff.
- 2.7 There have been two recent Professorial appointments in the School, further strengthening the academic leadership of the School.
- 2.8 The School recently (in 2008) moved to newly renovated premises in Roebuck.
- 2.9 The School has introduced a workload model which includes recognition of a range of teaching, research and administration / contribution activities.
- 2.10 The School generates a notable RAM surplus and the Review Group noted a significant increase during the period 2007/08-2010/11.
- 2.11 The introduction of the established research network of SMARTlab into the School has opened up an array of new collaborative research, teaching and funding opportunities for the School.

¹ Currently there are 14 academic staff members but one will retire in February 2012.

² The Postgraduate Diploma in Education (PGDE) was changed nationally and institutionally in September 2011 and is hereafter referred to as PDE.

- 2.12 The activity of the School has increased notably in recent years with an increase in taught student numbers of approximately 10% over past 5 years (excluding SMARTlab students) along with a notable increase in the research student cohort to approximately 43 research students currently. In addition, the School has introduced several new programmes, including new structured PhD programmes and three Masters-level programmes.
- 2.13 Strong academic leadership is provided across the various diploma / degree programmes of the School, by their respective programme directors.
- 2.14 The School has good relations with colleagues in the College and the School is represented on the key committees of the College.

Recommendations

- 2.15 The RG recommends that the School develop a comprehensive 5-10 year strategic plan, with agreed implementation goals and timelines, as soon as possible. The involvement of all School staff in this process will also enhance the development of a shared vision for the School.
- 2.16 The RG recommends that a School Research Committee and Teaching and Learning Committee should be reconstituted, with appropriate leadership from academic staff given responsibility as Heads of Research, and Teaching and Learning, respectively.
- 2.17 The School Executive has a relatively large membership that rotates each year. The membership of the School Executive should be re-examined with a view to streamlining the committee and improving its decision-making effectiveness.
- 2.18 The School has experienced a significant degree of change over recent years, including changes in structure, changes in senior management, a change in location and the addition of SMARTlab. This degree of change provides clear challenges to the maintenance of a shared vision across all staff. A coherent plan for SMARTlab's integration into the activities of the School needs to be drawn up as a matter of urgency.
- 2.19 The non-pay budget funds 152 teaching / teaching practice staff whose work is essential to the running of the School. Any reduction in this budget would have immediate negative consequences on the ability of the School to maintain its programme portfolio – particularly the PDE programme. It is essential that the School seek to protect these staff (and the associated budget).
- 2.20 The School's largest programme, the PDE, is moving to a two-year format with effect from 2014, as a result of a change in National strategy for post-primary teacher education. This will likely place large additional resource demands on the School. The School should play a proactive role in designing a distinctive new PDE programme offering whilst ensuring that the College and wider University is made aware of the likely resource implications of this change.

3. Staff and Facilities

- 3.1 The School of Education has 14 permanent full-time academic members of staff and one full-time and one part-time member of administrative staff. In the past year SMARTlab has brought an additional staff of approximately 5 FTEs and one executive assistant who are funded from

external sources. The School also employs 152 “non-pay” part-time staff that contribute to all programmes, but chiefly to the PDE.

- 3.2 The School moved to Roebuck two years ago and this has provided an opportunity for developing a new identity and new ways of working. All staff are located in Roebuck and further office and teaching spaces are of a high standard. However, there are limitations on the space available and large classes are currently taught in the Newman Building, some distance from the Roebuck site.
- 3.3 The SMARTlab team has relatively recently moved into Roebuck and this has presented both opportunities and challenges, in terms of academic work and the use of space.
- 3.4 Induction processes for new members of staff (both academic and administrative) appear to be inconsistent.

Commendations

- 3.5 The professional and committed nature of academic and administrative staff is to be commended. The evidence from students is that the School is a vibrant and supportive place to work and study.
- 3.6 The model of staffing of the PDE course involving core staff and part-time staff appears to work very effectively in terms of training future teachers. The PDE is a secure and important part of the School’s business from both an academic and a financial perspective.
- 3.7 The new premises at Roebuck are well decorated with images, pictures and posters, presenting an attractive, professional and vibrant culture to students and visitors.

Recommendations

- 3.8 The School should review the allocation of space in Roebuck in order to create facilities for full and part-time doctoral students and space for part-time members of staff. Use of hot-desking space could be beneficial in providing for the needs of part-time staff while maximising space available for full-time staff/doctoral students.
- 3.9 As there is only one classroom and one seminar room in the School’s building in Roebuck, most of the School’s teaching takes place in the Newman Building, which is some distance from staff offices in Roebuck. This is not optimal either in terms of efficient use of staff time, or in ensuring that students can access staff out of class. The current facilities do not provide dedicated space for part-time staff or any space for research students. The integration of SMARTlab into the School has further increased the pressure on the School’s physical facilities. The impending move of the School of Law from Roebuck may open up an opportunity to expand the School’s physical footprint. As part of the strategic planning process, the School needs to clearly articulate a ‘facilities plan’ to encompass the physical requirements for all its teaching and research activities over the duration of the strategy.
- 3.10 The books, journals and other media located in the resources room, currently some distance from the main offices in Roebuck, and closed since the retirement of the School Librarian, should be integrated into the library collection as appropriate. A new communal workspace should be created in Roebuck. Such a workspace would allow for groups of students and staff to work collaboratively together and access digital resources.

- 3.11 Long-term strategic planning for future staffing, which takes into account the need to expand the research activities of the School, is essential.
- 3.12 The School's website should be reworked to publicise more effectively the research work of colleagues, to include the work of doctoral students. Training for staff in this area may be required.
- 3.13 The School, with the University, could beneficially review the systems for staff induction and ongoing training to make sure there is maximum communication between colleagues and uptake of opportunities available.

4. Teaching, Learning and Assessment

- 4.1 The UCD School of Education offers a range of programmes at graduate level, with no undergraduate provision at present.
- 4.2 There is one Certificate and two Diploma level programmes, six taught Masters programmes with a new validated MA and a new MSc planned for commencement in 2012, and three research programmes, with two new PhD programmes in preparation for 2012. There are thus a total of twelve current programmes, which is a large number when considering that the core academic staff of the School with SMARTlab consists of 13 people (or 12.2 FTEs).
- 4.3 The largest programme in terms of student intake is a PDE programme that took in 212 students during the current session. This programme prepares teachers for the post-primary school sector and operates within the national framework set out for such programmes by the Teaching Council. The Council reviewed the programme in June 2010 and made a number of commendations and recommendations. The School has produced an action plan in response to the recommendations.
- 4.4 As well as a general strength in teachers' professional learning and development, one of particular strengths is in special educational needs and educational psychology, manifested in programmes in these areas being offered at all levels.
- 4.5 The recent arrival of SMARTlab has added Masters and Doctoral programmes. The MA in Creative Technology Innovation and the Practice-based doctoral programme have potential to provide important new dimensions to the School's offerings.

Commendations

- 4.6 All students spoke very highly of the support provided by tutors. The kinds of professional pastoral support required by beginning or serving teachers when they are studying on programmes such as those offered here, is clearly recognised by staff. They are extremely responsive to students.
- 4.7 There is also a strong sense of collegiality and mutual support among the core staff of the School, as well as enthusiasm for innovation, development and the maintenance of high quality. This is in spite of the current constraining financial context and the existing moratorium on promotion and new appointments.

- 4.8 Across the range of programmes care is given to provide teaching at times that suit the students concerned. There are very few full-time students other than those on the PDE and imaginative approaches are taken to provision in the evenings, at weekends and in 'residential' blocks to ensure that students can maximise their learning experiences when they attend.
- 4.9 The teaching and learning methods deployed seem generally very appropriate and a diverse range of assessment methods is deployed. There was a recent review of assessment approaches across the School that has led to positive developments.
- 4.10 There was much evidence of strong and positive relationships with the relevant professional communities, including post-primary school staff, educational psychology services, the Teaching Council and relevant government departments.
- 4.11 The use of video in the development of teaching skills on the PDE had been successfully trialled in an innovative pilot scheme (but this development has not been sustained).
- 4.12 The School played a major role in establishing the all-Ireland conference for doctoral students in education, initially with Queen's University Belfast. This has been very successful and is now open to doctoral students from all Irish Higher Education institutions.

Recommendations

- 4.13 The Teaching Council's Accreditation Report proposes that external examiners be deployed in the context of the assessment of school placement on the PGDE. The School's Action Plan proposes to introduce this in 2014. The Review Group recommends that this be brought forward to the earliest possible date, preferably 2012.
- 4.14 A review of roles of those staff involved in the PDE programme would be valuable. While the deployment of 90 non-core staff, which includes many practising teachers, clearly provides very well focused professional support for the students, it would be worth considering, as the new 2-year programme is introduced, whether the numbers of people involved could be reduced so that an increasingly systematic approach to their training and development could be provided.
- 4.15 There is an urgent need to increase administrative support for the PDE (we understand this is forthcoming), not least to ensure that academic staff are not overburdened by such work, in order to undertake their required research activity.
- 4.16 Consideration should be given to improving accessibility of library and other resources. In some respects this may be about improving communication between the library and students. However the question of access to professional resources and the availability of a space for workshop activities and materials development (see also Section 3) need urgent attention.
- 4.17 The introduction of new approaches to professional learning such as the video project mentioned above should be revisited with an emphasis on continuing development and sustainability of successful practices.
- 4.18 There is scope for greater deployment of innovative technologies in providing learning experiences for students across the full range of programmes. Blackboard is used successfully but does have limitations of accessibility. It would be beneficial for the experiences of SMARTlab to be shared across the School, for example in the deployment of assistive technologies in learning and in the development of blended learning approaches.

5. Curriculum Development and Review

- 5.1 Programmes and modules are built and developed on the basis of ongoing student feedback, external examiners' reports, discussions with a range of stakeholders and continuing review among the core staff. Recruitment to the existing programmes is very strong.
- 5.2 Modularisation was used as an opportunity to increase the coherence of the School's offering and to ensure maximum efficiency in the availability of common modules on a range of programmes.
- 5.3 At present, capacity for further programme development must be seen as limited because of the budgetary context. Indeed in this context it is pleasing to see the development of the MSc/PhD in Child Well-Being, as an interdisciplinary with cognate schools across the College of Human Sciences. However, as with other elements of this review, it is important to be continually planning for the long-term as well as short and medium term.
- 5.4 A concern of the Review Group is that the School should be positioning itself with confidence for greater internationalisation across the main range of activity and also to the extension of this offering beyond the professional focus that tends to dominate at present. The research interests and expertise of the staff as a whole (including those associated with SMARTlab) provide a strong basis for future development.
- 5.5 Internationalisation may require expanding the current predominant focus within the School on professional formation. That expansion could benefit from greater interdisciplinary activity (including exploring further collaboration within the College of Human Sciences) as well as further consideration of contexts beyond Ireland.
- 5.6 The PDE programme has been renamed the Professional Diploma in Education (PDE) and is being offered at Level 8 in the National Qualifications Framework (NQF). This apparent lowering of the academic level of the award implies a different direction of travel in such awards from that in other parts of Europe. The RG recognises that this decision has been taken on a national basis.

Commendations

- 5.7 In general terms, the School has been very responsive to emerging professional needs in teaching, teacher education and educational psychology. The reputation of the range of professional programmes is exceptionally good and reflects great expertise, knowledge and commitment among the core staff as well as among the wider team that provides support of various kinds.
- 5.8 A specific example of this is the highly successful development of the MA and PhD in Educational Psychology. Students and employers who met with the Review Group during the site visit spoke very highly indeed of this provision.
- 5.9 The PDE has also evolved as a very significant and successful provider of post-primary teachers for Ireland. Employers and partner schools were very appreciative of their relationships with the programme and the School and believe that the programme is very effective in producing high quality teachers.

- 5.10 In general terms there is a clear commitment to building a synergy between teaching and research within the School.
- 5.11 The expansion of the doctoral offerings over the past few years has been very impressive. Not only have numbers of students and programmes increased, a community of scholars has been created, no easy feat when local facilities for such students are currently limited.
- 5.12 The School has led the way in developing specialist educational research methods modules for its structured doctoral programmes. These have been very successful.

Recommendations

- 5.13 The initiation of a two-year PDE (replacing the current one year PGDE) should be taken as an opportunity for a major review of the programme, incorporating a series of discussions with stakeholders and further developing a distinctive UCD model of the post-primary teacher. The research insights of the academic staff can provide a significant input into a model of teacher as lifelong learner and enquiring professional. The School should be encouraged to continue to support reflective practice and 'teacher as researcher' orientations in the programme in spite of the recent changes in NFQ level that have been decreed. Indeed there may well be scope for staff who work on this programme to undertake programme related research that could be carried out at relatively low cost but would potentially generate outputs of international significance.
- 5.14 There are likely to be significant staffing and resource implications of the introduction of this two-year programme. UCD will need to support this provision, possibly as an exceptional case, that has to attract exceptional treatment at this time of resource constraint.
- 5.15 Although the current programme is very strong, this review should also take cognisance of the current developments in teacher education provision such as the distance learning part-time approach taken by other providers.
- 5.16 In relation to the doctoral provision, the Review Group recommends the development of an increasingly strategic approach to recruitment of research students so that the strength of research clusters can grow.
- 5.17 Doctoral students working within SMARTlab who transferred into UCD are currently temporarily registered on generic doctoral programmes at UCD, pending the full approval of the distinctive practice-based programme by UCD. It is to be hoped that the due processes of validation can be completed as a matter of urgency, so that students have full confidence in the standing of the award for which they originally signed up.
- 5.18 The discussions and developments already underway concerning the interplay between SMARTlab and the School should be built upon to find creative ways of expanding the range of activity. This may well require some of the core School staff to revise the balance of their commitments and for SMARTlab to ensure that the some of the resources that arise from such expansion are used to facilitate this.
- 5.19 Two strands of existing MA provision that have been developed at least in part as a positive response to external opportunities and aspirations are the MA/Diploma (Global Classrooms) and the MA in Mentoring. The former of these appears to have been provided to support Irish

teachers to undertake short-term work in the context of developing countries. The latter is an outcome from the mentoring pilot scheme that was based in the School of Education. The mode of delivery of both programmes is unusual and they might both be reviewed to consider their on-going fit to the academic frameworks of UCD and the School.

- 5.20 The long-term strategic planning that should be undertaken will need to be informed by a careful review of competing provision elsewhere in the island of Ireland as well as internationally. It will also benefit from increasing international networking by core members of staff, in both professional and academic networks. The College and University environments should also facilitate the possibility of significant development in inter-disciplinarity and also of inter-professional activity.
- 5.21 Again, in the longer term and recognising current financial constraints as well as constraints deriving from the national teacher education policy context, consideration could be given to the development of further curricular specialist expertise within the core School staffing, as well as to the development of greater activity in sectors other than post-primary, possibilities including early years, primary, further and higher education.

6. Research Activity

- 6.1 The School engages with a wide-ranging programme of research that draws on the expertise and professional experience of colleagues. This work is driven by the desire to contribute to national policy developments in the field of education as well as informing professional and pedagogical practice at all levels of the educational system.
- 6.2 The School recently appointed two new professors of Education. These appointments have created opportunities for developing the research strength of the School.
- 6.3 The School has started a process of promoting inter-disciplinary research through the use of seed funding and through the development of inter-disciplinary teaching programmes.
- 6.4 There is evidence that the teaching programmes are informed by research and that there is a good synergy between academic staff's personal research and their teaching.
- 6.5 The School has identified the ways in which its research intersects with the four major research themes of the University. Historically the bulk of its research falls within the theme Global Ireland, although with the integration of SMARTlab its research could increasingly fall within the theme Information, Computation and Communications.
- 6.6 The School has increased its international research networking, through presentations at international conferences, involvement in European projects, membership of European and American research networks and the hosting of international symposia and conferences.
- 6.7 The School has started a process of clustering its research efforts at a recent two-day retreat, led by the new Head of School. This involves opportunities for new research synergies between the School and SMARTlab's existing three research clusters (covering the existing nine research groups).
- 6.8 The School benchmarks against external reference points through attendance at international conferences and membership of international networks.

Commendations

- 6.9 The School is commended for the increase in research activity in recent years and in particular the scholarly publications.
- 6.10 Research in teacher education is an area of excellence, strengthened further by the appointment of a Chair of Education (the current Head of School) with an international reputation in this area.
- 6.11 The School is commended for taking up the opportunity of working with new SMARTlab colleagues and beginning a process of changing its research profile.
- 6.12 The Head of School is commended for organising a two-day retreat to begin the process of developing a strategic research plan and ensuring staff engagement with this process.
- 6.13 The RG was impressed by the strength of the PhD programme and the activities of the School in creating a very strong research community of doctoral students, and in particular for the joint hosting of an annual all-Ireland conference for doctoral students in the field of Education.
- 6.14 The Review Group commends the School for the joint publications produced by doctoral students and academic staff.

Recommendations

- 6.15 The School would benefit from becoming more ambitious in its research planning and developing a long term strategic research plan with a vision of the research culture and activity of the School in 5 and 10 years time. In this respect the Review Group recommends that the School organises its research around research clusters/themes and incorporates doctoral students into the clusters/themes.
- 6.16 In the long term the RG recommends that the School consider broadening its focus of research (for example research on early years education) whilst recognising its current strength of research in teacher education, the psychology of education and special educational needs. The broadening of focus should exploit the opportunity for synergy between the research of the School and SMARTlab. This broadening of focus should, however, be done on a managed basis and in relation to a strategic research vision.
- 6.17 A Director of Research should be appointed, from among the academic staff. This appointment would be key, along with the Research Committee, in leading the development of a long-term strategic research plan; supporting the development of research clusters/themes; identifying collaborative research opportunities within the College of Human Sciences and the University; ensuring support for early career researchers; capitalising on support from the University in terms of both grant application and administration of grants; supporting staff in fulfilling research commitments; making recommendations about research leave and developing international networks. Such a person would be expected to identify new research opportunities and work with the Head of School to ensure that the School has the capacity to bid for such opportunities.
- 6.18 The Head of School should allocate a budget to support research activity that would include support for research themes/clusters, seed-corn funding, attendance at international

conferences and invitation of international scholars. The amount required would be relatively small, but could be important in supporting academic staff at a time when there is a block on both promotions and appointments.

- 6.19 Further integration of doctoral students, including doctoral students from SMARTlab into the research life of the School, would be beneficial. For example a regular seminar programme for academic staff and doctoral students could help in this respect.
- 6.20 The RG recommends that the School consider ways of seeking funding for postdoctoral students/contract researchers as a means of further developing the research culture/activity. For example, final year doctoral students could be encouraged to collaboratively write research bids in which they are named as researchers. There is potential here for academic staff to learn from the practices of SMARTlab.
- 6.21 The School should prioritise the presentation of its research and the impact of its research in a more strategic and coherent manner to the outside world, and in particular through the website.
- 6.22 The School should consider formally benchmarking its research against the research of similar Schools of Education, through for example collaboration with similar schools that are recognised for their international research excellence. Identifying the characteristics of the schools that could be reference points for benchmarking would be an important part of the process.
- 6.23 The School should consider whether it could exploit the strength of the PDE programme in terms of research, through for example developing a “teacher as researcher” programme.

7. Management of Quality and Enhancement

- 7.1 Many of the School’s programmes are professional in orientation and two are subject to review and accreditation by external bodies. The UCD processes for student feedback on modules, and for review by external examiners, are followed.
- 7.2 There is evidence of curriculum review and modification in response to student/external feedback.
- 7.3 The students were very positive in speaking of their interaction with the staff of the School, in the pastoral care they received, and in the organisation and management of their programmes.
- 7.4 Recent changes in national policy with regard to the level and duration of the PDE have impacted on current students and will impact on the resources required in the future to run this programme.
- 7.5 The SAR did not describe the management of quality and enhancement for areas not directly related to teaching and learning (for example as it relates to research quality, communications or staff development).
- 7.6 Strategic planning processes, in the short and medium term, will be crucial in determining how well the quality of education and research will be maintained in the face of budgetary constraints.

- 7.7 The relationship of SMARTlab with the School, and its potential for acting as a stimulus for growth and development, requires clarification.
- 7.8 The integration of the 90 “non-pay” staff who contribute to the PDE as practice supervisors and tutors is a particular challenge in terms of quality management and enhancement. The RG notes the School’s intention to review this aspect of the PDE in the context of the new two-year programme.

Commendations

- 7.9 The School is clearly highly regarded by current students, graduates and employers, and efforts in supporting students have clearly had a positive influence on students choosing programmes offered by the School over those offered elsewhere.
- 7.10 The visionary future-oriented approach of SMARTlab provides distinct added value that has the potential to distinguish the UCD School of Education from other similar schools.
- 7.11 The accreditation reports of external bodies were largely positive, and their recommendations have been acted upon.

Recommendations

- 7.12 Enhanced mechanisms for tracking and maintaining contact with alumni through a database would be valuable in documenting first destination and career pathways of graduates, thus generating statistics valuable for quality management and enhancement.
- 7.13 The establishment of procedures for measurement and management of research quality (such as benchmarking with other Schools of Education, canvassing views of external stakeholders etc) should be implemented.
- 7.14 Measures relevant to staff morale and the working environment, including reviews of internal communications, decision-making processes and budgetary processes, should be considered under the quality management/enhancement criterion.
- 7.15 The School needs to articulate a clear vision and identity that encompasses both the tradition of excellence in professional education and the newer developments and potential of interdisciplinary research and innovation.
- 7.16 The RG encourages the School to be proactive in developing and articulating business cases to the senior management of the University for developments that will attract non-exchequer income while also enhancing the quality of education and research.
- 7.17 The appointment of Heads/Directors of Teaching and Research would be helpful in quality management and enhancement.
- 7.18 Succession planning, and a short, medium and long-term development plan, should be described in the new strategic plan currently in development.

8. Support Services

- 8.1 The excellent and dedicated administrative support provided to academic staff and students of the School is clearly evident. This has been maintained despite the substantial increase in workload arising from the introduction of new courses and the non-replacement of departing administrative staff.
- 8.2 The School Office Manager plays a very important role in the smooth running of the School and in promoting good communication flows between SMARTlab and other School staff.
- 8.3 The School is over dependent on key administrative personnel and it is unrealistic to expect these personnel to continue to adjust to ever-increasing workloads. It is noted that an administrative post holder retired in May 2011 and a full-time administrator retired in December 2009, neither of whom have been replaced.
- 8.4 One of the recommendations from the Teaching Council's Accreditation report is the necessity for dedicated administrative support for the PDE programme. The failure to recruit someone for this position could endanger this critical accreditation of the School. The RG understands that the filling of this post has been agreed.
- 8.5 While the School has a good relationship with the Library, students of the School noted that availability of core texts for their courses in the Library was limited.

Commendations

- 8.6 The School has good relationships with multiple key people in the College including the Principal, the Graduate School Director and the College Finance Officer.
- 8.7 The School has good relationships with key personnel in Registry and the Library.

Recommendations

- 8.8 Recruitment of an additional full-time administrator is required as a matter of urgency, specifically to support the PDE.
- 8.9 The School should actively liaise with the Library in order to facilitate timely identification of resource shortcomings impacting on student service. Information from this process should then be escalated to College level and beyond in order to provide visibility on the pressures currently being imposed on Library funding.

9. External Relations

- 9.1 The School has a strong history of providing quality professional teacher training and has built up excellent relationships with a variety of external stakeholders including second-level schools. In discussion with a sample of head teachers during the review process, it was evident that there is a close 'partnership' between the School of Education and a large cohort of second-level schools.

- 9.2 The School has good relationships with external accrediting bodies including the Teaching Council and Psychological Society of Ireland. The School's professional training programmes have recently been accredited by both of these organisations.
- 9.3 Academic staff of the School are engaged in professional leadership in a variety of spheres, including participation in national/international professional and academic bodies.
- 9.4 The School has led the development of new inter-disciplinary programmes such as the MSc/PhD in Child Wellbeing (in conjunction with the School of Applied Social Science and School of Psychology).
- 9.5 The School has history of overseas students from developing countries, notably on the MA in Education programme, with funding for this initiative coming from the Irish Council for Overseas Students.
- 9.6 The School is engaged in a number of international collaborations re teaching, for example, the Erasmus Intensive Programme.
- 9.7 The addition of SMARTlab activities to the School has notably increased the internationalisation of the School's student base and opens up the possibility of development of further linkages between the School and major research institutes of UCD such as CLARITY, TRIL and the National College of Art and Design.
- 9.8 The addition of SMARTlab has extended the School's network of international research linkages.
- 9.9 The School (excepting SMARTlab) has traditionally had a relatively low degree of internationalisation of its student cohort.
- 9.10 Although individual faculty are engaged in various international research activities, the depth of many of these relationships, at School level, appear limited.
- 9.11 The School does not have a formal internationalisation strategy.
- 9.12 It would appear that there are further opportunities to develop research and teaching linkages with cognate areas in the College of Human Sciences.
- 9.13 There is no formal 'tracer' programme to track graduates of the School.

Commendations

- 9.14 The strong recruitment to the School's programmes suggests that the programmes are well-thought of by potential students.
- 9.15 The commitment of the School to its students is evident with several students/alumni of the School noting that faculty commitment was the reason they chose to study at UCD.
- 9.16 The addition of Smartlab activities to the School has notably increased the internationalisation of the School's student base and opens up the possibility of development of further linkages between the School and major research institutes of UCD such as Clarity/TriL, and the National College of Art and Design, as well as with international research networks.

Recommendations

- 9.17 An internationalisation strategy should be prepared. It is recognised that while many opportunities exist, resource constraints will likely require the prioritisation of a subset of these for strategic development.
- 9.18 Efforts should be made to increase, in a managed way, the number of international students in the School's graduate programmes.
- 9.19 The School should consider what opportunities exist for collaboration with colleagues in the College of Human Sciences.
- 9.20 A method of tracking not only the first destination, but also the career trajectories, of graduates should be developed. This would bring benefits in terms of improved external visibility, student recruitment, and highlight potential for internal and external synergies.

10. Summary of Commendations and Recommendations

A. Organisation and Management

Commendations

- 2.6 There is a strong sense of identity within the School and an evident collegial atmosphere amongst the staff.
- 2.7 There have been two recent Professorial appointments in the School, further strengthening the academic leadership of the School.
- 2.8 The School recently (in 2008) moved to newly renovated premises in Roebuck.
- 2.9 The School has introduced a workload model which includes recognition of a range of teaching, research and administration / contribution activities.
- 2.10 The School generates a notable RAM surplus and the Review Group noted a significant increase during the period 2007/08-2010/11.
- 2.11 The introduction of the established research network of SMARTlab into the School has opened up an array of new collaborative research, teaching and funding opportunities for the School.
- 2.12 The activity of the School has increased notably in recent years with an increase in taught student numbers of approximately 10% over past 5 years (excluding SMARTlab students) along with a notable increase in the research student cohort to approximately 43 research students currently. In addition, the School has introduced several new programmes, including new structured PhD programmes and three Masters-level programmes.
- 2.13 Strong academic leadership is provided across the various diploma / degree programmes of the School, by their respective programme directors.
- 2.14 The School has good relations with colleagues in the College and the School is represented on the key committees of the College.

Recommendations

- 2.15 The RG recommends that the School develop a comprehensive 5-10 year strategic plan, with agreed implementation goals and timelines, as soon as possible. The involvement of all School staff in this process will also enhance the development of a shared vision for the School.
- 2.16 The RG recommends that a School Research Committee and Teaching and Learning Committee should be reconstituted, with appropriate leadership from academic staff given responsibility as Heads of Research, and Teaching and Learning, respectively.
- 2.17 The School Executive has a relatively large membership that rotates each year. The membership of the School Executive should be re-examined with a view to streamlining the committee and improving its decision-making effectiveness.
- 2.18 The School has experienced a significant degree of change over recent years, including changes in structure, changes in senior management, a change in location and the addition of SMARTlab. This degree of change provides clear challenges to the maintenance of a shared vision across all staff. A coherent plan for SMARTlab's integration into the activities of the School needs to be drawn up as a matter of urgency.
- 2.19 The non-pay budget funds 152 teaching/teaching practice staff whose work is essential to the running of the School. Any reduction in this budget would have immediate negative consequences on the ability of the School to maintain its programme portfolio – particularly the PDE programme. It is essential that the School seek to protect these staff (and the associated budget).
- 2.20 The School's largest programme, the PDE, is moving to a two-year format with effect from 2014, as a result of a change in National strategy for post-primary teacher education. This will likely place large additional resource demands on the School. The School should play a proactive role in designing a distinctive new PDE programme offering whilst ensuring that the College and wider University is made aware of the likely resource implications of this change.

B. Staff and Facilities

Commendations

- 3.5 The professional and committed nature of academic and administrative staff is to be commended. The evidence from students is that the School is a vibrant and supportive place to work and study.
- 3.6 The model of staffing of the PDE course involving core staff and part-time staff appears to work very effectively in terms of training future teachers. The PDE is a secure and important part of the School's business from both an academic and a financial perspective.
- 3.7 The new premises at Roebuck are well decorated with images, pictures and posters, presenting an attractive, professional and vibrant culture to students and visitors.

Recommendations

- 3.8 The School should review the allocation of space in Roebuck in order to create facilities for full and part-time doctoral students and space for part-time members of staff. Use of hot-desking space could be beneficial in providing for the needs of part-time staff while maximising space available for full-time staff/doctoral students.
- 3.9 As there is only one classroom and one seminar room in the School's building in Roebuck, most of the School's teaching takes place in the Newman Building, which is some distance from staff offices in Roebuck. This is not optimal either in terms of efficient use of staff time, or in ensuring that students can access staff out of class. The current facilities do not provide dedicated space for part-time staff or any space for research students. The integration of SMARTlab into the School has further increased the pressure on the School's physical facilities. The impending move of the School of Law from Roebuck may open up an opportunity to expand the School's physical footprint. As part of the strategic planning process, the School needs to clearly articulate a 'facilities plan' to encompass the physical requirements for all its teaching and research activities over the duration of the strategy.
- 3.10 The books, journals and other media located in the resources room, currently some distance from the main offices in Roebuck, and closed since the retirement of the School Librarian, should be integrated into the Library collection as appropriate. A new communal workspace should be created in Roebuck. Such a workspace would allow for groups of students and staff to work collaboratively together and access digital resources.
- 3.11 Long-term strategic planning for future staffing, which takes into account the need to expand the research activities of the School, is essential.
- 3.12 The School's website should be reworked to publicise more effectively the research work of colleagues, to include the work of doctoral students. Training for staff in this area may be required.
- 3.13 The School, with the University, could beneficially review the systems for staff induction and ongoing training to make sure there is maximum communication between colleagues and uptake of opportunities available.

C. Teaching, Learning and Assessment

Commendations

- 4.6 All students spoke very highly of the support provided by tutors. The kinds of professional pastoral support required by beginning or serving teachers when they are studying on programmes such as those offered here, is clearly recognised by staff. They are extremely responsive to students.
- 4.7 There is also a strong sense of collegiality and mutual support among the core staff of the School, as well as enthusiasm for innovation, development and the maintenance of high quality. This is in spite of the current constraining financial context and the existing moratorium on promotion and new appointments.
- 4.8 Across the range of programmes care is given to provide teaching at times that suit the students concerned. There are very few full-time students other than those on the PDE and imaginative

approaches are taken to provision in the evenings, at weekends and in 'residential' blocks to ensure that students can maximise their learning experiences when they attend.

- 4.9 The teaching and learning methods deployed seem generally very appropriate and a diverse range of assessment methods is deployed. There was a recent review of assessment approaches across the School that has led to positive developments.
- 4.10 There was much evidence of strong and positive relationships with the relevant professional communities, including post-primary school staff, educational psychology services, the Teaching Council and relevant government departments.
- 4.11 The use of video in the development of teaching skills on the PDE had been successfully trialled in an innovative pilot scheme (but this development has not been sustained).
- 4.12 The School played a major role in establishing the all-Ireland conference for doctoral students in education, initially with Queen's University Belfast. This has been very successful and is now open to doctoral students from all Irish Higher Education institutions.

Recommendations

- 4.13 The Teaching Council's Accreditation Report proposes that external examiners be deployed in the context of the assessment of school placement on the PGDE. The School's Action Plan proposes to introduce this in 2014. The Review Group recommends that this be brought forward to the earliest possible date, preferably 2012.
- 4.14 A review of roles of those staff involved in the PDE programme would be valuable. While the deployment of 90 non-core staff, which includes many practising teachers, clearly provides very well focused professional support for the students, it would be worth considering, as the new 2-year programme is introduced, whether the numbers of people involved could be reduced so that an increasingly systematic approach to their training and development could be provided.
- 4.15 There is an urgent need to increase administrative support for the PDE (the Review Group understands this is forthcoming), not least to ensure that academic staff are not overburdened by such work, in order to undertake their required research activity.
- 4.16 Consideration should be given to improving accessibility of Library and other resources. In some respects this may be about improving communication between the Library and students. However the question of access to professional resources and the availability of a space for workshop activities and materials development (see also Section 3) need urgent attention.
- 4.17 The introduction of new approaches to professional learning such as the video project mentioned above should be revisited with an emphasis on continuing development and sustainability of successful practices.
- 4.18 There is scope for greater deployment of innovative technologies in providing learning experiences for students across the full range of programmes. Blackboard is used successfully but does have limitations of accessibility. It would be beneficial for the experiences of SMARTlab to be shared across the School, for example in the deployment of assistive technologies in learning and in the development of blended learning approaches.

D. Curriculum Development and Review

Commendations

- 5.7 In general terms, the School has been very responsive to emerging professional needs in teaching, teacher education and educational psychology. The reputation of the range of professional programmes is exceptionally good and reflects great expertise, knowledge and commitment among the core staff as well as among the wider team that provides support of various kinds.
- 5.8 A specific example of this is the highly successful development of the MA and PhD in Educational Psychology. Students and employers who met with the Review Group during the site visit spoke very highly indeed of this provision.
- 5.9 The PDE has also evolved as a very significant and successful provider of post-primary teachers for Ireland. Employers and partner schools were very appreciative of their relationships with the programme and the School and believe that the programme is very effective in producing high quality teachers.
- 5.10 In general terms there is a clear commitment to building a synergy between teaching and research within the School.
- 5.11 The expansion of the doctoral offerings over the past few years has been very impressive. Not only have numbers of students and programmes increased, a community of scholars has been created, no easy feat when local facilities for such students are currently limited.
- 5.12 The School has led the way in developing specialist educational research methods modules for its structured doctoral programmes. These have been very successful.

Recommendations

- 5.13 The initiation of a two-year PDE (replacing the current one year PGDE) should be taken as an opportunity for a major review of the programme, incorporating a series of discussions with stakeholders and further developing a distinctive UCD model of the post-primary teacher. The research insights of the academic staff can provide a significant input into a model of teacher as lifelong learner and enquiring professional. The School should be encouraged to continue to support reflective practice and 'teacher as researcher' orientations in the programme in spite of the recent changes in NFQ level that have been decreed. Indeed there may well be scope for staff who work on this programme to undertake programme related research that could be carried out at relatively low cost but would potentially generate outputs of international significance.
- 5.14 There are likely to be significant staffing and resource implications of the introduction of this two-year programme. UCD will need to support this provision, possibly as an exceptional case, that has to attract exceptional treatment at this time of resource constraint.
- 5.15 Although the current programme is very strong, this review should also take cognisance of the current developments in teacher education provision such as the distance learning part-time approach taken by other providers.

- 5.16 In relation to the doctoral provision, the Review Group recommends the development of an increasingly strategic approach to recruitment of research students so that the strength of research clusters can grow.
- 5.17 Doctoral students working within SMARTlab who transferred into UCD are currently temporarily registered on generic doctoral programmes at UCD, pending the full approval of the distinctive practice-based programme by UCD. It is to be hoped that the due processes of validation can be completed as a matter of urgency, so that students have full confidence in the standing of the award for which they originally signed up.
- 5.18 The discussions and developments already underway concerning the interplay between SMARTlab and the School should be built upon to find creative ways of expanding the range of activity. This may well require some of the core School staff to revise the balance of their commitments and for SMARTlab to ensure that the some of the resources that arise from such expansion are used to facilitate this.
- 5.19 Two strands of existing MA provision that have been developed at least in part as a positive response to external opportunities and aspirations are the MA/Diploma (Global Classrooms) and the MA in Mentoring. The former of these appears to have been provided to support Irish teachers to undertake short-term work in the context of developing countries. The latter is an outcome from the mentoring pilot scheme that was based in the School of Education. The mode of delivery of both programmes is unusual and they might both be reviewed to consider their on-going fit to the academic frameworks of UCD and the School.
- 5.20 The long-term strategic planning that should be undertaken will need to be informed by a careful review of competing provision elsewhere in the island of Ireland as well as internationally. It will also benefit from increasing international networking by core members of staff, in both professional and academic networks. The College and University environments should also facilitate the possibility of significant development in inter-disciplinarity and also of inter-professional activity.
- 5.21 Again in the longer term and recognising current financial constraints as well as constraints deriving from the national teacher education policy context, consideration could be given to the development of further curricular specialist expertise within the core School staffing, as well as to the development of greater activity in sectors other than post-primary, possibilities including early years, primary, further and higher education.

E. Research Activity

Commendations

- 6.9 The School is commended for the increase in research activity in recent years and in particular the scholarly publications.
- 6.10 Research in teacher education is an area of excellence, strengthened further by the appointment of a Chair of Education (the current Head of School) with an international reputation in this area.
- 6.11 The School is commended for taking up the opportunity of working with new SMARTlab colleagues and beginning a process of changing its research profile.

- 6.12 The Head of School is commended for organising a two-day retreat to begin the process of developing a strategic research plan and ensuring staff engagement with this process.
- 6.13 The RG was impressed by the strength of the PhD programme and the activities of the School in creating a very strong research community of doctoral students, and in particular for the joint hosting of an annual all-Ireland conference for doctoral students in the field of Education.
- 6.14 The Review Group commends the School for the joint publications produced by doctoral students and academic staff.

Recommendations

- 6.15 The School would benefit from becoming more ambitious in its research planning and developing a long term strategic research plan with a vision of the research culture and activity of the School in 5 and 10 years time. In this respect the Review Group recommends that the School organises its research around research clusters/themes and incorporates doctoral students into the clusters/themes.
- 6.16 In the long term the RG recommends that the School consider broadening its focus of research (for example research on early years education) whilst recognising its current strength of research in teacher education, the psychology of education and special educational needs. The broadening of focus should exploit the opportunity for synergy between the research of the School and SMARTlab. This broadening of focus should, however, be done on a managed basis and in relation to a strategic research vision.
- 6.17 A Director of Research should be appointed, from among the academic staff. This appointment would be key, along with the Research Committee, in leading the development of a long-term strategic research plan; supporting the development of research clusters/themes; identifying collaborative research opportunities within the College of Human Sciences and the University; ensuring support for early career researchers; capitalising on support from the University in terms of both grant application and administration of grants; supporting staff in fulfilling research commitments; making recommendations about research leave and developing international networks. Such a person would be expected to identify new research opportunities and work with the Head of School to ensure that the School has the capacity to bid for such opportunities.
- 6.18 The Head of School should allocate a budget to support research activity that would include support for research themes/clusters, seed-corn funding, attendance at international conferences and invitation of international scholars. The amount required would be relatively small, but could be important in supporting academic staff at a time when there is a block on both promotions and appointments.
- 6.19 Further integration of doctoral students, including doctoral students from SMARTlab into the research life of the School, would be beneficial. For example a regular seminar programme for academic staff and doctoral students could help in this respect.
- 6.20 The RG recommends that the School consider ways of seeking funding for postdoctoral students/contract researchers as a means of further developing the research culture/activity. For example, final year doctoral students could be encouraged to collaboratively write research bids in which they are named as researchers. There is potential here for academic staff to learn from the practices of SMARTlab.

- 6.21 The School should prioritise the presentation of its research and the impact of its research in a more strategic and coherent manner to the outside world, and in particular through the website.
- 6.22 The School should consider formally benchmarking its research against the research of similar Schools of Education, through for example collaboration with similar schools that are recognised for their international research excellence. Identifying the characteristics of the schools that could be reference points for benchmarking would be an important part of the process.
- 6.23 The School should consider whether it could exploit the strength of the PDE programme in terms of research, through for example developing a “teacher as researcher” programme.

F. Management of Quality and Enhancement

Commendations

- 7.9 The School is clearly highly regarded by current students, graduates and employers, and efforts in supporting students have clearly had a positive influence on students choosing programmes offered by the School over those offered elsewhere.
- 7.10 The visionary future-oriented approach of SMARTlab provides distinct added value that has the potential to distinguish the UCD School of Education from other similar schools.
- 7.11 The accreditation reports of external bodies were largely positive, and their recommendations have been acted upon.

Recommendations

- 7.12 Enhanced mechanisms for tracking and maintaining contact with alumni through a database would be valuable in documenting first destination and career pathways of graduates, thus generating statistics valuable for quality management and enhancement.
- 7.13 The establishment of procedures for measurement and management of research quality (such as benchmarking with other Schools of Education, canvassing views of external stakeholders etc) should be implemented.
- 7.14 Measures relevant to staff morale and the working environment, including reviews of internal communications, decision-making processes and budgetary processes, should be considered under the quality management/enhancement criterion.
- 7.15 The School needs to articulate a clear vision and identity that encompasses both the tradition of excellence in professional education and the newer developments and potential of interdisciplinary research and innovation.
- 7.16 The RG encourages the School to be proactive in developing and articulating business cases to the senior management of the University for developments that will attract non-exchequer income while also enhancing the quality of education and research.
- 7.17 The appointment of Heads/Directors of Teaching and Research would be helpful in quality management and enhancement.

- 7.18 Succession planning, and a short, medium and long-term development plan should be described in the new strategic plan currently in development.

F. Support Services

Commendations

- 8.6 The School has good relationships with multiple key people in the College including the Principal, the Graduate School Director and the College Finance Officer.
- 8.7 The School has good relationships with key personnel in Registry and the Library.

Recommendations

- 8.8 Recruitment of an additional full-time administrator is required as a matter of urgency, specifically to support the PDE.
- 8.9 The School should actively liaise with the library in order to facilitate timely identification of resource shortcomings impacting on student service. Information from this process should then be escalated to College level and beyond in order to provide visibility on the pressures currently being imposed on Library funding.

G. External Relations

Commendations

- 9.14 The strong recruitment to the School's programmes suggests that the programmes are well-thought of by potential students.
- 9.15 The commitment of the School to its students is evident with several students/alumni of the School noting that faculty commitment was the reason they chose to study at UCD.
- 9.16 The addition of Smartlab activities to the School has notably increased the internationalisation of the School's student base and opens up the possibility of development of further linkages between the School and major research institutes of UCD such as Clarity/TriL, and the National College of Art and Design, as well as with international research networks.

Recommendations

- 9.17 An internationalisation strategy should be prepared. It is recognised that while many opportunities exist, resource constraints will likely require the prioritisation of a subset of these for strategic development.
- 9.18 Efforts should be made to increase, in a managed way, the number of international students in the School's graduate programmes.
- 9.19 The School should consider what opportunities exist for collaboration with colleagues in the College of Human Sciences.

- 9.20 A method of tracking not only the first destination, but also the career trajectories, of graduates should be developed. This would bring benefits in terms of improved external visibility, student recruitment, and highlight potential for internal and external synergies.

Appendix 1

UCD School of Education Response to the Review Group Report

The UCD School of Education, including SMARTlab, welcomes the Quality Review Report. The self-assessment undertaken in advance of the site visit was a timely and valuable means of reflecting on the ongoing work of the Unit. In this regard, the many commendations and recommendations in the Quality Review report are a significant assurance regarding the quality of our work, while providing an important impetus to our strategic thinking and planning for the immediate and longer term future in a challenging climate.

The actual site visit was an intensive period of further reflective engagement with peers whose professionalism throughout the process was exemplary and we wish to record our gratitude for their thoroughness, sensitivity, sincerity and perceptiveness. We look forward to incorporating their recommendations into our Quality Improvement Plan (QIP).

Regarding the actual Report itself, we would like to record the following observations. While our QIP will indicate in various ways the manifold manner in which collaborative endeavours between the Unit and SMARTlab will evolve and be developed immediately and strategically, the precise nature of the relationship between the School and SMARTlab, and the latter with the University community as a whole, is the subject of ongoing discussion at University level.

Notwithstanding the thoroughness of the Quality Review Report, we consider that aspects of the work of the School of Education — its teaching and research in the field of special educational needs, its excellent reputation in initial teacher education and continuing professional development, its leadership and pioneering record in relation to developing and promoting interdisciplinary teaching and research, as well as its academic and professional programmes in the field of psychology could have received greater recognition.

Finally, we would like to endorse the commendation in the Report of the dedicated hard work of the entire staff of the Unit; its continued commitment and enthusiasm will be an essential ingredient in the further development of the School of Education.

Appendix 2



Quality Review Visit Timetable

UCD School of Education

24-26 October 2011

Preliminary Meeting: Sunday, 23 October 2011

- | | |
|-------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 17.15-18.45 | Review Group (RG) meet to review preliminary issues and to confirm work schedule and assignment of tasks for the following three days |
| 19.15 | Dinner for the RG |

Day 1: Monday 24th October 2011

Venue: 0.10, Ground Floor, Roebuck Offices

- | | |
|---------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 09.00-09.30 | Private meeting of Review Group (RG) |
| 09.30 – 10.15 | RG meet with Principal, College of Human Sciences |
| 10.15 - 10.30 | Break |
| 10.30 – 11.15 | RG meet with Head of School |
| 11.15 – 11.30 | Tea/coffee break |
| 11.30 – 12.15 | RG meet with SAR Coordinating Committee |
| 12.15 - 12.45 | Break – RG review key observations and prepare for lunch time meeting |
| 12.45 - 13.45 | Working lunch (buffet) – meeting with employers (and/or other external stakeholders) |
| 13.45-14.15 | RG review key observations |

14.15-15.30	RG meet with representative group of academic staff – primary focus on Teaching and Learning, and Curriculum issues.
15.30-15.45	RG tea/coffee break
15.45-16.30	RG meet with support staff representatives
16.30-16.35	Break
16.35-17.05	RG meet Graduate School Director, College of Human Sciences
17.05-17.45	RG meeting with former Head of School
17.45-18.15	Tour of facilities
18.15	RG depart

Day 2: Tuesday 25th October 2011

Venue: 0.10 Ground Floor, Roebuck Offices

08.45-09.15	Private meeting of the RG
09.15-09.55	RG meet Director of Registry
09.55-10.10	Break
10.10-11.00	RG meet with a representative group of postgraduate students(taught and research)and recent graduates (PG and UG)
11.00-11.15	RG tea/coffee break
11.15-12.15	RG meet with the School Research Committee
12.15-12.30	Break - RG review key observations
12.30-13.15	Lunch – Review Group only
13.15-14.00	RG meet with UCD Library representatives
14.00-14.15	RG private meeting - review key observations
14.15-15.00	RG meet with College Finance Manager and Head of School to outline School's financial situation
15.00-15.15	Break

15.15-16.15	RG meet with recently appointed members of staff
16.15-17.15	RG available for private individual meetings with staff
17.15-18.00	RG private meeting – review key observations/findings

Day 3: Wednesday 26th October 2011

Venue: 0.10, Ground Floor, Roebuck Offices

09.00-09.30	Private meeting of RG
09.30-10.30	(Optional) RG meet with Head of School and/or specified University staff to clarify any outstanding issues <u>or</u> begin preparing draft RG Report
10.30-10.45	Break
10.45-12.30	RG continue preparing draft RG Report
12.30-13.15	Lunch
13.15-15.30	RG finalise first draft of RG Report and feedback commendations/recommendations
15.30-15.45	Break
15.45-16.00	RG meet with Head of School to feedback initial outline commendations and recommendations
16.15	Exit presentation to <u>all available staff of the unit</u> summarising the principal commendations/recommendations of the Review Group
16.45	Review Group depart