University College Dublin

Annual Report on Quality Assurance/Quality Enhancement Activities for the Period September 2011 – August 2012

UCD Governing Authority

University College Dublin

Periodic Report on Quality Assurance/Enhancement Activities
for the period September 2011 to August 2012

1. **Academic Council Committee on Quality (ACCQ)**

   The ACCQ met on four occasions during 2011-12

   - 18 October 2011

   - 15 December 2011

   - 15 March 2012

   - 14 June 2012

2. **Quality Reviews completed during the period September 2011 – June 2012**

   As part of UCD's ongoing commitment to enhance the student experience, provide academically excellent programmes and support teaching and learning through the provision of high quality, reliable and user-friendly academic, administrative and student support services, the following units underwent quality assurance reviews by external Review Groups during 2011-12:

   - UCD School of Applied Social Sciences

   - UCD Nova

   - UCD School of Education

   - UCD School of Nursing, Midwifery and Health Systems

   - UCD School of Business

   - UCD School of Irish, Celtic Studies, Irish Folklore and Linguistics

   - UCD School of Psychology

   - UCD Office of the Director of Access and Lifelong Learning

The Review Group Reports and associated Quality Improvement Plans are available at: www.ucd.ie/quality. A breakdown of recommendations by theme, from 2011-12 Review Reports, is set out in Appendix 1. Appendix 1 also sets out by theme, the consolidated Review Report recommendations from 2007-12.

3. **Membership of Quality Review Groups September 2011 - June 2012**

For information, membership of the 2011-12 Quality Review Groups are set out in Appendix 2.

4. **Quality Reviews Scheduled for 2012-13**

Confirmed:

- UCD Bursar's Office

- UCD Joint Programmes with University of Ulster (Pg Cert Veterinary Public Health; Pg Cert/Dip/MSc Food Regulatory Affairs)

- UCD collaborative partnership with Teagasc – UCD Professional Diploma in Dairy Farm Management

- UCD Quality Office

- UCD Registry

- UCD School of Geography, Planning and Environmental Policy

- UCD School of Music

- UCD School of Public Health, Physiotherapy and Population Science

- UCD School of Sociology

- UCD Teaching and Learning

Provisional:

UCD Overseas Programmes with Fudan University, China

UCD Research Institutes – Thematic Review

5. **Quality Improvement Plans (QIPs)**

Follow-up is an integral part of the quality review process. The decisions on improvement, which are made in the follow-up to self-assessment and review, provides a framework within which each unit can continue to work toward the goal of developing and fostering a quality culture in the University.

The following QIPs were accepted during 2011-12:

- UCD Human Resources

- UCD School of Education

- UCD School of Nursing, Midwifery and Health Systems

- UCD Nova

6. QIP Progress Reviews

A Progress Review meeting is held approximately 12 months after a QIP is accepted, to consider the progress that has been made against the Review Group Report recommendations.

The following QIP Progress Review meetings were completed during the reporting period:

- UCD Student Services

- UCD Buildings & Services

- UCD Applied Language Centre

- UCD School of Economics

- UCD Commercial Office

- UCD School of Archaeology

- UCD School of Physics

7. UCD Institutional Review

As part of the Irish Universities Quality Board (IUQB) external quality review process of Irish Universities, UCD formally reported on its follow-up action plan one year on from its review in March 2011, by a team of six independent national and international reviewers. UCD's action plan to address the Review Report recommendations to enhance the institution's provision, was accepted by the IUQB Management Board in March 2012.

The University Management Team with the Academic Council Committee on Quality, will maintain a continuing monitoring oversight role, to ensure that the Review Report recommendations continue to be progressed appropriately.

8. **Irish Universities Quality Board/UCD Annual Dialogue Meeting**

Each year, Irish universities are required to report to the Irish Universities Quality Board (IUQB) on their Quality related activities in the preceding calendar year. The analysis of these institutional reports is undertaken by the IUQB, and forms part of the annual dialogue meeting. For information, a filenote of the annual dialogue meeting which took place on 16 May 2012 at UCD, is attached as Appendix 3.

9. **UCD Quality Office: External Activity**

- Irish Universities Association (IUA)

  UCD participated in four meetings of the IUA Quality Officers Group during 2011-12.
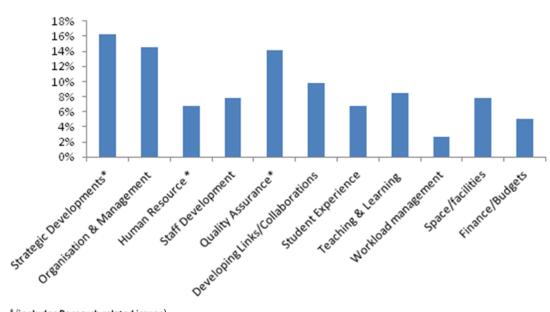
- The UCD Director of Quality is chair of an IHEQN Working Group, established in October 2011, to develop national Guidelines for the Approval and Monitoring of Collaborative and Transnational Taught Education Provision

- The UCD Director of Quality was a member of the IUQB Working Group that developed and published, in March 2012, a Good Practice Booklet for the Approval, Monitoring and Periodic Review of Programmes and Awards in Irish Universities

- During 2011-12, UCD Quality Office staff participated as Review Group members in two external reviews:

  - Athlone Institute of Technology

  - HETAC Evaluation Panel to assess an application by a third level provider for registration as an institutional HETAC provider

10. **Examples of Good Practice identified in University Quality Review Reports (2010-12)**

Examples of good practice that have been identified in Quality Review Reports during the review period 2010-12, are set out in Appendix 4. This Report has been circulated to academic and support units, and will be updated periodically.

August 2012

University College Dublin

2011-12 Review Group Recommendations by Category

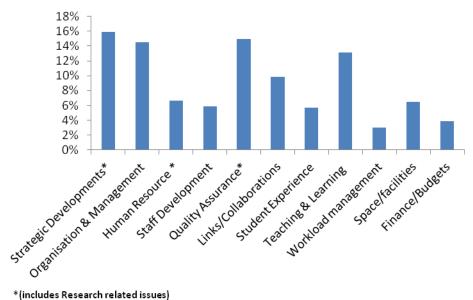| 2011-2012 Review Group Recommendations by Category	Number of Recommendations	% Recommendations per Category
Strategic Developments*	48	16.2%
Organisation & Management	43	14.5%
Human Resource *	20	6.8%
Staff Development	23	7.8%
Quality Assurance*	42	14.2%
Developing Links/Collaborations	29	9.8%
Student Experience	20	6.8%
Teaching & Learning	25	8.4%
Workload management	8	2.7%
Space/facilities	23	7.8%
Finance/Budgets	15	5.1%
Total recommendations	**296**	**100%**

*(includes Research related issues)

(includes Research related issues)

SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS 2007-2012

Focus of Recommendations	Number of Recommendations	% Recommendations per Category
Strategic Developments*	172	16%
Organisation & Management	157	14%
Human Resource *	72	7%
Staff Development	64	6%
Quality Assurance*	162	15%
Links/Collaborations	107	10%
Student Experience	62	6%
Teaching & Learning	142	13%
Workload management	33	3%
Space/facilities	70	6%
Finance/Budgets	42	4%
Total number recommendations	**1083**	**100%**
*(includes Research related issues)		

Summary of UCD Review Group Report Recommendations by Category

*(includes Research related issues)

University College Dublin

Quality Review Group Membership 2011-2012

UCD School of Applied Social Sciences, 10-13 October 2011

- Professor Cheryl Regehr, **University of Toronto, Canada**
- Professor Alan Deacon, **University of Leeds, UK**
- Professor Padraig Dunne, UCD School of Physics (Chair)
- Dr Oonagh Breen, UCD School of Law (Deputy Chair)

UCD Nova, 11-13 October 2011

- Dr Brian Kelly, Director, **Cornell Center for Technology Enterprise and Commercialization, USA**
- Dr Derek Waddell, **University of Edinburgh, Scotland**
- Professor Michael Monaghan, Project Director, UCD Science District Development (Chair)
- Dr Sinead Critchley, Director of Academic Secretariat (Deputy Chair)

UCD School of Education, 23-26 October 2011

- Professor Ros Sutherland, **University of Bristol, UK**
- Professor Ian Menter, **University of Glasgow, Scotland**
- Professor Grace Mulcahy, UCD Dean of Veterinary Medicine (Chair)
- Professor Anthony Brabazon, UCD School of Business (Deputy Chair)

UCD School of Nursing, Midwifery & Health Systems, 29 January-1 February 2012

- Professor Courtney Lyder, **UCLA, USA**
- Professor Roger Watson, **University of Sheffield, UK**
- Dr Lorraine McGinty, UCD School of Computer Science & Informatics (Chair)
- Dr Kay Nolan, UCD School of Biology & Environmental Science (Deputy Chair)

UCD School of Irish, Celtic Studies, Irish Folklore & Linguistics, 20-23 March 2012

- Professor Micheal McCraith, **NUIG, Ireland**
- Professor Jim McCloskey, **UC Santa Cruz, USA**
- Professor Stiofán Ó Cadhla, **UCC, Ireland**
- Professor Gregory Toner, **QUB, UK**

- Professor Michael Doherty, UCD School of Veterinary Medicine (Chair)
- Dr Deirdre Hurley-Osing, UCD School of Public Health, Physiotherapy & Population Science (Deputy Chair)

UCD School of Business, 19 – 22 February 2012

- Mr Peter Rafferty, **Vlerick Leuven Gent Management School, Belgium** (Chair)
- Professor Nakiye Boyacigiller, **Sabanci University, Istanbul, Turkey**
- Professor Frank McDermott, UCD School of Geological Sciences (Deputy Chair)

UCD School of Psychology, 10-13 April 2012

- Professor Peter Halligan, **Cardiff University, UK**
- Professor Margaret Harris, **Oxford Brookes University, UK**
- Professor Ian Somerville, UCD School of Geological Sciences (Chair)
- Dr Síofra Pierse, UCD School of Languages &Literatures (Deputy Chair)

UCD Access & Lifelong Learning, 16-19 April 2012

- Dr Veena O'Halloran, **University of Strathclyde, Scotland**
- Professor Penny Jane Burke, **Roehampton University, UK**
- Professor Trevor Gale, **Deakin University, Australia**
- Professor Dan Goodley, **Manchester Metropolitan University, UK**
- Professor Alan Baird (Chair)
- Ms Maura McGinn, Director of Institutional Research (Deputy Chair)

IUQB/UCD Annual Dialogue Meeting
16 May 2012

Filenote

In attendance:

UCD:
Dr Hugh Brady (President); Professor Mark Rogers (Deputy President and Registrar); Dr Mark Richardson (Chair of Academic Council Committee on Quality); Dr Roy Ferguson (Director of Quality).

IUQB/ QQAI:
Dr Padraig Walsh (CEO IUQB, CEO designate QQAI); Karena Maguire (QQAI Head of Quality Assurance Services designate); Trish O'Brien (QQAI Head of Provider Relations designate).

The President of UCD welcomed to the University the Chief Executive of the Irish Universities Quality Board (IUQB)/Chief Executive designate of the Qualifications and Quality Assurance Authority of Ireland (QQAI), and the designate heads of functions of QQAI, for the IUQB/UCD annual dialogue meeting. The Chief Executive of the IUQB thanked UCD for hosting the annual dialogue meeting and outlined its purpose and scope. *During the meeting, the following areas were discussed*:

o   In terms of European developments, the Chief Executive of the IUQB reported that the Bucharest Ministerial Conference held in April 2012 committed to revising the European Standards and Guidelines; it is anticipated that draft revisions will be available within a year

o   At a national level, an overview was provided to the University regarding the main aspects of the QQAI Bill of note to self-awarding bodies. These include:

  •   It is anticipated that legislation for the new organisation will be enacted before the summer recess and that the organisation will be established in the autumn

  •   The universities, the NUI, DIT and the RCSI are categorised in the Bill as designated awarding bodies. Designated awarding bodies can have relationships with linked providers and the Bill sets out the quality assurance responsibilities of the designated awarding body in this regard

  •   The Bill repeals section 35 of the Universities Act 1997. QQAI is responsible for issuing guidelines to universities and linked providers for the establishment of quality assurance procedures. It also establishes procedures for the review by QQAI of the effectiveness of such procedures and the implementation of those procedures by a university

- QQAI is responsible for the establishment of a code of practice for the provision of programmes of education and training to international learners and can authorise the use of an International Education Mark to providers that meet the code of practice

- QQAI is also responsible for establishing a database of programmes/awards recognised through the National Framework of Qualifications (NFQ)

- The Board of the amalgamated organisation will consist of eight members including the CEO; it will not be a representative Board

o Developments regarding the establishment of the proposed amalgamated body, the Qualifications and Quality Assurance Authority of Ireland, were also outlined:

- The organisation has been structured around two main business areas, Quality Assurance Services and Qualifications Services. Quality Assurance Services will manage all aspects of quality from the point of provider recognition (where relevant) to institutional review. Its remit will include the international quality assurance activities of institutions and the administration and review of the International Education Mark. It will also play a strong role in identifying and implementing quality enhancement activities. Qualifications Services is responsible for the continued development of all aspects of the National Framework of Qualifications, including the development of subject guidelines; the recognition of international qualifications; and the development of a database of programmes/awards recognised through the Framework. A Provider Relations function has been established to collaborate with these business areas; to support providers in the transition to the new organisation; to consult and communicate with providers on policy developments; to identify and contribute to provider quality and qualifications enhancement activities; and to establish and maintain the sub-board governance structures for provider services

o In terms of UCD activities, the University outlined the significant international activities with which it is currently involved and its intention to build regional campuses of scale in a limited number of locations

o The University also expressed its concerns about the financial constraints it is working within and the potential impact of these constraints on its quality processes. The CEO of the IUQB identified the document *Mid-Cycle Analysis of the Fitness for Purpose, Impact and Outcomes of the IRIU Process 2009-2011* (www.iuqb.ie) as a contribution to these discussions; the document provides a collated account of the outcomes of internal and external quality reviews and represents a cross-sector perspective in this regard. In this context, the importance of the independence of the amalgamated organisation from government departments and national funding authorities was emphasised

o A discussion took place regarding the current debate on governance structures within institutions and their size and format, leading from the related recommendations in the *National Strategy for Higher Education to 2030*

o UCD was thanked for its contribution to the IUQB's sixth good practice guide booklet *Approval, Periodic Review and Monitoring of Programmes and Awards* (www.iuqb.ie). Hard copies of the document have been submitted to the University for circulation and the IUQB would welcome any feedback arising

o   In terms of its 2011 Annual Institutional Report (AIR) the university was thanked for its very detailed account of its quality activities over that period. The commendations and recommendations from the IUQB Board, already made available to the university, were reiterated.

Resulting from these discussions, *the following actions on the part of the University and of the IUQB/ QQAI were identified:*

o   *The university* will consider the commendations and recommendations arising from its 2011 AIR

o   *The university* will consider the QQAI Bill in more detail in order to establish its impact upon its quality assurance activities; particularly with regards to its quality assurance responsibilities for linked colleges

o   *The university* will continue to consider appropriate methods for exporting its quality culture to provision abroad leading to its awards

o   *The university* will continue to consider the value of having an external person act as internal review group chair

o   *The university and QQAI* will give consideration to how best to achieve a balance between internal and external review at the level of the institution, the unit and the programme

o   *The university and QQAI* designate representatives will discuss in more detail the university's observations and evaluation of its recent thematic review of academic supports for students

o   *The university and QQAI* will consider further the potential for and benefits in developing a renewed framework for quality for the university sector, which identifies quality standards whilst facilitating institutional diversity and flexibility

o   *QQAI*, will focus on providing adequate information for the university sector on developments regarding IUQB and QQAI; consult with the universities on future policy developments; and ensure that universities are represented at a sub-board governance level

o   *QQAI,* will seek to facilitate cross-sector support on themes of common interest and concern to the university sector, for instance, quality assuring linked provision, and developing international education quality processes

o   *QQAI* will be mindful of the need to design policy which protects and supports rather than inhibits innovation across the education and training sector

o   *QQAI* will consider how best it can develop its relationships with professional bodies in order to better align professional and quality assurance practices where appropriate and to identify/promote common interests

- *QQAI* will consider how best it can add value to the education and training system by, for instance, providing independent information to the public, at a national and international level regarding the internal and external quality assurance/enhancement frameworks operating in Ireland.

University College Dublin

Examples of Good Practice identified in University Quality Review Reports 2010-2012: Issue 3

This report presents good practice identified in University Quality Review Reports during the review period 2010-2012. The examples are organised under a number of broad themes, which parallel the structure of the Self-assessment Reports and the Review Group Reports. Some of the examples highlighted will, however, be subject/location specific, and so this schedule is not intended as an exhaustive, nor a 'standard practice' guide. The schedule will be updated annually.

UCD Quality Office
August 2012

1. <u>**ORGANISATION AND MANAGEMENT**</u>

UCD School of Business

- The new delegated organisational structure involving four Associate Deans appears to be fit for purpose and working well. The role of Associate Dean for Internationalisation and Distance Learning is noted and is appropriate in view of the School's ambitions for increased Internationalisation. The model of a small School Management Team and a larger School Executive appears to be working well. There seems to be a clear delineation of roles (operational vs. strategic respectively).

- The Staff/Student Forum meetings are an excellent means for student/staff feedback and there is evidence that feedback is swiftly acted upon by staff.

- The School is commended on the development and operation of a comprehensive workload model. In particular, the School is highly commended on its operation of a teaching remission scheme to encourage high quality internationally competitive research. This is a good example of the School's well developed management structure.

UCD School of Education

- The School has introduced a workload model which includes recognition of a range of teaching, research and administration / contribution activities.

- The School has good relations with colleagues in the College and the School is represented on the key committees of the College.

UCD School of Applied Social Sciences

- The change in structure and composition of the management committee is to be commended.

UCD School of Nursing, Midwifery and Health Systems

- Regular meetings of the SMT (and School Executive) take place and the evidence is that the SMT functions cohesively and diligently as a unit. The School aspires to distributed leadership, interconnectivity, networked communication and coherence.

- Position descriptions exist for all SMT positions and School executive roles, and incumbents engage in an annual review process with the Head of School.

Nova UCD

- NovaUCD staff are to be commended for their continued provision of a comprehensive, co-ordinated and professional service to its stakeholders during a period of significant organisation change.

UCD Human Resources

- Within the Unit and the directorates there is a strong sense of team camaraderie - a clear vision of their own mission and how it fits into the overall UCD HR picture and the wider UCD plan.

- There appears to be good and open communication within the Unit.

- UCD HR values are well articulated.

2. **STAFF AND FACILITIES**

UCD School of Education

- 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.

- The new premises at Roebuck are well decorated with images, pictures and posters, presenting an attractive, professional and vibrant culture to students and visitors.

UCD School of Applied Social Sciences

- The Review Group commend the recent progress made by the School in beginning to oversee its use of occasional lecturers. The creation of a spreadsheet-based system to collate annual information on occasional lecturer use should greatly assist in the review of this process.

UCD School of Business

- The existence of a School level dedicated HR staff person liaising with the University on HR issues was viewed as a highly responsive resource.

- The staff commented very favorably on the wide range of training and development opportunities they are provided with. This is potentially a very effective way to motivate staff despite the current severely restricted financial circumstances vis *a vis* salary increases and promotions.

- That the School continues to support attendance at two international conferences a year for academic staff members despite the cutbacks shows continued commitment to research and staff development. The Review Group was particularly impressed that this opportunity is also extended to doctoral students.

UCD School of Nursing, Midwifery and Health Systems

- The co-location with other health related disciplines, and shared facilities, provides the possibility for inter-professional learning.

- The appointment of a dedicated Educational Technologist, alongside the contracted Audio-visual Technician, demonstrates a genuine commitment to the development of blended learning in the School.

3. **MANAGEMENT OF RESOURCES**

UCD Human Resources

- The VP for Staff and HR Directors appear to have a professional and structured approach to financial management. They are currently planning a three year financial view, and on a weekly basis have a finance meeting that replicates the University-wide finance meeting.

- There are a variety of internal communication channels to keep UCD HR staff informed and connected with each other. Effective use of these may reduce the need for some face-to-face meetings.

Nova UCD

- The quality and provision of reporting such as NovaUCD's Annual Report is to be commended.

4. FUNCTIONS, ACTIVITIES, PROCESSES

UCD Human Resources

- While each Director appears to have clear responsibility for specific activities there are mechanisms in place to enable collaborative decision making as a management team.

- The introduction of HR Partners is a real success story for UCD HR. There was strong support for the role and value of HR Partners in assisting College Principals and Heads of School and Units to manage people in their areas of responsibility.

5. TEACHING, LEARNING AND ASSESSMENT

UCD School of Education

- 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.

- 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.

UCD School of Applied Social Sciences

- The accessibility of the programmes to diverse intake is noteworthy, as is the range of pathways available to the common entry to the BSocSc.

- The School and the University are to be commended for initiating the new Fitness to Practice Committee and the Practice Review Committee in response to concerns raised by students and the externs.

- Assessments of student learning are varied and regularly reviewed.

UCD School of Geological Sciences

- The School's high-quality teaching programme ensures not only strong loyalty and appreciation on the part of the student body, but considerable employer approval for the quality of its graduates. The School offers an excellent teaching programme ranging from general modules in Stage 1 Science through to its flagship Geology BSc degree. The well-conceived and well run modules in Stage 1 are very successful and attract high numbers of students, markedly improving FTE ratings. In collaboration with other UCD schools, two new entry-designated degree programmes in Geology and Archaeology and Climate and Earth Systems have been developed and in existence for three and four years, respectively.

- The School maintains an important component of fieldwork in its degree programmes, with all staff teaching in the field. This has not been the case for many departments across Europe due to high costs and loss of staff expertise, leading unfortunately to an inevitable decline the quality of geoscience education. Fieldwork plays a unique and essential role in Earth Science learning. The UCD School should therefore be commended and supported in their policy of preserving it as a lynchpin in their degree courses.

UCD School of Business

- There are opportunities for students to take courses in other colleges (schools) within the University. This provides a wide range interesting options for pursuit of studies for students and demonstrates an understanding and acceptance of the desirability of enabling students to design educational experiences in line with their aspirations and interests.

- Programmes at both UG and PG levels have developed a process of orientation for incoming students. Student who attended the orientation were unanimous in their praise of the process and the resulting integration into the life and community of the School.

UCD School of Nursing, Midwifery and Health Systems

- The School is meeting increasing demands of the nursing community as evident in developing the Doctor of Nursing degree. This doctoral degree was developed to provide nurses and midwives with a structured and rigorous academic programme of research, training and applied practice (SAR: Appendix: 31).

6. CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT AND REVIEW

UCD School of Education

- 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.

- The School has led the way in developing specialist educational research methods modules for its structured doctoral programmes. These have been very successful.

UCD School of Applied Social Sciences

- The introduction of pathways in the undergraduate programme has proved highly successful in generating demand. The students in this programme have higher entering points scores than students in the larger BA programme. External examiners reports are consistently happy with the standards of the programme. The introduction of the new capstone module is evidence of continued reflection on the programme and efforts at continuous improvement.

- The School deserves special commendation for its community outreach educational programmes that received high acclaim by community members and have achieved positive outcomes for students.

UCD School of Business

- There is evidence that programmes which have repeatedly failed to attract a sufficient number of students have been curtailed (e.g. MSc. Innovation and Technology Management and part-time MSc Project Management Practice).

- With the support of the institute of Bankers, UCD offers a part-time MBA programme in facilities in Dublin city centre, indicating its willingness to respond to market locational needs.

UCD School of Nursing, Midwifery and Health Systems

- The School's curriculum is driven by evidence-based theory and clinical practice. Moreover, the curriculum is responsive to the ever-changing health care reform in Ireland.

- There are well-developed oversight practices in place (e.g., module co-ordinators, programme co-ordinators) to ensure the high quality of programmes and external stakeholders.

7. RESEARCH ACTIVITY

UCD School of Education

- 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.

- The Review Group commends the School for the joint publications produced by doctoral students and academic staff.

UCD School of Applied Social Sciences

- The School has recently launched a working paper series for faculty research and exhibits this work on the School website.

- The efforts of the School in bringing PhD students to completion in the past few years have resulted in success.

UCD School of Geological Sciences

- The School has an outstanding track record in research that places it at the forefront of its field on this island and comparable in quality to many of Europe's leading universities. This research-oriented culture pervades all levels of School activity, ranging from the undergraduate curriculum through to publication and external relations. All members of academic staff are research active and the School has a significant international reputation for research quality. Within UCD, the strategic development of the new Earth Sciences Institute (ESI) provides a crucial opportunity to further develop collaborations across cognate disciplines.

- The School has been highly innovative in obtaining new sources of funding from industry as well as various research agencies. The Review Group notes and commends the very high success rate for external funding sustained over the last six years, including two Griffith Awards, numbers of SFI PI Awards, the number and calibre of senior Postdoctoral staff, and particularly the funding of a new academic post by the petroleum industry in a very difficult financial environment.

UCD School of Business

- The Review Group commends the School for the existence of a formal sabbatical system and research leave.

- Support for attendance at two international conferences a year, despite the economic challenges, shows continued commitment to staff development. The Review Group is particularly impressed that this is extended to doctoral students.

UCD School of Nursing, Midwifery and Health Systems

- The use of external peer review, in addition to self-assessment, to inform the development of research in the School is commendable.

- Procedures for research student supervision are demonstrably robust and adhered to.

- The clustered approach to research provides opportunities for the development of well-funded streams of research and a research identity for the School.

8. **MANAGEMENT OF QUALITY AND ENHANCEMENT**

UCD School of Education

- The accreditation reports of external bodies were largely positive, and their recommendations have been acted upon.

UCD School of Applied Social Sciences

- The School has recognised the importance of module enhancement and to this end one member of staff (BSSoc Social Policy Coordinator) has recently been given responsibility for running module enhancement reviews on an annual basis.

- The School has fully taken on board comments of external examiners and when these comments have required change to existing practice, the School has worked actively to bring these changes about.

UCD School of Business

- Several examples of programme updating and revision were provided. Examples include the revision of the Master in Management (MiM) programme in 2010 and the introduction of a new curriculum for the BComm Programme commenced in September 2011. The MBA and the Master in Accounting programmes have also been revised substantially within the past two years.

- The School utilises a wide variety of student feedback mechanisms and does not rely solely on the standard online student feedback system that typically attracts low response rates from students. The School is commended for using staff/student forums at both undergraduate and postgraduate levels. Crucially, students also reported that their feedback and suggestions offered in these meetings are normally acted upon in a timely fashion by the School.

UCD School of Nursing, Midwifery and Health Systems

- Impressive external review procedures and exemplary listing of quality enhancement initiatives undertaken by the School (2007-2011). Examples include: School-initiated research review [2011]; Student Absenteeism and Attendance Survey (2008); and periodic review conducted by An Bord Altranais (every 5 years).

- Prompt action taken to expand the School's online and blended-learning portfolio in line with the changing needs of the SNMHS students. The Review Group were suitably impressed with the work that has already been achieved by the purposely-recruited Educational Technologist (3-year contract) in this area, as well as the support that is provided by the audio-visual technician.

- The SNMHS has recently established a Professional Doctorate programme recognising the needs of practitioners in the field and the opportunities that exist here. In doing this, the School has influenced and assisted in the drafting of UCD Policy and regulations to govern this process. It is clear that considerable effort was invested in this exercise.

Nova UCD

- NovaUCD is clearly engaged in managing and reviewing its processes and procedures.

UCD Human Resources

- UCD HR has a strong commitment to continuous improvement and the SAR provides evidence of examples of improvement initiatives, e.g. projects such as Online Time Sheets and the soon-to-be-launched Online Pensions Information have been developed, both to improve in-house procedures and also out of user-defined need.

- New initiatives, such as the case tracking metrics in HR Relationships, are an excellent development and will provide a platform for further developments

9. SUPPORT SERVICES

UCD School of Applied Social Sciences

- The Review Group was impressed at the high level of support provided by the support staff within the School. It was clear to the Review Group that strong working relationships existed between academic and administrative staff, who work closely together in the provision of services to students.

UCD School of Geological Sciences

- The Review Group commends the UCD Buildings Office for their proactive willingness to work closely with the School in order to achieve a satisfactory working environment that will permit the School to increase its cohort of Bachelors and Masters degree students. This important development will be crucial to the School in the coming decade while the Science West building is being developed.

UCD School of Business

- The School is commended on its provision of a series of parallel support services for its students in the Smurfit School. Examples include admissions, programme and careers offices, all of which appear to do an excellent job in supporting the students based in both buildings.

- IT Services are commended for proactively engaging with academic and support staff to improve the quality and user experience of online service applications (e.g. module descriptor software, gradebook, class list reports etc.). Overall students receive a high level of IT technical support and have access to a wide range of centrally provided software applications.

UCD School of Nursing, Midwifery and Health Systems

- The Review Group commend the high level of engagement of staff with students. The Review Group are particularly impressed with the supports provided to students at Programme Office level and by academic staff, and with the obvious concern of all School staff for the education and welfare of its students.

10. EXTERNAL RELATIONS

UCD School of Education

- The strong recruitment to the School's programmes suggests that the programmes are well-thought of by potential students.

- 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.

UCD School of Applied Social Sciences

- The School is extremely well connected to its hinterland. It enjoys strong links in the community (through its outreach programmes), nationally (through involvement in policy and government bodies) and internationally (through collaborative research networks).

- The School has consistently met all the requirements of the accrediting body for professional social workers. Graduates of the programmes run by the School are highly sought after by employers and their skills are highly regarded in the field.

UCD School of Geological Sciences

- Graduate employment rates are excellent and career progression sees UCD Geology graduates taking up senior positions in Irish and international agencies and companies. Employer feedback is very positive demonstrating that there continues to be a strong market demand for UCD geology BSc graduates. This demand is compatible with the intention of the School to increase its number of degree level geology students to a target of 20 per annum.

UCD School of Business

- The links that academic staff members have with the Irish business community are of great importance and a strategic strength. Furthermore, the consulting contracts and board directorships held by academic staff members with prestigious organisations is a key resource for the School.

- Engagement of students on non-profit and/or humanitarian actives is considered an impressive strength.

UCD School of Nursing, Midwifery and Health Systems

- The Review Group is impressed with the wide-ranging relationships in which the School is engaged, and notes the substantial effort involved in establishing and maintaining these relationships and in initiating new relationships.

- The Review Group commends the establishment of a School International Strategy Group and the achievements of this group in identifying international opportunities for the School, and in bringing initiatives (such as the Nursing Study Abroad semester and UCD Nursing Summer School programme) to fruition.