



University College Dublin/Teagasc

Quality Improvement Plan

UCD/Teagasc – Programme Quality Review Report
(i) UCD BAgrSc Dairy Business Degree (Stage 3)
(ii) Teagasc Professional Diploma in Dairy Farm Management (Level 7)
- Validation Proposal

February 2013

1. Introduction

This Quality Improvement Plan (QIP) was developed in response to the recommendations of the Quality Review of the UCD BAgrSc Dairy Business Programme and the Teagasc Professional Diploma in Dairy Farm Management. Both Programmes are carried out in collaboration with Teagasc where validation for the Teagasc Professional Diploma in Dairy Farm Management is sought from UCD and where Teagasc contribute to the delivery (Stage 3) of the UCD award – BAgrSc Dairy Business degree.

The Programme Management Teams welcome this report and found the review process to be constructive, insightful and encouraging. Both programmes under review are in their early stages of existence and are unique in their collaborative nature within the University. The Programme Management Teams would like to thank the Review Group Members, Dr Karen King (Chair, Queen’s University Belfast); Dr Roy Ferguson (Deputy Chair, Director of Quality, UCD) and Dr Joe Brady (UCD Dean of Arts and member of the UCD Academic Council Committee on Quality).

The review involved a visit to the two Teagasc sites with lead roles in the delivery of the programmes. The visit to Teagasc Moorepark took place on 17 October 2012 and the visit to the Kildalton site took place on 29 November 2012. The Review Group Report was received on 21 January 2013. The QIP was developed by members of the Programme Management Teams (PMT).

Membership of the PMT for Dairy Business: Dr Karina Pierce (Programme Option Coordinator), Dr Mary Forrest (Associate Dean for Teaching and Learning, School of Agriculture and Food Science), Dr Frank Buckley (Teagasc Coordinator), Dr Pat Dillon (Head of Animal and Grassland Programme, Teagasc), Mr Tony Pettit (Head of Education Programme, Teagasc)

Membership of the PMT for the Teagasc Professional Diploma in Dairy Farm Management: Dr Karina Pierce (Programme Option Coordinator), Dr Mary Forrest (Associate Dean for Teaching and Learning, School of Agriculture and Food Science), Mr James Ryan (Teagasc Coordinator), Dr Pat Dillon (Head of Animal and Grassland Programme, Teagasc), Dr Frank Buckley (Teagasc Moorepark Coordinator), Mr Tony Pettit (Head of Education Programme, Teagasc)

The RG recommendations were approved by the UUPB on 13 February 2013. The QIP was subsequently drafted by the UCD members of the PMT in consultation with the Head of School of Agriculture and Food Science, prior to sending to colleagues from both programmes in Teagasc. Feedback from Teagasc was received and incorporated into the report and a final version was submitted to the Quality Office in March 2013.

Categories

1. Recommendations concerning academic, organisational and other matters which are entirely under the control of the unit
2. Recommendations concerning shortcomings in services, procedures and facilities which are outside the control of the unit
3. Recommendations concerning inadequate staffing, and/or facilities which require recurrent or capital funding

Timescale

- A. Recommendation already implemented
- B. Recommendations to be implemented within one year
- C. Recommendations to be implemented within five years
- D. Recommendations which will not be implemented

Report Section / Page	RG Recommendation	Category (see list above)	Action Taken/Action Planned/Reason for Not Implementing	Timescale (see list above)
BAgrSc				
6/p.11	The Review Group explored, in response to student comments, with the Teagasc/UCD Programme Team whether the current Stage 3 might better be offered at Stage 4 (i.e. with all of the UCD components completed). There was a clear view held by the programme team that Stage 3 was the appropriate time in the programme for these activities at this time and the Review Group was satisfied that this was the case. However, the Review Group identified advantages in these components being at the higher level/in the final year, where a stronger research/innovation element could be included as preparation for graduation and recommend that the Teagasc/UCD Programme Team periodically review the	1	During the development of the Dairy Business Programme, it was the opinion of the Programme Management Team (PMT) that the Moorepark component of the course (Semester 3, Stage 3) should come directly after the farm placement/PWE aspect (Semester 1, Stage 3). This was to ensure that students had a firm grounding in the practical aspects of dairy production before exposure to the applied research in Moorepark. Also, this resulted in a full year out of UCD and therefore minimised disruption to students. The PMT will however keep this point under consideration.	B/C

	appropriateness of structuring the Teagasc component and placement at Stage 3.			
7/p.12	To ensure a consistent student experience with all modules, it is recommended that UCD/Teagasc explores the possibility of facilitating relevant Teagasc staff to have access to the UCD Blackboard system.	2	The Programme Option Coordinator (POC) will liaise with the Head of School of Agriculture and Food Science and the Associate Dean for Teaching and Learning in the first instance. Following this, the POC will contact the relevant UCD personnel to explore the logistics of access by non-UCD personnel to the BB system.	B
10/p.14	It is recommended that UCD/Teagasc should document what the key quality assurance mechanisms are for the BAgSc including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • how new staff are inducted and supported who will teach on the programme • how extern examiner reports, feedback from students etc are gathered and used • how related quantitative data is used e.g. student progress information • procedures for quality assurance and reporting within the collaborative organisations and so on 	1	The PMT will make the procedures more formal from now on. A 'Procedures Manual' will be developed to ensure the programme operates on a more formal basis and should the current UCD or Teagasc Coordinators move on, that the programme can run in their absence. This manual will document official procedures for staff induction, capture of student/extern examiner feedback, student progress information and also list procedures for quality assurance as recommended by the RG. The development of this manual will be the responsibility of the POC who will also record other meetings of the PMT etc.	B
10/p.14	While it is recognised that Teagasc has robust procedures for programme quality assurance and that they follow those of UCD (for the BAgSc), the Review Group recommend that the UCD/Teagasc Programme Team ensure that the modules are subject to the same module enhancement processes as is the case with modules delivered in UCD.	1	Modules taught in Teagasc Centres are subject to the same module feedback system as modules taught in UCD. As part of the annual review process, the POC will ensure that those teaching into the Teagasc modules will receive student feedback.	B

10/p.14	It is also recommended that formal notes/minutes of UCD/Teagasc liaison meetings are maintained by the UCD co-ordinator.	1	While this process is ongoing on a less formal basis, the POC will be responsible for formally recording and maintaining notes/minutes of UCD/Teagasc liaison meetings and also meetings of the PMT.	A
10/p.14	In accord with UCD PDARF procedures, the Review Group recommend that a formal brief annual review of the collaborative arrangement take place, bringing together, for example, student feedback, extern examiner reports, student progression data, etc. and a short report prepared, highlighting key issues discussed and identifying proposed changes to be introduced to modules and/or the programme for the following year. The Report should be submitted to the University Undergraduate Programme Board and the Academic Council Committee on Quality and the equivalent bodies at Teagasc.	1	<p>This formal 'internal' review will take place on an annual basis starting in 2013 and will be the responsibility of the POC to arrange and coordinate the meeting, record the outcomes, ensure the implementation of any actions from the meeting. Annual reports for collaborative programmes are due by October 30th. A template for annual reports is to be provided by the Quality Office.</p> <p>The POC will also submit this report to the UCD Quality Office who in turn will synthesise the collective annual reports from University Collaborative Programmes for UPB ACCQ and UMT. Aggregate reports will be prepared by the UCD Quality Office which will be circulated to the POC and PMT.</p>	B
11/p.15	The Review Group recommend that the orientation be included as an integral part of the Farm placement module, (increasing to 30 credits) rather than as a separate module of 10 credits.	1	This change will be made to the module descriptors for PWE by the summer 2013 and 'Technical Management of a Dairy Farm' will form part of the overall 30 credits for PWE.	B
11/p.15	It is recommended that the Kildalton pre-placement orientation programme be kept under review.	1	The PMT will review the Kildalton module at each annual review and student feedback will be taken into consideration also.	B
13/p.16	While the Review Group was generally satisfied with the level of academic support that was available to students, the students felt, and the Review Group agreed, that support for students with personal issues might be enhanced, if a member of Teagasc staff (not involved in	1/2	<p>Following the recommendations of the RG, a Student Liaison Officer is now formally in place in Moorepark who deals directly with the students on a daily basis.</p> <p>The Moorepark Liaison Officer will be fully briefed (by the POC) on the range of supports available to UCD students by the Programme Option Coordinator and the Student Welfare Officer.</p>	A

	teaching), was formally established as a liaison/pastoral support person and that this person is fully briefed on the range of supports available to UCD students and on how best to access them. While, it was recognised that this is already occurring informally, the Review Group would recommend that this position be formalised as soon as possible, to ensure that students have access to academic guidance and pastoral support, similar to students on the Belfield site.			
9/p.13	The Review Group recommends that the School of Agriculture and Food Science with Teagasc, continues to monitor income/expenditure financial arrangements on a regular basis.	1	During the development of the Programme, a business plan was developed which outlined the financial outcomes from the Programme over a 5 year period. The finances of this programme are the responsibility of the College Finance Director in consultation with the POC and counterparts in Teagasc Moorepark.	A
Professional Diploma				
16/p.17	Whilst recognising the credit loading for a Professional Diploma, the Review Group recommend that a mechanism is found to recognise the experiential learning taking place during the work placement. This may be accommodated for example, by the inclusion of the time and location of work placements on the Diploma certificate awarded on successful completion.	2	The PMT in UCD are currently investigating a mechanism to recognise the experiential learning taking place during the work placement.	B
16/p.18	The Review Group recommend that the programme team consider documenting the process of matching students to mentor farms (e.g. bullet point the key stages involved) in a short paper.	1	This information exists informally, but the Teagasc Coordinator will develop a formal document to include information on key stages involved in the process ahead of the new students entering the programme in 2013. This information will be included in a 'Programme Information Pack' (PIP) for staff teaching into the PDDFM. The PIP will also include information on key contacts involved in the Programme, annual reports etc.	B

16/p.18	The Review Group believe that it would be desirable for the University to consider the possibility of systematically sharing across collaborative partners, appropriate information/resources relating to best practice in learning, teaching and assessment.	2	The UCD Quality Office will make available to Teagasc colleagues the annual collated annual reports which highlight general issues experienced with collaborative programmes and examples of good practice.	A
18/p.18	The Review Group recommends that the School of Agriculture and Food Science with Teagasc, continues to monitor income/expenditure financial arrangements on a regular basis.	1	During the development of the Programme, a business plan was developed which outlined the financial outcomes from the Programme over a 5 year period. The finances of this programme are the responsibility of the College Finance Director in consultation with the POC and counterparts in Teagasc Moorepark.	B
19/p.19	It is important that these [<i>the joint UCD-Teagasc Programme Management Team and the Steering Group</i>] be recognised as different entities with distinct functions and the Review Group recommends that Terms of Reference, membership and reporting lines are established for both the Programme Management Team and the Steering Group.	1	Membership of the PMT for the Teagasc Professional Diploma in Dairy Farm Management: Dr Karina Pierce (Programme Option Coordinator), Dr Mary Forrest (Associate Dean for Teaching and Learning, School of Agriculture and Food Science), Mr James Ryan (Teagasc Coordinator), Dr Pat Dillon (Head of Animal and Grassland Programme, Teagasc), Dr Frank Buckley (Teagasc Moorepark Coordinator), Mr Tony Pettit (Head of Education Programme, Teagasc) Steering Group for the Teagasc Professional Diploma in Dairy Farm Management: Jim Treacy (IFMA and Chair); Mr James Ryan (Teagasc Coordinator), Dr Pat Dillon (Head of Animal and Grassland Programme, Teagasc), Dr Frank Buckley (Teagasc Moorepark Coordinator), Mr Tony Pettit (Head of Education Programme, Teagasc), Mr Frank Murphy (College Principal, Kildalton), Kevin Twomey (Dairy farmer); George Ramsbottom (Teagasc Dairy Specialist), Paul Hennessy (XXXXXX Teagasc), Dr Karina Pierce (UCD Coordinator), Dr Mary Forrest (Associate Dean for Teaching and Learning, School of Agriculture and Food Science) Terms of References for each of these committees is in progress.	B
19/p.20	The Review Group also recommend that the Programme Management Team prepare a short	1	This formal 'internal' review will take place on an annual basis starting in 2013 and will be the responsibility of the POC to arrange and coordinate the meeting, record the	B

	annual report on the operation of the programme in the preceding year, for the UCD University Undergraduate Programme Board and Academic Council Committee on Quality and Teagasc equivalent bodies.		<p>outcomes, ensure the implementation of any actions from the meeting. Annual reports for collaborative programmes are due by October 30th. A template for annual reports is to be provided by the Quality Office.</p> <p>The POC will also submit this report to the UCD Quality Office who in turn will synthesise the collective annual reports from University Collaborative Programmes for UPB ACCQ and UMT. Aggregate reports will be prepared by the UCD Quality Office which will be circulated to the POC and PMT.</p>	
21/p.20	The Review Group recommend that an agreed approval protocol is put in place to ensure that marketing and advertising material is consistent and accurate and approved in accord with institutional (both Teagasc and UCD) requirements.	1	<p>Mr Damien Dempsey, UCD School of Agriculture and Food Science and Mr Eric Donald, Teagasc are responsible for the marketing of both programmes.</p> <p>Any such marketing such be agreed with the POC and should receive UCD approval.</p>	A
General Issues Relating to Both Programmes				
22/p.21	<p>The Review Group, while recognising the benefit of the various interpersonal communications / conduits, recommend that it would be beneficial to have a formal succinct written record for both programmes, of, <i>inter alia</i>, the key inter-institutional contacts, key milestones / dates on the programme calendar e.g.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • key contact staff • student induction dates • monitoring mechanisms • examination / assessment approval dates / 	1	<p>A 'Staff Information Pack' (PIP) is currently in development and will incorporate all information as recommended by the RG i.e. key staff contacts, student induction dates, monitoring mechanisms, annual reports etc.</p> <p>This document will ensure that both programmes operate on a more formal basis and should the current UCD or Teagasc Coordinators move on, that both programmes can run smoothly in their absence.</p>	B

	<p>submission deadlines</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • placement periods etc 			
22/p.21	<p>The Review Group recommend that a Memorandum of Agreement be drawn up as a matter of urgency, for both programmes, detailing, <i>inter alia</i>:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Roles and Responsibilities of each partner • Programme management • The structure of the programme/modules • Quality Assurance arrangements including validation review • Dispute resolution and partnership termination • Time period that the Agreement is in force 	1	<p>The POC will work with the UCD Quality Office and Teagasc counterparts to prepare a draft Programme Agreement for approval and signing by the relevant UCD and Teagasc personnel (UCD President/Vice President and Director of Teagasc).</p>	B
22/p.22	<p>The Review Group recommend that summary financial information and related processes (e.g. how/when will payments be made) are provided in an appropriate schedule to the Programme Agreement. The College Finance Director (and UCD Bursar's Office, as appropriate) should maintain ongoing oversight of financial arrangements relating to these collaborative programmes.</p>	1	<p>The College Finance Director in consultation with the POC will make this information available in the required format for inclusion in the Programme Agreement. Consideration will be given to projected ongoing expenditure.</p>	B

Other Issues to be Considered/Addressed by UCD

3/p.7	The Review Group recommend that Teagasc consider identifying an additional function for the CDS, regarding HE providers, for example, <i>“to provide quality assurance and other functions as required to meet validation and other QA requirements of collaborative HE institutions.”</i>	1	Teagasc CDS will arrange that Teagasc meets required quality assurance criteria for the PDDFM programme as per UCD validation requirements and similarly for other UCD – Teagasc collaborative programmes as relevant	B
19/p.20	In the absence of any current policy, the Review Group recommend that the University should develop a policy framework to guide the extent to which it exercises direct control over the quality assurance aspects of the management of validated programmes.	2	The UCD Academic Secretariat, in conjunction with the UCD Quality Office and UPB will consider an institutional policy framework and supporting procedures for the approval and management of UCD validated programmes.	B
22/p.21	Can a UCD award be made to students on a UCD validated programme who are not registered as UCD students (as is the case for the Diploma)?	2	UCD procedures do permit this, however, the related UCD processes require further development.	B