



Progress Update on EUA Institutional Review of University College Dublin (2005)

Area	Recommendation	Progress
<p>Mission</p>	<p>When formulating the new strategic plan, consider carefully how to position UCD for its specific role in Ireland, e.g. taking into consideration the disciplinary balance of the university, the type of higher education to be provided, and shifting the balance from undergraduate to postgraduate, adult and international education.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • UCD Strategic Plan 2005-2008 set out clear objectives which UCD has achieved in terms of strategic focus to developments in student recruitment; development of research capacity; internationalisation and lifelong learning. • The UCD Strategic Plan (2005-08) delivered radical reform of UCD’s undergraduate curriculum, establishing the modular, semesterised and credit-based <i>UCD Horizons</i> curriculum; establishment of Graduate Schools and structured PhD programmes to support 4th level training; launch of a new research strategy and support system with a particular focus on the development of large thematic multidisciplinary research programmes; complete overhaul of academic recruitment, development and promotions systems; formulation of a new campus development plan. • The UCD Strategic Plan to 2014, commits the intellectual resources of UCD to the rebirth of economic prosperity in Ireland as a priority area in the context of national and global crisis, possibly the most challenging circumstances of UCD’s history. • Excellence in teaching and research and focus on innovation to build on achievements in teaching and research are the pillars on which the strategy is formed. Traditional educational concerns will be supplemented by the development of entrepreneurial capacities amongst students. In moving forward the new Strategic Plan places greater emphasis on the national impact of UCD activities. • The <i>Innovation Alliance</i> in partnership with Trinity College Dublin is a key element of UCD’s aspirations on innovation. This will lead to unprecedented collaboration with Government and industry and forms part of the national recovery programme to develop the ‘Smart Economy’. • Internationalisation will be progressed by welcoming and supporting international students and staff; being a resource for diaspora abroad and by playing a leading role in developing Ireland’s relationships with Asia, particularly China, with the UCD Confucius Institute, established in 2006 being a ready-made channel to enhance key relationships. • Priority research themes have been identified up to 2014 – these include Earth Sciences; Energy and the Environment; Global Ireland; Health and Healthcare Delivery and Information, Computation and Communications. These will enhance current research activity and build interdisciplinary all-Ireland and international collaboration. • Notwithstanding the University’s focus on keeping UCD finances on a solid footing, UCD intends to make strategic investments and to seek Government and private support for priority developments to enhance and transform its provision in support of national recovery. • UCD strategic planning processes are continuous, self-correcting and informed by a community of stakeholders.

Area	Recommendation	Progress
Teaching and Learning	Increase the capacity of the Centre for Teaching and Learning in its existing core functions and also in developing a more important research component, to enable UCD to identify and build on best practice;	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The scope and capacity of the Centre for Teaching and Learning has expanded since 2005. (The unit is now referred to as UCD Teaching and Learning). • The Centre came under the overall line-management of the Deputy Registrar, Teaching and Learning in 2008. • In 2009, the Centre was redeveloped as part of a wider UCD Teaching & Learning under the Deputy Registrar. While evidence on teaching and learning in higher education will inform practice and developments, the focus will be on building capacity for enhanced teaching and learning within UCD Schools in line with UCD's Education Strategy. • New Director of Teaching & Learning appointed in 2009, in addition to a Teaching Projects Support Team. • UCD Fellowships and Senior Fellowship in Teaching and Academic Development have been incorporated into UCD Teaching and Learning from 2009.
	Use the recent experience from a number of academic units in undertaking comprehensive curricula reviews and introducing new teaching and learning approaches to foster such activities on a wider basis across the university;	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Module enhancement projects were completed in 08/09 in which almost 900 modules were reviewed at School level within the Colleges of Arts and Celtic Studies and Human Sciences, and at programme level in the College of Business & Law. • An Assessment Project, focusing on ensuring alignment of assessment with learning outcomes within the major programmes in the UCD College of Life Sciences was undertaken in 2008/09. The UCD College of Engineering, Mathematical and Physical Sciences will engage in a similar initiative in 2009/10. • A UCD grant scheme to support module innovation, design and delivery of general education modules and teaching/research links in curriculum design has been introduced. • A suite of annual Awards and Grant schemes has been developed to enhance and encourage individual academic teaching performance and innovation.
	Encourage a renewed focus on the outcomes of the learning process, not just on the teaching inputs, across all units	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The modularisation process developed in UCD involves a clear articulation of learning outcomes for each module and the modular assessment strategies to measure these outcomes. This module information is placed online prior to student registration and is reviewed annually.
	Ensure that the modular structure and ECTS are introduced rapidly and coherently across the entire university	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Modular structure and ECTS have been fully implemented across the University. Module review has taken place and learning outcomes are being redeveloped.
	Implement a common approach across the institution for the student evaluation of courses.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A project to develop a common approach to student feedback on modules is at implementation stage for academic year 2010/11.

Area	Recommendation	Progress
Research	Articulate UCD's policies regarding research more clearly and develop a coherent research management system.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research management systems have been implemented – work is ongoing to continually enhance these. • The UCD Research management processes; research and research policies all provide optimum support for UCD's Research.
	Increase the number of research students and fellows.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of PhD students has risen by 26% since 2005. • Funded research posts have risen by 67% from December 2005 to December 2009
	Encourage better cooperation with the dynamic Irish and international industrial activity in the immediate hinterland of UCD;	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Links with industry are focused on strategic alliances rather than just geographic considerations. • Two CSETs (SFI Centres for Science Engineering and Technology) awarded - Systems Biology & CLARITY. • A number of strategic research clusters are in place. • Proposals developed for five competence centres which would be industry-led. • Industry partnership programmes are in place • UCD Nova has links with 45 companies including 15 campus companies • More than €200m industry investment has been attracted into UCD • The Technology Transfer Unit in UCD Nova has been developed with a current staffing level of six. • IRCSET awards provide for an industry-funded PhD programme • 40% of SFI funding is in industry-linked areas.
	Link the monitoring and evaluation initiatives for the new research institutes to the university-wide QA/QI process.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The nature and role of research institutes have been clarified, as have structures and processes for management and governance of the institutes. • An organisational review of major research institutes took place in 2006 and recommendations are being implemented. • Major research institutes now come within UCD Quality Assurance procedures in the current cycle of Quality Reviews. Guidelines for Quality Review of Research Institutes within UCD quality assurance are being developed and the first periodic Quality Review of a research institute is scheduled for 2011-12
Governance	Explore options for adapting both the size and composition of the Governing Authority, in order to provide the university with more suitable strategic direction and oversight;	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The UCD Code of Governance was published in 2007, which draws on the HEA/IUA "Code of Governance for Universities". The GA elected not to reduce the number of members from 40, as to do so would have altered the balance between different constituencies which elect or nominate members to the GA. There are now just two permanent Committees of the GA – the Finance, Remuneration and Asset Management Committee and Audit and Risk Management Committee.

Area	Recommendation	Progress
	Ensure an effective and functional Academic Council in order to provide an effective and timely academic governance counterbalance to the executive management team;	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Academic Council Committee structures were reviewed in 2008 and new Committees of Academic Council have been constituted, with effect from 2009-10
	Use the QA/QI process and results, together with an increased institutional research capacity, to support strategic planning and actions;	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Director of Institutional Research appointed in 2007. Analyses of Quality Review recommendations is being undertaken annually and work on building pathways for results of QA/QI processes to inform planning is ongoing. Review Group Reports and Quality Improvement Plans linked to unit strategic plans.
	Entrust greater responsibility to the deans for a variety of academic and management issues, including QA and QI across each faculty.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> College Principals (formerly Faculty Deans) are now budget holders for their Colleges and are directly involved in QA/QI procedures, e.g. appointment of Review Group members for associated Schools; participation in review of Quality Improvement Plans following School Reviews.
	Use both input and output measures when developing a new resource allocation model.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Income allocated via the RAM* comprises core recurrent grant, other non-capital grants, academic fee income, funded research income, research overhead income and miscellaneous income. Specific grants, fee income, research income and overheads, and miscellaneous income earned by individual academic units are credited directly to the relevant unit. Core recurrent grant income is allocated to academic units in accordance with specified drivers that reflect UCD priorities and uses many of the elements of the HEA's RGAM, although RAM is broader in scope than RGAM*. 75% of the drivers are input-based, being Weighted Student FTEs where the weightings reflect the relative costs of subjects and levels (i.e. graduate or undergraduate). 75% of the remaining grant is attributed on the basis of an output measure, Research Graduates. A recent review has recommended that this proportion be increased to 100% of the balance (i.e. 25% of the total).RAM also charges academic units for the cost of support services on the basis of a number of usage drivers. <p><i>*RAM – Resource Allocation Model (the mechanism by which funding is allocated internally within the University); RGAM – Recurring Grant Allocation Model (model used by Higher Education Authority (HEA) for allocation of funding to universities in Ireland)</i></p>

Area	Recommendation	Progress
	<p>Monitor student and other mobility not only in terms of incoming persons but also UCD students and staff going abroad for periods of study or work.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Data on Mobility is an area of ongoing work needing development. UCD International Office is aware of issues that need to be addressed and there has been progress in a number of areas. • Information on inward and outward Erasmus exchange rates has improved. Detailed data on balances in reciprocal mobility for each exchange programme, School and College is now available and updated annually. • Work is underway to achieve reliable data monitoring undergraduate student mobility and should be achieved within next year. • In June 2009, UCD signed up to a pilot, led by the University of British Columbia, to formalise undergraduate research mobility within <i>Universitas 21</i>. This scheme is currently being rolled out. • Quality of data on non-Erasmus mobility has improved significantly. Full lists of outgoing and incoming students are now compiled annually. Regular meetings now take place between the International Office and other UCD sections with responsibility for administering exchange programmes which have led to processes being implemented for increased sharing of data between units. • Capture of data on graduate mobility via formal exchange agreements has been achieved alongside that for undergraduate mobility. Further measures are needed to fully capture data on informal research mobility, which by its nature is less easily measured at an institutional level. • Details on all visiting staff should be submitted to the UCD University Committee for Academic Appointments, Tenure and Promotions (UCAATP). The International Office is developing a proposal to access information on incoming visiting international staff so as to capitalise on their presence on campus for international relations objectives. • Information and procedures for non-programme student mobility have improved considerably, e.g. for students undertaking voluntary service overseas, the UCD Volunteers Association has recently agreed to share their comprehensive database of programme participants with the International Office. The International Office will explore ways that this data can be incorporated into its reporting on international mobility • The International Office is working with the UCD School of Medicine and Medical Science to promote the recording of data on student clinical placements abroad as part of their programmes – however this involves work with individual hospitals and presents data protection issues. • Further significant steps toward the enhancement of student mobility information are planned, including establishment of an Academic Council International Committee, which will approve all international mobility agreements and help ensure capture of information on all new and renewed agreements; development of a network of International Exchange Coordinators, to enhance the flow of information about mobility partnerships and student participation between academic units and the International Office.

Area	Recommendation	Progress
Quality Assurance and Quality Improvement	Examine the potential for linking the QA office, the Strategic Planning office and the Centre for Teaching and Learning as the nucleus of a much-needed increased capacity in institutional research, providing essential research support for the executive management;	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • With appointment of new Directors of Quality, UCD Teaching and Learning and Institutional Research, these units are developing their links with each other.
	Examine options for giving faculties and deans greater ownership of the QA/QI process, including influencing the choice of peers, and greater responsibility for the follow up and implementation phases.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • College Principals (formerly Faculty Deans) are now involved in signing off Quality Improvement Plans and in the selection of external Review Group peers. • College Principals are now asked to review Quality Improvement Plans (QIPs) prepared by their associated Schools and are invited to participate in QIP progress review meetings after one year. • Further involvement of College Principals in QA/QI processes is currently under review.
	Connect the reviews of departments to a framework for evaluating faculties, so that a departmental review can feed into the faculty review	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The review of Colleges will include consideration of the Review Group Reports of their associated Schools/research institutes. Consideration is being given to a radical re-think of the quality review schedule to align school reviews with their respective college review.
	Urgently consider options for developing a greatly improved internal data information system, and use it to feed the QA/QI process;	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • With the appointment of Director of Institutional Research, internal data issues are being addressed. A suite of reports on student data is available to units undergoing review and the Director of Institutional Research provides additional support as required.
	Consider options for making the regular quality review process shorter and lighter, i.e. every five years, with a less onerous information gathering process (relying on an improved information system), with a much greater focus on analytical rather than descriptive material;	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quality Review procedures have been streamlined to reduce the demands on units undergoing review and a shorter review cycle has been introduced. Although data will be required to support the self-assessment report, the guidelines emphasise analyses of key data and issues rather than volumes of descriptive data. Quality Review procedures remain under review

Area	Recommendation	Progress
	Establish links between the QA/QI process and the many other QA mechanisms which exist at UCD, and ensure academic and support staff are aware of these in their daily work;	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Periodic Quality Reviews bring together ‘evidence’ from various QA/QI mechanisms. • The UCD Quality Assurance and Quality Enhancement Policy and the UCD Guidelines for Quality Review of Academic Units make explicit reference to the interconnectivity between a range of QA/QI processes (e.g. staff/student committees; external examiner reports). • UCD Quality Office works to address QA/QI issues with colleagues from associated units, e.g. work on student modules evaluation with Centre for Teaching & Learning and Academic Development & Director of Institutional Research; Student Forum Day with College VP for Teaching & Learning and UCD SU to elicit student feedback. • Regular communication mechanisms are used for promulgating details of QA/QI at UCD (e.g. Registrar’s Bulletins; Reports to Governing Authority; www.ucd.ie/quality; cross-University representation on ACCQ.).
	Ensure reviews of academic units also cover that unit’s use of relevant services, such as the library;	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quality Review Guidelines now specifically include reference to units addressing their relationships with other units. In some cases, Review Groups have requested to meet with Library and staff from other relevant units.
	Ensure that regular analysis is made of the results of QA/QI activities in order to obtain an overall view of developments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The University now undertakes analysis of the results of its QA/QI activities and feeds back findings to Governing Authority; Academic Council Committee on Quality; SMT (Executive)
	Ensure that the results of QA/QI activities are fed into the wider institutional decision making processes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Findings from the QA/QI reports are circulated to appropriate institutional management to inform decision-making processes e.g. issues arising re estates or personnel matters are circulated to UCD Buildings and Services and UCD Human Resources, and responses sought, as appropriate.
	To ensure an independent view, it might be useful to involve a wider group of external peers, not necessarily persons already known to the unit leaders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • External members of Review Groups, although nominated by Heads of units, are now selected by a small sub-group of ACCQ and the relevant College Principal/Vice-President. Nominees are not necessarily known to Heads. Guidelines are explicit about conflicts of interest that exclude nominees. Guidelines for selection of Review Group members remain under continual review and have recently been changed to include the principle that the number of UCD members will not exceed the number of external members.
	Take steps to ensure that the student body becomes progressively more aware of the QA/QI process and contributes to this;	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The UCD Quality Office has information for students on its website, with information about UCD QA/QI processes and how students can become involved. • The UCD Quality Office has participated in information sessions for student representatives. A pilot College-based Student Forum process was initiated in conjunction with three UCD Colleges to elicit feedback on a range of issues impacting on the student experience.

Area	Recommendation	Progress
	Develop a performance management system for individual staff members and articulate this closely with the QA/QI framework;	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> PMDS has been fully rolled out in UCD. Mandatory PMDS training was delivered to all staff and the first review cycle is complete.
	Explore options for synergies between professional accreditation procedures and the QA/QI process;	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Quality Office facilitates units to link QA/QI processes with professional accreditation wherever possible. Several academic units have aligned internal UCD quality review process with professional accreditation procedures e.g. School of Medicine & Medical Sciences; School of Chemical & Bioprocess Engineering.
	Consider introducing a specially adapted quality review capacity to respond on an ad hoc basis to specific unit needs at moments in time;	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A number of ad hoc requests for review processes outside of the formalised UCD QA/QI procedures have been responded to by the UCD Quality Office.
	Consider introducing a specially adapted quality review capacity to review university-wide issues, not units	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Proposal for undertaking Thematic Reviews within UCD has been accepted by SMT Executive. A pilot Thematic Review (Academic Support Services) will be undertaken in 2010-2011. Planning has commenced for this.