



University College Dublin

Periodic Quality Review

UCD School of Art History and Cultural Policy

October 2009

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1. Introduction and Context

Introduction

- 1.1 This report presents the findings of a quality review of the UCD School of Art History and Cultural Policy, at University College Dublin. The review was undertaken in October 2009.

The Review Process

- 1.2 Irish Universities have collectively agreed a framework for their quality review and quality improvement systems, which is consistent with both the legislative requirements of the Universities Act 1997, and international good practice. Quality reviews are carried out in academic, administrative and support service units.
- 1.3 The purpose of periodic review is to assist the University to assure itself of the quality of each of its constituent units, and to utilise learning from this essentially developmental process in order to effect improvement, including :
- To monitor the quality of the student experience, and of teaching and learning opportunities
 - To monitor research activity, including: management of research activity; assessing the research performance with regard to: research productivity, research income, and recruiting and supporting doctoral students.
 - To provide an opportunity for units to test the effectiveness of their systems and procedures for monitoring and enhancing quality and standards
 - To provide a framework within which the unit can continue to work in the future towards quality improvement
 - To identify shortfalls in resources and provide an externally validated case for change and/or increased resources
 - Identify, encourage and disseminate good practice – to identify challenges and address these
 - To provide public information on the University's capacity to assure the quality and standards of its awards. The University's implementation of its quality review procedures also enables it to demonstrate how it discharges its responsibilities for assuring the quality and standards of its awards, as required by the Universities Act 1997.
- 1.4 Typically, the review model comprises of four major elements:
- Preparation of a Self-assessment Report (SAR)
 - A visit by a Review Group (RG) that includes UCD staff and external experts, both national and international. The site visit normally will take place over a two or three day period.

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

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

1.5 The composition of the Review Group for UCD Art History and Cultural Policy was as follows:

- Dr Michelle Butler, UCD School of Nursing, Midwifery & Health Systems (Chair)
- Dr Barbara Dooley, UCD School of Psychology (Deputy Chair)
- Professor Hugh Campbell, UCD School of Architecture, Landscape and Civil Engineering
- Professor Sheila Bonde, Dean of the Graduate School, Professor of History of Art and Architecture, Professor of Archaeology, Brown University, USA
- Professor Joop de Jong, Department of History, Director MA in Arts and Heritage: Policy, Management and Education, Maastricht University, Netherlands

1.6 The Review Group visited the School from 5th to 8th October 2009 and had meetings with School staff, students and other University staff, including: the Head of School; College Principal; SAR Co-ordinating Committee; employers of graduates; taught and research postgraduate students; recent graduates; undergraduate students; representatives from the BA Programme Board. The site visit schedule is included as Appendix 2.

1.7 In addition to the Self-assessment Report, the Review Group considered documentation provided by the Unit and the University including: the School Plan, programme documents and statistics, reports of Extern Examiners, examples of student coursework, examples of staff publications.

Preparation of the Self-assessment Report

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

- Professor Kathleen James-Chakraborty [Chair]
- Dr John Loughman, College Lecturer
- Pat Cooke, MA, MBA, College Lecturer
- Carla Briggs, MA, Slide Curator
- Ruth Musielak, MA, postgraduate research student

- 1.9 The Committee met twice and conducted regular email correspondence. The Committee met once with the facilitators. The writing of the SAR was undertaken by the Chair of the Co-ordinating Committee with the assistance of other members of the Co-ordinating Committee. Contributions were also supplied by the rest of the School staff. The Postgraduate student representative made contact and liaised with the undergraduate and post-graduate students. The SAR was discussed at staff meetings and the SAR was sent to all staff for review and comments incorporated into final report.

The University

- 1.10 University College Dublin (UCD) is a large and diverse university whose origin dates back to 1854. The University is situated on a large, modern campus, about 4km to the south of the centre of Dublin.
- 1.11 The current University Strategic Plan (2005-2008) states that the University's Mission is:

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

The University is organised into 35 Schools in five Colleges;

- UCD College of Arts and Celtic Studies
 - UCD College of Human Sciences
 - UCD College of Life Sciences
 - UCD College of Engineering, Mathematical and Physical Sciences
 - UCD College of Business and Law
- 1.12 There are currently over 22,000 students registered on University programmes, including over 3,000 international students from more than 110 countries.
- 1.13 As one of the largest universities on the island of Ireland, UCD supports a broad, deep and rich academic community in Science, Engineering, Medicine, Arts, Celtic Studies and Human Sciences. There are currently over 22,000 students (14,000 undergraduates) registered on University programmes, including over 3,000 international students from more than 110 countries.

UCD School of Art History and Cultural Policy

- 1.14 UCD was the first Irish university to offer instruction in Art History; it remains the only university on the island to offer an MA in Cultural Policy and Arts Management. The staff of eight academics and three administrators (two of whom are half-time), although small for a UCD school, makes it the largest unit of its kind in Ireland. The School's impact within the country has been enormous; its graduates direct many of the major Irish institutions in the field in the country. Its reputation, however, extends far more widely. In addition to being a centre for the study of Irish art, members of staff publish regularly and in prominent venues on European and American art and architecture.

They are frequently asked to contribute to the catalogues of exhibitions organised by foreign museums and to lecture at museums and universities abroad. Their collective expertise also attracts an impressive number of MA and doctoral students from around the world. Most notably, two George Mitchell scholars have recently earned postgraduate degrees with the School.

- 1.15 The School is one of eight in the College of Arts and Celtic Studies, five of which are substantially larger. Indeed, it is one of the smallest schools in the University. It offers a third level (three-year BA) major in Art History and taught MAs in Art History and in Cultural Policy and Arts Management. Historically all research degrees have been in Art History. However, in 2007 Cultural Policy enrolled its first doctoral student. The School has a strong record of teaching and research in both the history of Irish and of European art; it has only recently begun to teach Asian art and American art before 1950.
- 1.16 The School was formed in 2005. A major restructuring of the University brought what had been two separate programmes together. The History of European Painting has been taught in University College Dublin since 1935, when Dr. Françoise Henry began to give a course of lectures in preparation for the Purser-Griffith Scholarship and Prize Examination. In 1965 the Department of European Painting was established. The History of European Painting became an Honours only subject for the Degree of BA to be taken with a second subject. In 1977 the title of the Department was changed to the Department of the History of Art, and the programme of studies expanded to include architecture and sculpture. The Department joined the Modular BA programme in 1993. Postgraduate degrees have been awarded since 1970 [MA] and 1973 [PhD]. The Taught MA was begun in 1991/92 and the MA by research was replaced by the MLitt from 1997. The MA in Cultural Policy and Arts Management at UCD has its origins in the Higher Diploma in Arts Administration, which commenced in 1986. This course has been located within the School of Art History since 1999. It was upgraded to a one-year, 90 credit taught Masters programme in 2002. A new Head of School was appointed externally in 2007.

Commendations

- 1.17 The arrival of the new Head of School has energised the School and started to plot some new directions for the School.
- 1.18 The Head of School is well-respected within the field and well connected within the national and international community of historians of art and architecture. Since arriving at UCD, the Head of School has done much to consolidate existing relationships and to build new relationships.
- 1.19 Although a small staff, one member was appointed to work in both the Art History and Cultural Policy areas.

Recommendations

- 1.20 The School needs to agree and articulate its mission in art history and cultural policy education and research. This should form the basis for agreement on the School's education and research priorities for the coming years. For example, the School needs to address questions such as whether the School

should further expand its programme content and research in Asian, Islamic Art, non-western art or enhance its focus on Irish and western art.

- 1.21 The School needs to be much more articulate about why students should come to UCD to study art history. That leads to a sense of focus for their curriculum. How does the School distinguish itself from others? How are its graduates distinct from those of other schools?

2. Organisation and Management

- 2.1 The School of Art History and Cultural Policy is one school of eight within the College of Arts and Celtic Studies. The School is organised into two overlapping halves. Six of the academic staff is within the subject Art History. One of the academic staff is within the subject Cultural Policy and one full-time member of staff is shared between the two subjects. Art History has an undergraduate major, a taught MA and PhD students. In addition, it contributes to the BA evening programmes and serves a large population with electives on the BA programme. Cultural Policy offers a taught MA, which attracts experienced graduates into its programme. Administrative support in the school consists of a 0.5 FTE administrator for each component of the school's activities. In addition, a permanent Slide Curator provides additional support to the School. This forms the complement of permanent staff. At present two further temporary appointments (1 academic post and 1 Fellow) are central to the School's activities. There are also a number of temporary appointments which are central to the School's activities. These include one academic post, one Fellow, the reading room assistant and four tutors.
- 2.2 The academic organisation of the staff consists of one Professor, who is the current Head of School and Subject Head for Art History, two Senior Lecturers and five Lecturers. One of the Lecturers is the Subject Head for Cultural Policy and Director of its MA programme. In addition there is a Director of the MA in Cities, Art, Architecture and Aspiration.
- 2.3 Three academic staff members are responsible for key activities: Teaching & Learning, Research & Innovation, and Graduate Studies. In addition, a further member of staff co-ordinates the undergraduate Art History structure. Academic staff members are also appointed as 'Year Co-ordinators' for each of the three years in a typical BA cycle.
- 2.4 The committee system is simple, reflecting the size of the School, where staff activities and communication is directed through staff meetings which are held regularly throughout the academic year.

Commendations

- 2.5 The School has structures in place to map activities in Teaching & Learning, Research & Innovation, and Graduate Studies from School level to College level.
- 2.6 As the School is small, the introduction of a workload model has set out clear principles by which the demands of the School and its academic staff are shared across the domains of teaching, research and administration. (However, the RG did not undertake a detailed examination of individual 2009/2010 workloads).

- 2.7 It was evident that communication between staff members was very good and staff were approachable for students.
- 2.8 Staff meetings are held regularly, which facilitates good communication.

Recommendations

- 2.9 Over 50% of staff members hold key responsibilities at any given time. These responsibilities place heavy administrative pressure on the academic staff and present a challenge for their efforts to deliver on aspects of research. The School should consider incorporating the Teaching and Learning role with that of 'Programme Co-ordinator' into a single role. This would facilitate the rotation of roles in a manner that would reduce administrative burden in the long term. The School might also reconsider the need for stage co-ordinators.
- 2.10 The role of tutor within the structure of the School should be clarified, including tutors' responsibility to run modules and also their remuneration. In addition, the School might consider introducing the role of teaching assistant.
- 2.11 At present, a high proportion (22%) of the modules are delivered by occasional lecturers. Although the Review Group found no evidence of concern amongst students relating to the quality of these lectures, the School should establish mechanisms to monitor the quality of such lectures on an on-going basis. The Review Group recommends that when the opportunity arises, the School should consider alternatives such as the appointment of adjunct lecturers or part-time permanent lecturers.
- 2.12 The School has an open door policy, which is to be commended. However, in a School delivering a large number of modules with a small staff, dedicated office hours displayed on staff doors during term time may protect time without compromising the sense of community that exists within the School.

3. Staff and Facilities

- 3.1 In general, the Review Group found that the academic staff to be highly competent and energetic. They make significant contributions to both teaching and research. Teaching commitments and the large number of modules are stretching the capacity of this small staff.
- 3.2 The School recently lost a senior academic, reducing the number of senior academics at the School to two.
- 3.3 The School has two 0.5 full time equivalent (FTE) administrative staff (16.25 hours per week each). One member of staff provides support on the MA in Cultural Policy and the other supports Art History and Arts Management. The UCD Performance Management Development System (PMDS) has been introduced. Teaching spaces are functional but the subject has unique needs in terms of mode of teaching which need to be supported. Office space is at a premium and is poorly located in different locations. The Slide Room was recently remodelled and expanded but has now become largely redundant with the arrival of digital imaging and its use could be reduced. The library is significantly under-endowed, even for an undergraduate teaching library, and

fails to function satisfactorily as a research resource. Students highlighted significant difficulties obtaining core texts and extern examiners have commented on lack of evidence of advanced reading.

Commendations

- 3.4 Active academic staff strongly involved in research activities.
- 3.5 Academic staff praised as inspiring lecturers.
- 3.6 Energetic, helpful and dedicated administrative staff.
- 3.7 Tutors, who are mainly doctoral students in the School, are highly praised by students.
- 3.8 The Françoise Henry Reading Room is an important resource for students especially in the light of the library shortcomings already identified. Students can access this resource free of charge during School business hours, or for a nominal fee, purchase a card to access this resource outside of normal business hours.

Recommendations

- 3.9 As a matter of urgency, the School should seek to make a key strategic appointment to the recent vacancy as soon as it is possible.
- 3.10 Library facilities fall short of what is required, even for an undergraduate teaching institution. The shortcomings of the library collection are affecting activities of the School at every level from undergraduate teaching to research, and are universally commented upon as being a hindrance to excellence. Engagement with printed text and images is central to all the School's core activities. The School needs to argue for the resources to achieve this. In this, it should find allies and make common cause.
- 3.11 Library support for students and staff access to borrowing privileges at other institutions should be re-evaluated. The Review Group also recommends a re-evaluation of the library resources dedicated to holdings.
- 3.12 The School should appoint a member of academic staff to liaise with the library to ensure that purchases of holdings are consistent with the School's priorities.
- 3.13 The Library should also take on a more active role as a repository for all digital resources, including images.
- 3.14 The RG feels that the teaching load and the number of modules being delivered should be re-examined.
- 3.15 The School should identify dedicated space with IT access for PhD students.
- 3.16 The School has two part-time administrative staff. While both staff members perform at a high level, the Review Group suggests that additional support may be required to support the Art History subject and that locating administrative staff in a single office may better serve the School in the longer term.

- 3.17 Formal mechanisms to support mentoring for academic and non-academic staff should be introduced.
- 3.18 The RG recommends that consideration should be given to the co-location of all staff offices in order to consolidate the sense of School identity, which is especially important for undergraduate students. The Françoise Henry library and digital image facilities perhaps could be fruitfully co-located to make room for further office space.

4. Teaching, Learning and Assessment

- 4.1 The learning outcomes for each programme are clearly stated. In general, the curriculum is well-balanced. Students have a reasonable idea of what is expected of them but due to individual choice on the BA programme, students may find the range of options available to them difficult to understand. Good information is provided via the School's website.
- 4.2 Student workloads are appropriate and the recent module enhancement review suggested that the staging of assessments was appropriate.
- 4.3 Because of the lack of a strategic plan, the School's priorities are not visible in the curriculum.
- 4.4 Teaching methods reflect the content of the curriculum. The quality of teaching is generally good and sometimes excellent. Teaching methods are effective, although the full potential of Blackboard is not fully realised. Reading lists should be available in good time.
- 4.5 Assessment mechanisms used are appropriate but a heavy reliance on tutors to grade assessments was noted.
- 4.6 Some staff appear to draw on their research, scholarship and professional activity in their teaching, for example in the MA in Cultural Policy and Arts Management. However, there is scope for greater coherence between research and modules at level three and above.
- 4.7 Assessments reflect the content of the programme and courses and the level of assessment. Graduates of the MA in Cultural Policy and Arts Management are equipped for the labour market. However, graduate attributes, which are to become a feature of programmes, as set out in University's education strategy, have yet to be articulated for the MA in Art History.

Commendations

- 4.8 Dedicated staff, very motivated and capable of inspiring students
- 4.9 All permanent staff members are engaged in teaching.
- 4.10 Strong communication between staff and students.
- 4.11 The introduction of participation/attendance being 10% of the final grade in order to counteract absenteeism.

- 4.12 Good range of expertise within such a small pool of staff.
- 4.13 Genuine concern about the quality of teaching and pursuit of excellence.
- 4.14 Staff are research-active.
- 4.15 Appropriate use of tutor staff to support learning.
- 4.16 MA in Cultural Policy and Arts Management graduates are highly valued by those employers included in the Review.

Recommendations

- 4.17 The School should build on and explore additional interdisciplinary linkages with other schools within the College (such as French, Archaeology, Celtic Studies) as well as outside the College (Geography, Architecture.) This can be done through shared modules, team-teaching and joint membership on dissertation panels.
- 4.18 The School should collect and analyse data on recruitment, retention and attrition of students to a greater degree.
- 4.19 The School should encourage staff to engage with College/UCD Teaching and Learning initiatives and awards.

5. Curriculum Development and Review

- 5.1 The School uses student evaluations, external examiners and informal, personal feedback from students, which together are adequate to review the curriculum. The focus on graduate attributes in the University's latest education strategy provides the School with the opportunity to set out a more formal approach to strategic curriculum development. There is evidence that curriculum design and content is informed by recent developments in teaching and learning, and research and scholarship. However, it was suggested to the Review Group that the School could more fully engage with some recent developments in the College and UCD in curriculum delivery, for example the use of the Blackboard virtual learning environment. Additionally, the School could explore options to meet the pedagogical needs of its students to a greater extent within the frameworks of modularisation and the flattened Stage 2. The Review Group also believes that further opportunities exist to enhance the visibility of Art History within the BA programme if the School exploits its contacts across the University.

Commendations

- 5.2 The School has formal mechanisms to generate feedback to inform curriculum development.
- 5.3 The scope of the curriculum has expanded over recent years to draw more fully on the expertise of staff.
- 5.4 Generally, student feedback is positive and there is evidence that feedback is used in programme development.

Recommendations

- 5.5 The School should further explore the use of pre-requisites to create a clearer pathway for Art History students through the BA programme.
- 5.6 The School should identify strategic partners within the College to enhance the opportunity and pathways for its graduates. For example exploiting the new BA CAO grid system could explicitly identify pathways in Art History and a language.
- 5.7 Programme goals and pathways should be communicated actively to students in an accessible format.

6. Research Activity

- 6.1 The Review Group has high respect for the nature and volume of research carried out by the academic staff of the School. The kinds of research “outputs”, peer-reviewed articles, books, as well as exhibition catalogues, edited books, and position papers all make valuable contributions to the field of art history, cultural policy and heritage management. School staff need to articulately promote the value of the arts and humanities to a greater degree outside of their own discipline. In addition to their individual pursuits, staff, and more importantly the graduate trainees, need to move towards a greater number of collaborative ventures. Larger-scale projects such as the Royal Irish Academy’s Art and Architecture of Ireland publication could be pursued. As a whole, the School needs to embrace further research partnerships with external members such as museums and arts institutions. In discussion with external participants, the RG identified such opportunities. The heavy workload for PhD students engaged as tutors, particularly if they also work part-time, was noted as a concern.

Commendations

- 6.2 Research is done at a high level by all academic staff.
- 6.3 Staff members take seriously the mandate to participate in Irish culture as public intellectuals.
- 6.4 Significant research funding has been obtained by staff and doctoral students.
- 6.5 The School has completed a submission for PRTL 5 funding and has identified EU FP7 opportunities.

Recommendations

- 6.6 Research facilities (principally the Library) are insufficient even to support undergraduate research (See Facilities section above).
- 6.7 In establishing its own performance for research outputs the School should identify valid peers and relevant outputs.
- 6.8 The School needs to think more fully about its strategic position within the College and University and, in particular, how it might capitalise on the Global Ireland research theme adopted by UCD.

- 6.9 The School needs to develop additional research partnerships with external units such as the National Gallery of Ireland, Chester Beatty Library and other arts and cultural institutions.
- 6.10 The teaching load should be re-examined in order to place equal priority upon research output.
- 6.11 Although grant funding is very competitive, School staff need to pursue opportunities vigorously, and try to write support for postdoctoral appointees and graduate student support into the grant proposals.

7. Management of Quality and Enhancement

- 7.1 Within the School, two methods are used to monitor quality. These methods include external examiners reports and student evaluation. Formal student evaluation was implemented in 2009, although the practice was used informally for some time. An additional method of quality enhancement is monitored at the University level. This method is referred to Module Enhancement Review (MER). The MER was conducted through the Centre for Teaching & Learning and Academic Development. Again this is a recent development within the University.

Commendations

- 7.2 Quality is clearly important to staff across all aspects of the School's activities.
- 7.3 Clear internal and external mechanisms to monitor quality.
- 7.4 Use of doctoral panels with a member from outside the School provides a wider breadth of expertise.

Recommendations

- 7.5 The School should develop a tailored programme of training of tutors to tutoring specifically in Art History.
- 7.6 A large proportion of lectures are provided by occasional lecturers. The School should introduce a formal method to monitor the quality of lectures provided by occasional lecturers.
- 7.7 It is a challenge for a small school to deliver a large number of modules, while also supporting an increasing number of graduate students. There may be consequences in terms of maintaining and enhancing quality in all areas. The School needs to prioritise its activities and consider ways to deliver a sufficient number of modules to meet the needs of its programme.
- 7.8 Greater consultation with students has been identified by the School as an area for development. The Review Group welcomes this and encourages the School to develop concrete plans for formal mechanisms to enable the student body to have an input into School processes, e.g. staff student consultative committee. Students at all levels, from undergraduate to doctoral level, should be represented within student participation mechanisms.

8. External Relations

- 8.1 The RG saw evidence of good use of an Erasmus network at undergraduate level, although there is scope to expand into postgraduate and staff exchange. There is scope to build more formalised links with other schools and programmes within the College and University-wide. The Review Group met a group of external 'stakeholders' from leading Irish cultural institutions who gave positive feedback on the School's programmes and graduates, and noted the efforts of the School staff to extend and deepen relationships. These connections to the institutions and the cultural constituency at large seem crucial to the School's future profile and direction.

Commendations

- 8.2 Good Erasmus network of highly reputable European schools
- 8.3 Good relations with many key cultural institutions
- 8.4 Ongoing collaborations at a number of levels, from lecture programmes to conferences to guest curating to catalogue essays.
- 8.5 Graduates of the undergraduate and graduate programmes are well-regarded generally in the sector.
- 8.6 Graduates of the Cultural Policy MA are highly regarded. They are seen as serious and accomplished, capable of filling key roles in both the smaller cultural organisations and large institutions. Work placements and visiting lecturers provide good exchange between the course and its stakeholders. The more critical and strategic focus of the Cultural Policy MA in recent years is noted.

Recommendations

- 8.7 There is scope to develop the Erasmus network to include visiting staff and postgraduates, with a view to establish an international 'peer group'.
- 8.8 The School should explore opportunities to develop more international research collaborations – formalise existing links and start to generate traffic. The School might want to take advantage of the University's interest in China, India and the United States, all areas of emerging interest within the School.
- 8.9 Existing collaborations, which have been given a new energy and urgency in the last couple of years, now need to become more systematic and strategic. There seems to be openness to this from both sides.
- 8.10 With enhanced collaboration, there is an opportunity for the School to establish itself firmly as one that engages meaningfully and fruitfully with museums, institutions and the broader cultural sector. This is in keeping with the School's vision of undertaking research that reaches a wider audience and which includes exhibitions and catalogues. It also gives an added validity to the proposed Museum Studies Masters. Furthermore, new or redeveloped partnerships bring the possibility of leveraging different kinds of funding – for example, education, cultural heritage, environment etc. and also private/corporate sponsorship.

- 8.11 The School needs to reassert its expertise and track record in Irish art and architecture. Clearly a new appointment is vital to this, but so too is a strategy of reaching out to galleries and institutions focussing on contemporary art, with a view to contextualising and enriching the understanding of that work.
- 8.12 The School should aim to become the visible face of art within UCD, in relation to UCD's existing collection and its policies of curating, display and acquisition.
- 8.13 The School's strong international expertise – particularly with Dutch and Italian art – could be translated into a series of formal connections with international universities and institutions.
- 8.14 The School should consider the use of more adjunct positions – there seems to be a willingness from the arts, culture and heritage sector. It might also be useful to form an advisory board of cultural 'leaders' who would play a collective 'adjunct' role.
- 8.15 Overall, the School should assert its character as a small, dynamic unit with a wide spread of connections at every level – within the University, within the cultural sector in Ireland, within European academia and with selected partners worldwide.

9. Summary of Commendations and Recommendations

- 9.1 In summary, the RG recognised many positive aspects of the School and its contributions to the University. It has a high standard of teaching and produces distinguished graduates. The level of research produced by academic staff is very high. The RG recommends that the School reflects in a more focused way upon the curriculum and focus of its programmes, and that it could strengthen its links with other Schools within the University, with arts institutions and with international universities.

a. Introduction and Context

Commendations

- 1.17 The arrival of the new Head of School has energised the School and started to plot some new directions for the School.
- 1.18 The Head of School is well-respected within the field and well connected within the national and international community of historians of art and architecture. Since arriving at UCD, the Head of School has done much to consolidate existing relationships and to build new relationships.
- 1.19 Although a small staff, one member was appointed to work in both the Art History and Cultural Policy areas.

Recommendations

- 1.20 The School needs to agree and articulate its mission in art history and cultural policy education and research. This should form the basis for agreement on

the School's education and research priorities for the coming years. For example, the School needs to address questions such as whether the School should further expand its programme content and research in Asian, Islamic Art, non-western art or enhance its focus on Irish and western art?

- 1.21 The School needs to be much more articulate about why students should come to UCD to study art history. That leads to a sense of focus for their curriculum. How does the School distinguish itself from others? How are its graduates distinct from those of other schools?

b. Organisation and Management

Commendations

- 2.5 The School has structures in place to map activities in Teaching & Learning, Research & Innovation, and Graduate Studies from School level to College level.
- 2.6 As the School is small, the introduction of a workload model has set out clear principles by which the demands of the School and its academic staff are shared across the domains of teaching, research and administration. (However, the RG did not undertake a detailed examination of individual 2009/2010 workloads).
- 2.7 It was evident that communication between staff members was very good and staff were approachable for students.
- 2.8 Staff meetings are held regularly, which facilitates good communication.

Recommendations

- 2.9 Over 50% of staff members hold key responsibilities at any given time. These responsibilities place heavy administrative pressure on the academic staff and present a challenge for their efforts to deliver on aspects of research. The School should consider incorporating the Teaching and Learning role with that of 'Programme Co-ordinator' into a single role. This would facilitate the rotation of roles in a manner that would reduce administrative burden in the long term. The School might also reconsider the need for stage co-ordinators.
- 2.10 The role of tutor within the structure of the School should be clarified, including tutors' responsibility to run modules and also their remuneration. In addition, the School might consider introducing the role of teaching assistant.
- 2.11 At present, a high proportion (22%) of the modules are delivered by occasional lecturers. Although the Review Group found no evidence of concern amongst students relating to the quality of these lectures, the School should establish mechanisms to monitor the quality of such lectures on an on-going basis. The Review Group recommends that when the opportunity arises, the School should consider alternatives such as the appointment of adjunct lecturers or part-time permanent lecturers.
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office hours displayed on staff doors during term time may protect time without compromising the sense of community that exists within the School.

c. Staff and Facilities

Commendations

- 3.4 Active academic staff strongly involved in research activities.
- 3.5 Academic staff praised as inspiring lecturers.
- 3.6 Energetic, helpful and dedicated administrative staff.
- 3.7 Tutors, who are mainly doctoral students in the School, are highly praised by students.
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Recommendations

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- 3.13 The Library should also take on a more active role as a repository for all digital resources, including images.
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- 3.15 The School should identify dedicated space with IT access for PhD students.
- 3.16 The School has two part-time administrative staff. While both staff members perform at a high level, the Review Group suggests that additional support may be required to support the Art History subject and that locating

administrative staff in a single office may better serve the School in the longer term.

- 3.17 Formal mechanisms to support mentoring for academic and non-academic staff should be introduced.
- 3.18 The RG recommends that consideration should be given to the co-location of all staff offices in order to consolidate the sense of School identity, which is especially important for undergraduate students. The Françoise Henry library and digital image facilities perhaps could be fruitfully co-located to make room for further office space.

d. Teaching, Learning and Assessment

Commendations

- 4.8 Dedicated staff, very motivated and capable of inspiring students
- 4.9 All permanent staff members are engaged in teaching.
- 4.10 Strong communication between staff and students.
- 4.11 The introduction of participation/attendance being 10% of the final grade in order to counteract absenteeism.
- 4.12 Good range of expertise within such a small pool of staff.
- 4.13 Genuine concern about the quality of teaching and pursuit of excellence.
- 4.14 Staff are research-active.
- 4.15 Appropriate use of tutor staff to support learning.
- 4.16 MA in Cultural Policy and Arts Management graduates are highly valued by those employers included in the Review.

Recommendations

- 4.17 The School should build on and explore additional interdisciplinary linkages with other schools within the College (such as French, Archaeology, Celtic Studies) as well as outside the College (Geography, Architecture.) This can be done through shared modules, team-teaching and joint membership on dissertation panels.
- 4.18 The School should collect and analyse data on recruitment, retention and attrition of students to a greater degree.
- 4.19 The School should encourage staff to engage with College/UCD Teaching and Learning initiatives and awards.

e. Curriculum Development and Review

Commendations

- 5.2 The School has formal mechanisms to generate feedback to inform curriculum development.
- 5.3 The scope of the curriculum has expanded over recent years to draw more fully on the expertise of staff.
- 5.4 Generally, student feedback is positive and there is evidence that feedback is used in programme development.

Recommendations

- 5.5 The School should further explore the use of pre-requisites to create a clearer pathway for Art History students through the BA programme.
- 5.6 The School should identify strategic partners within the College to enhance the opportunity and pathways for its graduates. For example exploiting the new BA CAO grid system could explicitly identify pathways in Art History and a language.
- 5.7 Programme goals and pathways should be communicated actively to students in an accessible format.

f. Research Activity

Commendations

- 6.2 Research is done at a high level by all academic staff.
- 6.3 Staff members take seriously the mandate to participate in Irish culture as public intellectuals.
- 6.4 Significant research funding has been obtained by staff and doctoral students.
- 6.5 The School has completed a submission for PRTL 5 funding and has identified EU FP7 opportunities.

Recommendations

- 6.6 Research facilities (principally the Library) are insufficient even to support undergraduate research (See Facilities section above).
- 6.7 In establishing its own performance for research outputs the School should identify valid peers and relevant outputs.
- 6.8 The School needs to think more fully about its strategic position within the College and University and, in particular, how it might capitalise on the Global Ireland research theme adopted by UCD.

- 6.9 The School needs to develop additional research partnerships with external units such as the National Gallery of Ireland, Chester Beatty Library and other arts and cultural institutions.
- 6.10 The teaching load should be re-examined in order to place equal priority upon research output.
- 6.11 Although grant funding is very competitive, School staff need to pursue opportunities vigorously, and try to write support for postdoctoral appointees and graduate student support into the grant proposals.

g. Management of Quality and Enhancement

Commendations

- 7.2 Quality is clearly important to staff across all aspects of the School's activities.
- 7.3 Clear internal and external mechanisms to monitor quality.
- 7.4 Use of doctoral panels with a member from outside the School provides a wider breadth of expertise.

Recommendations

- 7.5 The School should develop a tailored programme of training of tutors to tutoring specifically in Art History.
- 7.6 A large proportion of lectures are provided by occasional lecturers. The School should introduce a formal method to monitor the quality of lectures provided by occasional lecturers.
- 7.7 It is a challenge for a small school to deliver a large number of modules, while also supporting an increasing number of graduate students. There may be consequences in terms of maintaining and enhancing quality in all areas. The School needs to prioritise its activities and consider ways to deliver a sufficient number of modules to meet the needs of its programme.
- 7.8 Greater consultation with students has been identified by the School as an area for development. The Review Group welcomes this and encourages the School to develop concrete plans for formal mechanisms to enable the student body to have an input into School processes, e.g. staff student consultative committee. Students at all levels, from undergraduate to doctoral level, should be represented within student participation mechanisms.

h. External Relations

Commendations

- 8.2 Good Erasmus network of highly reputable European schools
- 8.3 Good relations with many key cultural institutions
- 8.4 Ongoing collaborations at a number of levels, from lecture programmes to conferences to guest curating to catalogue essays.

- 8.5 Graduates of the undergraduate and graduate programmes are well-regarded generally in the sector.
- 8.6 Graduates of the Cultural Policy MA are highly regarded. They are seen as serious and accomplished, capable of filling key roles in both the smaller cultural organisations and large institutions. Work placements and visiting lecturers provide good exchange between the course and its stakeholders. The more critical and strategic focus of the Cultural Policy MA in recent years is noted.

Recommendations

- 8.7 There is scope to develop the Erasmus network to include visiting staff and postgraduates, with a view to establish an international 'peer group'.
- 8.8 The School should explore opportunities to develop more international research collaborations – formalise existing links and start to generate traffic. The School might want to take advantage of the University's interest in China, India and the United States, all areas of emerging interest within the School.
- 8.9 Existing collaborations, which have been given a new energy and urgency in the last couple of years, now need to become more systematic and strategic. There seems to be openness to this from both sides.
- 8.10 With enhanced collaboration, there is an opportunity for the School to establish itself firmly as one that engages meaningfully and fruitfully with museums, institutions and the broader cultural sector. This is in keeping with the School's vision of undertaking research that reaches a wider audience and which includes exhibitions and catalogues. It also gives an added validity to the proposed Museum Studies Masters. Furthermore, new or redeveloped partnerships bring the possibility of leveraging different kinds of funding – for example, education, cultural heritage, environment etc. and also private/corporate sponsorship.
- 8.11 The School needs to reassert its expertise and track record in Irish art and architecture. Clearly a new appointment is vital to this, but so too is a strategy of reaching out to galleries and institutions focussing on contemporary art, with a view to contextualising and enriching the understanding of that work.
- 8.12 The School should aim to become the visible face of art within UCD, in relation to UCD's existing collection and its policies of curating, display and acquisition.
- 8.13 The School's strong international expertise – particularly with Dutch and Italian art – could be translated into a series of formal connections with international universities and institutions.
- 8.14 The School should consider the use of more adjunct positions – there seems to be a willingness from the arts, culture and heritage sector. It might also be useful to form an advisory board of cultural 'leaders' who would play a collective 'adjunct' role.
- 8.15 Overall, the School should assert its character as a small, dynamic unit with a wide spread of connections at every level – within the University, within the

cultural sector in Ireland, within European academia and with selected partners worldwide.

Appendix 1

UCD School of Art History & Cultural Policy Response to the Review Group Report

The UCD School of Art History and Cultural Policy welcomes the Quality review report. We would like to thank the Review Group and the staff of the Quality Office for their high degree of constructive engagement with us throughout the process. We welcome the endorsement of so much of what we are doing and their suggestions for how we can do better. The School's Self-assessment Report, the Review Group Report and the Quality Improvement Plan will all be used to inform the School's academic and resource planning for the next strategic period.

Appendix 2

Schedule for Review Visit

UCD School of Art History and Cultural Policy 5-8 October 2009

Pre-Visit Briefing Prior to Site Visit: Monday, 5 October 2009

- 17.30-19.00 RG meet to review preliminary issues and to confirm work schedule and assignment of tasks for the following two days.
- 19.30 Dinner hosted for the RG by the UCD Registrar and Deputy President

Day 1: Tuesday, 6 October 2009

Venue: Françoise Henry Reading Room J007, Newman Building

- 09.00-09.30 Private meeting of Review Group
- 09.30-10.15 RG meet Head of School
- 10.15-10.25 Break
- 10.25-11.15 RG meet **Self-assessment Report Co-ordinating Committee**
- 11.15-11.30 Tea/Coffee break – RG only
- 11.30-12.10 RG meet with **support staff** representatives
- 12.10-12.15 Break
- 12.15-13.15 RG meet with **College Principal**, UCD College of Arts and Celtic Studies
- 13.15-14.15 Lunch – RG only
- 14.15-15.00 RG meet with **representative group of staff to discuss research issues**
- 15.00-15.15 Tea/Coffee break – RG only
- 15.15-16.15 **Tour of facilities:**
- Lecture Theatres
 - Library
 - Slide Library
- 16.15-17.00 RG meet to review key observations
- 17.00 RG Depart*

Day 2: Wednesday, 7 October

Venue: Françoise Henry Reading Room J007, Newman Building

- 08.45-09.15 Private meeting of Review Group
- 09.15-10.00 RG meet with representative group of **Tutors** , all current PhD students:

10.00-10.10	Break
10.10-11.10	RG meet with a representative group of postgraduate students 2008-2009 (taught and research) and recent graduates
11.10-11.30	Tea/Coffee break
11.30-12.30	RG meet with: with representative group of academic staff to discuss teaching & learning issues; curriculum development; assessment etc.:
12.30-12.45	Private meeting of Review Group to review findings
12.45-13.30	RG lunch
13.30-14.30	RG meet with representative group of undergraduate students (Levels 2 and 3; 2009-2010)
14.30-14.45	Break
14.45-15.45	RG meet with group of external stakeholders including graduate employers
15.45-16.00	Break
16.00-17.00	RG private meetings with school staff (by request – 10 minute intervals) – optional for members of School
17.00-17.30	RG Private meeting and Depart

Day 3: Thursday, 8 October

Venue: Françoise Henry Reading Room J007, Newman Building

09.00-09.30	RG private meeting
09.30-10.00	RG meet with Head of School to sweep-up/clarify any outstanding issues
10.00-12.30	(Optional) RG meet with unit or University staff to clarify outstanding issues or start preparing draft RG Report
12.30-13.15	Lunch – RG only
13.15-15.00	RG finalise first draft of RG Report and prepare exit presentation – and confirm arrangements/deadline for RG completion
15.00-15.15	Break
15.15-15.30	RG meet with Head of School to feedback outline strengths and recommendations on areas for further development
15.30-16.00	Exit presentation to all available staff of the School – to be made by an external member of the Review Group (or other member of the RG, as agreed) summarising the key findings of the Review Group
16.00	Review Site Visit ends – RG depart