



**University College Dublin**

**Periodic Quality Review**

**UCD School of Music**

**February 2013**

**Accepted by the UCD Governing Authority at its meeting on 25 June 2013**

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## **1. Introduction and Overview of UCD School of Music**

### ***Introduction***

- 1.1 This Report presents the findings of a quality review of the School of Music, University College Dublin, which was undertaken on 18-21 February 2013.

### ***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 (e.g. Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area, 2007). 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
- To 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 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](http://www.ucd.ie/quality).

1.5 The composition of the Review Group for the UCD School of Music was as follows:

- Professor Hugh Campbell, UCD School of Architecture (Chair)
- Dr Gethin McBean, UCD School of Biomolecular and Biomedical Sciences (Deputy Chair)
- Professor Simon Keefe, James Rossiter Hoyle Chair of Music, University of Sheffield
- Professor Martin Stokes, King Edward Professor of Music, King's College London

1.6 The Review Group visited the School from 18-21 February 2013 and held meetings with School staff; undergraduate and postgraduate students; the SAR Co-ordinating Committee; other University staff, including the College Principal. 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 School and the University during the site visit.

### ***Preparation of the Self-assessment Report***

1.8 The membership of the School of Music Self-assessment Report Co-ordinating Committee was appointed at the 40<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the School of Music, held in Week 1 of Semester 1 2012–13. The student representative was approached separately and asked to participate. The membership of the Committee comprised:

- Professor Julian Horton (Head of School)
- Dr Wolfgang Marx

- Dr Frank Lawrence
- Dr Jaime Jones
- Ms Sheryl Lynch (Student Representative)

1.9 Three plenary meetings were held, in September, November, and January. The first meeting established an overview of the tasks required to complete the Self-assessment Report, a division of labour and a working timetable. At the first meeting, tasks were allocated as follows:

- Professor Julian Horton: Chapter 1 (Introduction and Context); Chapter 2 (Organisation and Management); Chapter 3 (Staffing and Facilities); Chapter 10 (Concluding Remarks); collation of appendices.
- Dr Wolfgang Marx: Chapter 4 (Teaching, Learning, and Assessment); Chapter 6 (Research Activity).
- Dr Frank Lawrence: Chapter 8 (Support Services); Chapter 9 (External Relations).
- Dr Jaime Jones: Chapter 5 (Curriculum Development and Review); Chapter 7 (Management of Quality and Enhancement).
- Ms Sheryl Lynch: review of all written materials and editorial input.

1.10 The second meeting reviewed the process, following submission of draft sections of the Report to the Head of School. In the interim, email was used to circulate documents and discuss any matters arising, and numerous one-to-one meetings between the Committee members also took place. It was also determined that materials for the appendices would be assembled by the staff members responsible for the relevant chapters, but collated by the Head of School with the assistance of the School Administrator. All written materials, once drafted, were circulated and edited by the Committee. The final meeting approved the SAR.

### ***The University***

1.11 University College Dublin (UCD) is a large and diverse university whose origins date back to 1854. The University is situated on a large modern campus about 4 km to the south of the centre of Dublin.

1.12 The University Strategic Plan (to 2014) states that the University's mission is: "to advance knowledge, to pursue truth and to foster learning, in an atmosphere of discovery, creativity, innovation and excellence, drawing out the best in each student, and contributing to the social, cultural and economic life of Ireland in the wider world".

The University is organised into 38 schools in seven colleges:

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

- 1.13 UCD supports a broad, deep and rich academic community. There are currently more than 24,000 students (15,400 undergraduates, 6,900 postgraduates and 1,900 Occasional and Adult Education students) registered on University programmes, including over 4,600 international students from more than 120 countries.

### ***Overview of the School of Music***

- 1.14 The School is one of eight located within the UCD College of Arts and Celtic Studies and is primarily based in the Newman Building. The School also avails of some performance space in the UCD Astra Hall, Memorial Hall in UCD Richview and Belfield Church.
- 1.15 The School has a relatively small staff complement (six permanent full-time academics, one Marie-Curie Fellow, two permanent part-time ensemble directors, one temporary part-time choral director and one permanent administrator), but a relatively large student body compared with music departments in other third-level institutions in Ireland and the UK.
- 1.16 The School offers modules in five degree programmes – the BA degree, the BMus, the MMus, the MLitt and the PhD – and teaches in diverse subject areas, from the history of Western music and music theory to Irish traditional music, popular music, film music, Indian music and African-American music.
- 1.17 In terms of research, the School has maintained a leadership role nationally in the areas of musicology, music theory and ethnomusicology. All staff members are research active and research foci include music and Irish cultural history, the Austrian baroque, the music of Anton Bruckner, nineteenth-century instrumental forms, Hindu devotional music, the music of the American Deep South, Irish traditional music, the music of *György Ligeti*, *music and representations of death*, *medieval liturgical chant*, and Medieval and Renaissance performance practice. The School has been successful in obtaining research-grant income in

the last several years, securing both post-doctoral and senior IRCHSS research fellowships and (for 2011–14) an FP7 Marie-Curie Fellowship, held jointly with the University of California at Irvine.

- 1.18 The School also has a developing performance culture, which includes three major performing groups (the Symphony Orchestra, Philharmonic Choir and Choral Scholars), a gamelan ensemble and the student-run Music Society, which organises regular recitals and events.
- 1.19 The Review Group considers that the UCD School of Music is at the forefront of musical culture and research in Ireland. It clearly retains the loyalty and commitment of its staff and students and garners the respect of its peers. It is a school which strives towards excellence in all aspects of its endeavours. Notwithstanding this, the School is clearly currently operating at or beyond capacity, and consequently finds itself with very little room to manoeuvre in terms of its future direction.

## **2. Organisation and Management**

- 2.1 The small size of the School facilitates the collegiate and collective decision-making ethos that has been adopted. The School does not have the formal organisational structures that are necessary in a larger school, for example, an Executive Committee, a Teaching & Learning Committee, a Research & Innovation Committee. A staff meeting, involving all staff, is held every two months and sub-committees (for example curriculum review) are convened regularly, but subject to necessity; and special staff meetings to discuss the work of such sub-committees are regularly organised. The Head of School is able to make strategic decisions and finalise administrative processes with due consultation relatively easily.
- 2.2 The School is an active and engaged member of the UCD College of Arts and Celtic Studies and is well represented on the following external committees: the College Executive Committee; the Academic Council; the Academic Plenary; the BA Programme Board; the College Teaching and Learning Committee; the College Research and Innovation Committee; and the College Graduate School Board. The School's representation on college committees is rotated on a regular (three year) basis.
- 2.3 Academic members of staff also fulfil, *inter alia*, the following administrative roles in the School: International Student Coordinator; Graduate Student Coordinator; two Staff-Student Committee representatives; Symphony Orchestra Board of Management Representative; and Library Liaison Officer.
- 2.4 The Review Group noted that the School's size becomes disadvantageous when the distribution of administrative labour is considered. As is evident from the list of committees on which the School is represented at College level, along with the administrative responsibilities within the School, and taking into consideration the very small pool of staff

from which to draw, it is inevitable that there are significant consequences for individual workloads. The Head-of-School position currently operates on a three-yearly rotation and all other duties are reviewed regularly.

- 2.5 One of the key challenges faced by the School is the impact of the cuts imposed as a result of the current economic crisis in Ireland. The small size of the School means that it has much less scope to absorb cuts. Responding to year-on-year government cuts, the College has reduced the School's non-pay budget by roughly two thirds over five years. Any further cuts are unsustainable and will threaten core services – the provision of elective modules, the supervision of dissertations - and in turn may affect student recruitment.
- 2.6 In the context of reductions in staffing and resources across the University, workloads have invariably increased. The devolving of many administrative responsibilities from central administration to schools has had a significant negative impact on staff responsibilities and morale.
- 2.7 The School operates a workload model, which is regularly reviewed and was considered during the visit by the Review Group. The School workload model takes into account academic staff contribution to teaching, research and administration. At present, while comprehensive in one sense, the workload model does not allow meaningful comparisons to be made, nor does it facilitate strategic thinking and decision-making.
- 2.8 School-wide, undergraduate teaching accounts for an average 70% of the staff teaching load. The current allocation of the heaviest teaching responsibilities to early career academic staff (the teaching load of academic staff ranges between 25% and 66%, with early career members of academic staff spending two thirds of their time in teaching), inevitably means that the relative contribution of early career academic staff to research output is low in comparison to their other activities. The Review Group is of the opinion that this is an issue, both for the development of early career academic staff and the School, in the long-term.
- 2.9 Administrative support for the entire School is provided by one SEA (0.8 FTE), who, whilst being extremely effective, is carrying a considerable workload. This is not a recent problem and was highlighted as a concern in the 2007 subject external examiner's report. There seems to be little direct administrative support from College level.
- 2.10 The Review Group believes that there needs to be a greater level of engagement at College level with the specifics of the School's planned development. At the moment, this kind of engagement seems to happen only fitfully, but where it does, as with the joint promotion of all taught masters programmes on a thematic basis, it is evidently of immediate and ongoing benefit.
- 2.11 While to all intents and purposes the School is in a relatively healthy state – sustainable staffing, acceptable office accommodation, reasonable student numbers – it finds itself with little room to manoeuvre. Any substantive capacity for growth is curtailed by lack of access to investment in resources or staffing, resulting in a tendency towards inertia.



- 2.12 To counteract this, the Review Group believes that the School should consider developing more radical scenarios for development. The workload model, budget and other instruments could be used to develop these scenarios, if only to reject them. What would happen if more space was given back to central booking? What if teaching at graduate level was reduced significantly, or undertaken on a different basis? What if student intake were to double at undergraduate level? The result of this exercise might be simply to confirm that the current course is the best one, but that in itself would be a valuable outcome. On the other hand, more dynamic and unexpected paths for development might emerge.
- 2.13 Valuable work has been done recently to raise the profile of the School. This needs to continue so that music becomes more central to the College's mission and to the University's identity. In its review of the School, the Review Group kept coming back to the 'middle ground' – the space between the well-defined world of the School and the larger contexts of the College and the University. Energies need to be concentrated in this territory - reinforcing good working relationships, like that with the Graduate School and that with the Director of Strategic Planning - and also opening up new ones, finding new connections and relationships.

### **Commendations**

- 2.14 The School has a high degree of collegiality amongst staff and this is reflected in the sense of belonging displayed by all cohorts of students that met the Review Group, particularly at graduate level.
- 2.15 The Head of School, for whom there is clear regard and respect among staff and students, adopts a consultative approach and encourages collective decision-making and this is facilitated by regular School meetings that are open to all staff.
- 2.16 Administrative support for the entire School is provided by one SEA (80% FTE), who is extremely effective.
- 2.17 The School is an active and engaged member of the UCD College of Arts and Celtic Studies and the University.

### **Recommendations**

- 2.18 Adequate administrative support, both within the School and within the College, is necessary for the School to maintain its current level of activity and to have any realistic ambitions for growth or development. The Review Group recommends that the School liaise with the College and the Budget Review Committee to ensure that they increase administrative support within the School (for example, the current administrative role could be increased from .8FTE to 1FTE) supported, where possible with additional support at College level (for example, marketing School graduate programmes, etc).

- 2.19 The School workload model should be revised in order to allow direct comparison of the full range of staff activity – research, teaching and administration. Longer-term considerations, such as the development of early career academic staff and the development of the School research culture, should be taken into account in a revised workload allocation model. Early career members of academic staff should be encouraged to increase their research activities and publication records and this can only be achieved by more senior members of academic staff sharing the heaviest teaching burden.
  
- 2.20 The Review Group strongly supports the School’s intention to draft a Development Plan and recommends that the College play a more active role in supporting the School to achieve its aims, especially in respect of providing appropriate facilities for rehearsal and performance.
  
- 2.21 The Review Group recommends that the School should consider a facilitated workshop, with input from relevant University experts, for example, the Director of Strategic Planning, to consider development scenarios. This should feed into the School Development Plan that is currently being drafted and the next iteration of the School Strategic Plan. The School could also chart the paths, through the institution and beyond, of high-achieving students as a way to clarify the School’s ‘Mission’.
  
- 2.22 The Review Group recommends that the School further develop its relationship with the larger contexts of the College and the University to reinforce good working relationships like that with the Graduate School and that with the Director of Strategic Planning and to open up new connections and relationships.
  
- 2.23 The School should work with the College and the University so that music becomes more central to the College’s mission and to the University’s identity. Ad Astra scholars and performing ensembles demonstrate this potential, but they would need to be getting the profile and support on a par with sporting achievements to achieve this. Indeed, music is one of the main means by which the University can communicate to a wider constituency. The question ‘How does the campus sound?’ should be asked. Integrating excellent musical performance more fully into the life of the University could offer an added dimension. Taken seriously, it would encompass plans for activities and events as well as venues and resources.

### **3. Staffing and Facilities**

- 3.1 At present, the School comprises nine permanent members of staff: one Professor, two Associate Professors, one Senior Lecturer; two College Lecturers; two part-time permanent Directors of Performing Ensembles (Symphony Orchestra and Choral Scholars); and one 80% permanent Administrator at Senior Executive level. The School also has the following temporary staff: one Research Fellow (Marie-Curie FP7 Fellowship); one part-time temporary Choral Director (Philharmonic Choir); two Adjunct Professors; two Occasional Lecturers; and six tutors. The School’s staff complement has remained stable for a number of years. At the same time, the student population has steadily increased over the past

decade, a growth with which School staffing levels have not kept pace. This inequality has placed a proportionate strain on staff workloads.

- 3.2 As outlined in section 2, School staff, in particular the School administrator, are working at or beyond capacity. The likelihood of staff burnout is very high. The Review Group was concerned that there appeared to be very few extended support structures at College level and due to limited staff numbers in the School, members of staff are not in a position to benefit from University supports.
- 3.3 The School's facilities comprise thirteen rooms housed on the third floor of the Newman Building and a room on the lower-ground floor of the Newman Building, which houses the gamelan ensemble. The three main teaching rooms house four pianos: a Steinway Model A and a Petrof grand in J305; a Kawai grand in J307; a Kawai upright in J308; with an additional Steinway housed in Richview. All three teaching rooms are equipped with audio equipment and music-manuscript whiteboards; rooms J305 and J307 also have fixed digital projectors and WIFI-enabled laptop facilities. The School owns one document projector, and Room J303 houses a small collection of scores, books, CDs and DVDs.
- 3.4 The School doesn't have any designated practice or rehearsal facilities, and no buildings within UCD have been designed with musical performance in mind. As a result, other facilities have to double these functions: the teaching rooms are made available as practise rooms; the orchestra and choir rehearse and perform in other spaces (Astra Hall, Memorial Hall in Richview, Belfield Church), however, not all of these spaces are suitable for practice and rehearsal. There is scope for further upgrading of the more suitable facilities, and the potential for them to become an excellent resource for the School and the University.
- 3.5 The Review Group was concerned about the quality of some of the facilities within the Newman Building. The long-term project for the refurbishment of the Newman Building, and the development of the Newman-Joyce Precinct, has the potential to address these concerns. There is clear potential for the provision of appropriate practice and rehearsal spaces within the new development, as well as spaces for performance.
- 3.6 The Review Group recognises that the pressures outlined above, coupled with an historical under-investment in the infrastructures necessary to support research and performance, place considerable pressure on the School's capacity to maintain the quality of its provision, recruitment (especially of overseas students) or research productivity.

## **Commendations**

- 3.7 There is a very strong group of staff, representing the full range from Professor to Lecturer, with reasonable gender balance and average age in the 40 – 50 bracket. In that sense, the School is on a sustainable footing. However, all staff are operating to capacity or beyond, on many fronts. To quote from a recent External Examiner's report 'the teaching staff do a splendid, heroic job, somewhat against the odds'.

- 3.8 The School's facilities are well used. The recent acquisition of two Steinways is a very welcome development, but points to the need for more and the benefits that would accrue.
- 3.9 The contribution of the Ensemble Directors is considerable and valuable, particularly in raising the profile of the School (within UCD and for a wider public) and in attracting students to its programmes.

### **Recommendations**

- 3.10 If performance is to develop as part of the School's mission, it will require more investment in practice spaces, equipment stores etc. The Review Group recommends that consideration should be given to the School's needs in the planned Newman-Joyce Precinct development. The School, with the support of the College, should campaign to have meaningful incorporation of some of these needed resources.
- 3.11 The School could conduct a facilities benchmarking exercise against peer institutions to support their case to the Newman-Joyce Precinct group.
- 3.12 The School could perhaps identify a small, attractive pilot project (perhaps the Gamelan Orchestra) which would be achievable in the short-term and would demonstrate the potential of research-informed performance within the University. This would act as the springboard to larger-scale initiatives.
- 3.13 The School should offer greater mentoring support to its younger staff members, perhaps collaborating with other of the smaller schools in the College in order to do so. It would be useful for staff to understand their own trajectory independent of the School's own mission and direction.
- 3.14 The position of Ensemble Directors needs to be regularised. It would be best that they be accommodated within the School, assuming that this can be achieved without having a significant impact on the School's financial position.
- 3.15 The Review Group recommends that the College consider establishing peer-to-peer support across schools with targeted workshops (for example, Heads of School, school administrators, etc). The Graduate School is a good example of how this type of support can be effective.

## **4. Teaching, Learning and Assessment**

- 4.1 The School of Music teaches modules across a broad range of areas (including musicology, ethnomusicology, and theory and analysis). The Review Group was impressed with the breadth of the subjects taught but was concerned that the emphasis on coverage may have the negative impact of spreading provision too thin, at all levels (see section 5).

- 4.2 The School teaches modules on the BA programme and the denominated entry BMus programme was reintroduced in 2010-11. Prior to that, following modularisation, the BMus was only available to high-achieving students at the end of level 1. The Review Group was satisfied that there is a good linkage between the BMus and the MMus. The BMus provides a good preparation for the MMus, in terms of directing increased attention over the course of the programme to writing papers and engaging in research-related activities that form the basis of MMus work.
- 4.3 However, the student numbers on the BMus are still low, despite School efforts to increase awareness of the denominated entry route. The BMus needs more prominent marketing, both online and in hard-copy materials. As both the School and the College want these student numbers to grow, the College and University should provide marketing support to promote the degree more effectively than at present. School staff have made considerable efforts in this area in 2012-13, despite the heavy administration burden under which they are operating, however, they do not have the marketing expertise required and they will need help from College and University and the International Office in achieving their goals.
- 4.4 The teaching loads for some members of staff are considerable and far exceed teaching loads in comparably reputable Higher Education institutions in the UK. In spite of onerous responsibilities, staff do admirably well at integrating research-led teaching into modules, even when the topics of modules are not focussed primarily on areas of their research.
- 4.5 The School has responded well to the stresses and strains associated with modularisation. In particular, the Review Group was pleased to see that undergraduate dissertations have been retained in the curriculum, as they are invaluable preparation for MMus work, as well as intrinsically valuable in pedagogical terms in their own right.
- 4.6 General elective modules offered by the School make an important contribution to teaching on the BA.
- 4.7 The Review Group was impressed that the School of Music has organised several music-related trips to European cities as part of its undergraduate and postgraduate offerings. This makes UCD's music programmes highly distinctive relative to benchmark institutions elsewhere in Ireland.
- 4.8 Performance modules have been integrated into the teaching programmes with seeming success. Their impact and their potential should be the subject of regular review.
- 4.8 The Review Group was satisfied with the assessment schemes especially as they vary according to the needs of individual modules and comprise (for example) exams and extended papers and projects. The assessment schemes for ensemble-related modules (two choirs and the orchestra) work well, including recognition of attendance and participation, the evaluation of small-group performances, and the evaluation of the full group in a formal concert setting.

## **Commendations**

- 4.9 The breadth of teaching is impressive given the small staff cohort.
- 4.10 The MMus follows on effectively from the BMus, acting as an encouragement for BMus students to continue at UCD following undergraduate study.
- 4.11 Staff are steadfastly committed to teaching and learning activities across the curriculum, including activities (such as international trips) that are well beyond the normal call of duty.
- 4.12 The School has engaged in a positive way with modularisation.
- 4.13 The School has retained undergraduate dissertations in the curriculum.
- 4.14 Staff are working extremely well in challenging circumstances, including limited library provision and the absence of designed practice and performance facilities on campus.

## **Recommendations**

- 4.15 The School should consider how much breadth can be realistically maintained. It would be useful to liaise with UCD Teaching and Learning, perhaps participating in its 'Focus on First Year' initiative in order to get an overview of teaching provision and what aspects of it are working most effectively.
- 4.16 The School should consider the possibility of reducing its taught offerings. The Review Group recommends that the School liaise with the Programme Viability Project currently being undertaken by UCD Registry for guidance and advice on how to consider and address modules with very low student numbers.
- 4.17 The Review Group recommends that the College and University provide marketing support and expertise to the promotion of the BMus programme. The School should evaluate the impact of a strong marketing campaign on recruitment numbers and consider whether the the BMus is viable. The programme could be attractive to students in the UK, and the US.

## **5. Curriculum Development and Review**

- 5.1 The School of Music has developed the undergraduate curricula in response to changing University structures (modularisation in 2005/6) and its own internal review, which took place in 2010. Modularisation impacted on both the BA and BMus programmes and the School introduced clear pre-requisites and co-requisites to address a number of resultant issues. The Review Group was impressed by the School's curriculum review (2010) which consisted of a large-scale re-evaluation of the structure and content of both undergraduate programmes, and addressed several specific issues including, *inter alia*, the development of a clear progression from level to level within the structures; the elimination of gaps and

overlaps within the undergraduate curricula; the establishment of modules that would accommodate an influx of first-year students with very little background in musical notation and musical repertoires; and the incorporation of modules that foster the development of specific skills, primarily in writing and analysis. As a result of this review process, in September 2010, substantial changes were implemented to the existing curricula, particularly in levels 1 and 2, with positive effects and good feedback from external examiners. The School is planning a follow-up review for 2013.

- 5.2 The School also carried out a curriculum review of its Master in Musicology (MMus) programme in 2011. The current structure reflects a substantial revision to the curriculum following a formal review in 2011. The issues addressed in the review process were: the development of a clear progression from foundational modules to independent research; the formulation of clear sub-disciplinary streams in music analysis, historical musicology, and ethnomusicology; and the strategic marketing of the degree, which involved considerations of both structure and content. The most substantial changes that were made revolved around the development of the phase progression, which has been very positively received by students. Following the revisions made in 2011, strong numbers have been maintained in the MMus programme and external examiners have responded positively to the structural changes, and have also indicated satisfaction regarding the standards of the degree.
- 5.3 The regular curriculum reviews conducted by the School are examples of good practice. Commendably, all academic staff are involved in these processes; revisions and refinements are therefore widely debated and discussed. Equally, decisions are made collectively about which modules should constitute core modules. The division of undergraduate options into the categories of 'Systematic Musicology', 'Ethnomusicology', 'Historical Musicology' modules is largely an administrative issue – the titles themselves are much debated, both at UCD and in the context of music scholarship at large. The modules offered collectively in these areas ensure considerable breadth for students in the final two years of their BA/BMus programmes.
- 5.4 There is a strong sense of community in the School. Considerable attention is paid to the needs of individual students, who consider staff very approachable and eager to help. Feedback on individual modules is provided on-line by students after the module has finished; a number of students also report academic staff as receptive to ideas for curriculum development etc. in the context of informal discussion as well.
- 5.5 Looking forward, the position of music performance in the curriculum needs consideration. Expanding performance is a good aspiration in the context of growing the BMus and MMus, but exactly how this aspiration can be achieved remains to be determined. There are varied views among staff (and students) about the role performance could play at UCD relative to the current and potential future positions: as (in effect) an add-on to existing activities; as a theoretical component of research-related discourse; as an integrated component of teaching and learning in individual modules. Discussion is therefore needed among student and staff bodies to develop a strategy for the years ahead.

- 5.6 Staff are to be commended for their engagement with curriculum activities, initiatives and administration outside the specific remit of their School. The School's relationship with the Ad Astra programme is clearly a positive and mutually beneficial one; School staff are participating actively in the establishment of the MA in Diaspora Studies; and School staff are praised for their involvement in and commitment to College and University committees.
- 5.7 Overall, the breadth of coverage is impressive on both the BMus and the MMus programmes, especially as the staff cohort is so small. The Review Group recognise that sustaining such breadth puts a considerable burden on individual members of staff, in terms of their teaching commitments and workloads in general. The Review Group notes, for example, that quite a large number of modules are offered for the MMus, following the curriculum review carried out in 2011. Any curriculum developments in the years ahead will therefore need to pay close attention to existing obligations in an attempt not to increase workloads still further.

### **Commendations**

- 5.8 Widespread consultation is carried out in the context of (regular) curriculum reviews, feeding off (and feeding into) a strong sense of community in the School as a whole.
- 5.9 Staff engage actively and energetically with teaching activities beyond the School.

### **Recommendations**

- 5.10 Students should be given opportunities to provide feedback on the BA, BMus and MMus programmes in their entirety.
- 5.11 Focus groups among staff and current students should be established in order to discuss – and ultimately reach a consensus on – the role of performance in the undergraduate and postgraduate curricula going forwards.
- 5.12 Notwithstanding the need to develop, staff should retain realistic expectations for growth of the BMus and MMus programmes, especially given the small staff cohort.

## **6. Research Activity**

- 6.1 School research activity, as manifested in staff publications in the review period, is of high quality and both nationally and internationally visible. The School “punches above its weight” and has a clear sense of its own research mission, articulated as a desire to be the place that people come to think about music. The Review Group was impressed that this was achieved with heavy administrative and teaching burdens.



- 6.2 School staff members are active in important research fora, and on editorial boards, both nationally and internationally (for example, International Conference for Traditional Music Ireland).
- 6.3 The School has a solid record of external grant capture.
- 6.4 Research colloquia, some focused on specific sub-disciplinary areas (music theory and ethnomusicology), some addressing the discipline as a whole, bring together researchers across the School, and forge effective and active links with musicological research outside Ireland.
- 6.5 The School research culture is diverse, lively and progressive, reflecting the forward direction of the discipline of musicology as a whole. Recent expansions of the School's research into medieval music and ethnomusicology have clearly invigorated the School's research culture as a whole, and mean that the School's publications cover a wide and representative spectrum.
- 6.6 The introduction of new areas of research has, as in Departments and Schools elsewhere, raised the challenge of integration (or, thinking beyond sub-disciplinary specialisation) and forward thinking in terms of the discipline as a whole.
- 6.7 The School has some distinct areas of research expertise strength that distinguish it from peer institutions both nationally and internationally (for example, Irish music history and historiography; music theory and analysis).
- 6.8 All School staff members are active researchers; there is, however, some imbalance across the School in terms of productivity and the visibility of the publications and other research outputs.
- 6.9 The College has occasionally promoted interdisciplinarity through various research 'strands'. The School, meanwhile, has its own interdisciplinary instincts, most clearly seen in research on music and death and ethnomusicology. These two ways of thinking about interdisciplinary do not seem to be in conversation. One consequence is that researchers in the School are, and feel, isolated.
- 6.10 The growth of music performance in the School offers opportunities for thinking about performance in the context of, or *as*, research. This might take various forms in the context of historical, analytical and ethnomusicological research.

## **Commendations**

- 6.11 Teaching is research-led. Undergraduates and masters students come into contact with staff's research at an early stage, and are systematically inculcated into the School's research culture.

- 6.12 The *Musicology Review* systematically involves postgraduate students, giving them first-hand experience of editorial work, as well as providing many of them with an early opportunity to publish their own work. The quality of the published work is high, and the experience clearly invaluable for the postgraduate students.
- 6.12 Team-teaching initiatives (for example a Modal Study course involving both a music analyst and an ethnomusicologist) lead some successful thinking about how the School's research culture might develop collectively, as well as individually.
- 6.13 Postgraduate students feel connected, engaged and excited by the School's research culture, and face their future as academics with confidence.

## **Recommendations**

- 6.14 Library facilities simply fail to support ongoing research, whether in emerging or in well-established areas of research. There are not enough scores, enough recordings, or recently published monographs in practically any area one cares to examine. Resources elsewhere (for example TCD) only partially compensate. A more proactive strategy needs to be considered on the part of the Library to anticipate and engage the School's ongoing research needs if the School is to maintain its research visibility.
- 6.15 The early career academics are clearly struggling to find time to write grant proposals and produce the early body of published work essential to their later careers and reputations at UCD, promotions and general sense of intellectual wellbeing. The sabbatical system is under strain, due to the pressure of administrative work and the demands of the teaching curriculum. A clearer sabbatical strategy, one foregrounding and protecting the needs of the early career academics, needs to be developed at both School and College levels. More could be done to encourage collaboration and co-operation between schools in sustaining and funding their research efforts.
- 6.16 The current workload model should be revised so that the different needs and priorities of early career academics, more established staff and the School as a whole, can be taken into account.
- 6.17 The College needs to provide more encompassing support for the research needs of early career academics in the School of Music. This could take the form of mentorship, advice about promotions, encouragement and support for grant proposals, providing backing for interdisciplinary projects.
- 6.18 Top-down interdisciplinary projects have not always engaged the needs and interests of School of Music staff. A variety of bottom-up projects have clearly excited and motivated staff, and prompted some significant research (for example, on music and death). But they are felt, within the School, to be precarious and limited. School and College might, together, consider ways of stimulating and supporting interdisciplinary work of this nature.

- 6.19 The School might develop mechanisms for sharing good practice, and expertise, in successful grant acquisition, in particular for the benefit of the early career academics.
- 6.20 Overall, there is a need for newer staff to be offered clearer guidance and support in developing their research careers. Again, this feels like something that should originate at College level rather than devolving to the School.
- 6.21 While the quality and quantity of research is clearly excellent, it would be beneficial to articulate a research 'narrative' which binds together the individual strands of work and allows the School to convey a sense of concerted effort and shared purpose across all its research.

## **7. Management of Quality and Enhancement**

- 7.1 The School of Music currently has several structures in place designed to ensure a high standard of teaching and learning in their undergraduate and postgraduate programmes. These include, but are not limited to, student module evaluations, feedback from student representatives, internal review processes, and external examiner's reports.
- 7.2 The Review Group was satisfied that the School actively seeks feedback from students. Student module evaluations are standardised and completed online and designed to identify any issues and to address them. The School also ensures that there are opportunities for students to give feedback during the semester (and before the end of a module) through regular meetings of the Student-Staff committee.
- 7.3 The Review Group was impressed that the School regularly conducts its own curriculum reviews, involving all staff. It was clear that following review, changes to the curriculum are introduced and reviewed in turn.
- 7.4 The School actively engages with the University's teaching and learning activities, regularly participating in courses and workshops offered by UCD Teaching and Learning. The skills learned through these formal means of study have been applied to School modules, particularly in the development of assessment strategies and curriculum design.
- 7.5 The School uses the external-examiner system effectively. Not only does the external examiner consider syllabi, assignment guidelines, and sample essays for all of the modules currently offered by the School, she or he also meets individually with each member of staff, and attends a staff meeting. External examiners reports include detailed evaluations of the School's programmes, addressing content, quality, resources and structure and the School is proactive in addressing their comments and suggestions.

## **Commendations**

- 7.6 There is a good take up of the standard feedback mechanisms and this was reflected in student feedback, which, from the evidence provided, is very positive.
- 7.7 The BA and BMus curriculum review (2010) and the MMus curriculum review (2011) were very welcome and thoroughgoing initiatives.

## **Recommendation**

- 7.8 The goodwill and loyalty of good students could be used more in the promotion of the undergraduate and graduate programmes: good feedback is a highly effective marketing tool.

## **8. Support Services**

- 8.1 The School receives satisfactory support in the areas of curriculum management, programme delivery, finance, examinations and assessment from a wide variety of College and University administrative units. However, support in the areas of Library, IT Services and Buildings & Services is inadequate to the School's needs. Recent severe cuts to the budgets of these central administrative units, in particular the Library, have had a significant impact on the provision available and are outside the control of these units. Nonetheless, the impact on the support to the School is extremely serious.
- 8.2 Support and advocacy from the College for schools could be more pro-active and forward-thinking. The Review Group had the overriding sense of a College trying to ride out the storm, in the current environment. The Review Group believes that the School needs more active support from the College but needs to be more precise (and maybe astute) about what it's looking for in terms of what can be made available.
- 8.3 The current Library facilities are a particular cause for concern and were a recurring theme in the School's Self-assessment Report and discussions with the Review Group during the site visit. The music collection is fragmentary in various ways: spatially, in that scores, books on music, reference texts, periodicals, LPs and CDs, and short-loan texts are all found in different locations; and in terms of acquisition policy, which has not kept pace with need, a problem exacerbated by the absence of a designated subject librarian.
- 8.4 There is also a considerable lack of connection between the current Library provision and the School's requirement for support material for undergraduate and postgraduate teaching and research. In instances, research students rely exclusively on external facilities to support their work, for example, Trinity College Library, The National Library, the British Library and locations in Europe.

- 8.5 Undergraduates are obliged to purchase standard text books because the Library facilities do not meet their needs. At research level, the absence of adequate facilities is seen by staff as a disincentive for attracting new staff to the School. The allocation of resources toward purchase of new material this year is welcome, but it is noted that the opportunity extends only to purchase of material required for undergraduate courses. In addition, access to online material has reduced since 2010, due to the high cost to the Library of maintaining links via IReL.
- 8.6 IT support services have significantly reduced in recent years and the School is obliged to pay for the AV systems in the School's lecture rooms and for the purchase of computers and associated hardware. Research students have access to a communal study room that houses a small number of computers, and there is a listening room that contains the bare minimum of equipment. Support for the development and maintenance of school websites has also been significantly reduced.
- 8.7 UCD Buildings and Services are responsible for maintenance, security and access to the Newman Building in which the School is housed. Out-of-hours access for research students, particularly on a Sunday, poses a particular difficulty. Each student must request a letter from the Head of School in advance, which must be presented to security staff each time they enter or leave the building. The lack of designated practise or rehearsal facilities, and buildings within UCD designed with musical performance in mind was addressed above (Section 3).
- 8.8 The School aims to increase its intake into its MMus programme and to increase international student recruitment to its programmes, particularly by targeting North America. Whilst the International Office is broadly supportive of the School's endeavours, links with the University's programme for promotion of its courses in the US, in particular, needs to be enhanced.

### **Commendations**

- 8.9 While resources are limited and services have been diminishing on many fronts, the School has managed to retain its high standards while maintaining good relations with support services.
- 8.10 The School has a good relationship with, and receives good support from, many support units in the University, including, *inter alia*, the College Programme Office, College Finance Manager, UCD Teaching & Learning, UCD Finance/Bursar's Office, and UCD Registry.

### **Recommendations**

- 8.11 The College could be more pro-active in considering the needs of schools and explore ways to provide additional support to schools. Externally facilitated focus groups, perhaps by UCD Human Resources, could be particularly helpful.

- 8.12 The Review Group acknowledges the good work and efforts of Library staff to provide supports in adverse circumstances, however, the provision for music needs to be seriously improved. The Review Group recommends that the College and University need to advocate for the improvement of the Music collection and to support the appointment of a Subject Librarian with relevant expertise. Specialised knowledge is required to augment and development the Library's current holdings if it is to overcome its current inadequacies in relation to research and graduate taught programmes.
- 8.13 The School, as with all schools in the University, has faced a significant reduction in its budget since the economic downturn with cuts to University budgets over progressive years, and further cuts anticipated in the future. This poses significant problems for all schools within the University, but in particular for a small school such as this. The School itself is happy that its budget is made earlier in the academic year, as this helps with their planning for the forthcoming academic year. The Review Group recommends more transparency from the College Finance Manager and College Principal as to how school budgets are determined and more strategic thinking about how best they be deployed.
- 8.14 The Review Group recommends that Buildings and Services Development Plans should include opportunity for direct engagement of school staff, including consideration of the School of Music's needs in the Newman-Joyce Precinct Development (see Recommendation 3.10).
- 8.15 The Review Group recommends that UCD Buildings and Services should consider and propose ways to facilitate School, and indeed College, research students gaining easy out-of-hours access to the Newman Building.
- 8.16 The Review Group recommends that the School engage with the UCD International Office to achieve its international student recruitment aims, in particular to increase the promotion of its courses in the USA.

## **9. External Relations**

- 9.1 The School has a strong international presence through its research, which actively connects staff with researchers across Europe and the USA.
- 9.2 School staff participate routinely in both national and international conferences. This participation is supported, and funded, by the School. Conversely, the School successfully attracts a range of international academic visitors through hosting major conferences, and plans to do more of this.
- 9.3 The undergraduate student body, in particular, is diverse. There is a solid representation of Erasmus and Junior Year Abroad students amongst the undergraduates, and an active programme for recruiting these students.

- 9.4 There is a growing awareness within the School of the need to cultivate UCD alumni, for purposes of funding and other support. Mobilizing the alumni base poses some intractable problems, requiring long-term and systematic thinking beyond the School level.
- 9.5 The School is increasingly thinking about how to market its undergraduate and postgraduate programmes in terms of the rapidly evolving HE environment in Ireland, and in Dublin in particular. The School is also considering how it can increase its profile internationally, especially in the US.
- 9.6 The Self-assessment Report suggests relatively limited scope in thinking about external relations, in terms of characterising the School's distinctive and significant achievements in research, or performance culture, or teaching, in relation to peers in Ireland or beyond.

### **Commendations**

- 9.7 Performance ensembles on campus (the Symphony Orchestra, the choirs, and the Ad Astra scholars) provide UCD with a rich resource with which to forge relations across campus, and with the city and the country as a whole.
- 9.8 The Ad Astra programme serves as a vehicle for forging strong links between UCD and the city; relations between the Ad Astra programme and the School of Music appear to be strong and productive.
- 9.9 The School of Music's plans to host more international conferences, in conjunction with other international research activity, will ensure strong and ongoing visibility in the international research field.

### **Recommendations**

- 9.10 There is more to be celebrated and communicated than is being realised at the moment. The Review Group recommends that the School seek advice from UCD University Relations to support the development of both internal and external (national and international) communication and marketing plans. Such plans, especially in respect of marketing the MMus and PhD offerings to the US market, would require development of the School's website.
- 9.11 Staging events could support the Schools marketing, nationally and internationally, especially in respect of the US market.
- 9.12 The University could engage with the School to highlight the impressive performance ensembles and concurrently better promote the School's offerings. As discussed in section 3, music has the potential to become a more central part of the University landscape. Initiatives such as gamelan performances, free lunchtime concerts could allow University staff and students to engage informally with music at UCD.

- 9.13 With the support of the University and the College, the School needs to cultivate UCD alumni with a view to increasing their profile, and opening up possible funding streams and other supports to help their development. The School should seek assistance from UCD Alumni Relations to help them engage with alumni.

## **10. Summary of Commendations and Recommendations**

### **A. Organisation and Management**

#### Commendations

- A.1 The School has a high degree of collegiality amongst staff and this is reflected in the sense of belonging displayed by all cohorts of students that met the Review Group, particularly at graduate level.
- A.2 The Head of School, for whom there is clear regard and respect among staff and students, adopts a consultative approach and encourages collective decision-making and this is facilitated by regular School meetings that are open to all staff.
- A.3 Administrative support for the entire School is provided by one SEA (80% FTE), who is extremely effective.
- A.4 The School is an active and engaged member of the UCD College of Arts and Celtic Studies and the University.

#### Recommendations

- A.5 Adequate administrative support, both within the School and within the College, is necessary for the School to maintain its current level of activity and to have any realistic ambitions for growth or development. The Review Group recommends that the School liaise with the College and the Budget Review Committee to ensure that they increase administrative support within the School (for example, the current administrative role could be increased from .8FTE to 1FTE) supported, where possible with additional support at College level (for example, marketing School graduate programmes, etc).
- A.6 The School workload model should be revised in order to allow direct comparison of the full range of staff activity – research, teaching and administration. Longer-term considerations, such as the development of early career academic staff and the development of the School research culture, should be taken into account in a revised workload allocation model. Early career members of academic staff should be encouraged to increase their research activities and publication records and this can only be achieved by more senior members of academic staff sharing the heaviest teaching burden.



- A.7 The Review Group strongly supports the School's intention to draft a Development Plan and recommends that the College play a more active role in supporting the School to achieve its aims, especially in respect of providing appropriate facilities for rehearsal and performance.
- A.8 The Review Group recommends that the School should consider a facilitated workshop, with input from relevant University experts, for example, the Director of Strategic Planning, to consider development scenarios. This should feed into the School Development Plan that is currently being drafted and the next iteration of the School Strategic Plan. The School could also chart the paths, through the institution and beyond, of high-achieving students as a way to clarify the School's 'Mission'.
- A.10 The Review Group recommends that the School further develop its relationship with the larger contexts of the College and the University to reinforce good working relationships like that with the Graduate School and that with the Director of Strategic Planning and to open up new connections and relationships.
- A.11 The School should work with the College and the University so that music becomes more central to the College's mission and to the University's identity. Ad Astra scholars and performing ensembles demonstrate this potential, but they would need to be getting the profile and support on a par with sporting achievements to achieve this. Indeed, music is one of the main means by which the University can communicate to a wider constituency. The question 'How does the campus sound?' should be asked. Integrating excellent musical performance more fully into the life of the University could offer an added dimension. Taken seriously, it would encompass plans for activities and events as well as venues and resources.

## **B. Staffing and Facilities**

### Commendations

- B.1 There is a very strong group of staff, representing the full range from Professor to Lecturer, with reasonable gender balance and average age in the 40 – 50 bracket. In that sense, the School is on a sustainable footing. However, all staff are operating to capacity or beyond, on many fronts. To quote from a recent External Examiner's report 'the teaching staff do a splendid, heroic job, somewhat against the odds'.
- B.2 The School's facilities are well used. The recent acquisition of two Steinways is a very welcome development, but points to the need for more and the benefits that would accrue.
- B.3 The contribution of the Ensemble Directors is considerable and valuable, particularly in raising the profile of the School (within UCD and for a wider public) and in attracting students to its programmes.

## Recommendations

- B.4 If performance is to develop as part of the School's mission, it will require more investment in practice spaces, equipment stores etc. The Review Group recommends that consideration should be given to the School's needs in the planned Newman-Joyce Precinct development. The School, with the support of the College, should campaign to have meaningful incorporation of some of these needed resources.
- B.5 The School could conduct a facilities benchmarking exercise against peer institutions to support their case to the Newman-Joyce Precinct group.
- B.6 The School could perhaps identify a small, attractive pilot project (perhaps the Gamelan Orchestra) which would be achievable in the short-term and would demonstrate the potential of research-informed performance within the University. This would act as the springboard to larger-scale initiatives.
- B.7 The School should offer greater mentoring support to its younger staff members, perhaps collaborating with other of the smaller schools in the College in order to do so. It would be useful for staff to understand their own trajectory independent of the school's own mission and direction.
- B.8 The position of Ensemble Directors needs to be regularised. It would be best that they be accommodated within the School, assuming that this can be achieved without having a significant impact on the School's financial position.
- B.9 The Review Group recommends that the College consider establishing peer-to-peer support across schools with targeted workshops (for example, Heads of School, school administrators, etc). The Graduate school is a good example of how this type of support can be effective.

## **C. Teaching, Learning and Assessment**

### Commendations

- C.1 The breadth of teaching is impressive given the small staff cohort.
- C.2 The MMus follows on effectively from the BMus, acting as an encouragement for BMus students to continue at UCD following undergraduate study.
- C.3 Staff are steadfastly committed to teaching and learning activities across the curriculum, including activities (such as international trips) that are well beyond the normal call of duty.
- C.4 The School has engaged in a positive way with modularisation.
- C.5 The School has retained undergraduate dissertations in the curriculum.

- C.6 Staff are working extremely well in challenging circumstances, including limited library provision and the absence of designed practice and performance facilities on campus.

#### Recommendations

- C.7 The School should consider how much breadth can be realistically maintained. It would be useful to liaise with the Centre for Teaching and Learning, perhaps participating in its 'Focus on First Year' initiative in order to get an overview of teaching provision and what aspects of it are working most effectively.
- C.8 The School should consider the possibility of reducing its taught offerings. The Review Group recommends that the School liaise with the Programme Viability Project currently being undertaken by UCD Registry for guidance and advice on how to consider and address modules with very low student numbers.
- C.9 The Review Group recommends that the College and University provide marketing support and expertise to the promotion of the BMus programme. The School should evaluate the impact of a strong marketing campaign on recruitment numbers and consider whether the BMus is viable. The programme could be attractive to students in the UK, and the US.

### **D. Curriculum Development and Review**

#### Commendations

- D.1 Widespread consultation is carried out in the context of (regular) curriculum reviews, feeding off (and feeding into) a strong sense of community in the School as a whole.
- D.2 Staff engage actively and energetically with teaching activities beyond the School.

#### Recommendations

- D.3 Students should be given opportunities to provide feedback on the BA, BMus and MMus programmes in their entirety.
- D.4 Focus groups among staff and current students should be established in order to discuss – and ultimately reach a consensus on – the role of performance in the undergraduate and postgraduate curricula going forwards.
- D.5 Notwithstanding the need to develop, staff should retain realistic expectations for growth of the BMus and MMus programmes, especially given the small staff cohort.

## **E. Research Activity**

### Commendations

- E.1 Teaching is research-led. Undergraduates and masters students come into contact with staff's research at an early stage, and are systematically inculcated into the School's research culture.
- E.2 The *Musicology Review* systematically involves postgraduate students, giving them first-hand experience of editorial work, as well as providing many of them with an early opportunity to publish their own work. The quality of the published work is high, and the experience clearly invaluable for the postgraduate students.
- E.3 Team-teaching initiatives (for example a Modal Study course involving both a music analyst and an ethnomusicologist) lead some successful thinking about how the School's research culture might develop collectively, as well as individually.
- E.4 Postgraduate students feel connected, engaged and excited by the School's research culture, and face their future as academics with confidence.

### Recommendations

- E.5 Library facilities simply fail to support ongoing research, whether in emerging or in well-established areas of research. There are not enough scores, enough recordings, or recently published monographs in practically any area one cares to examine. Resources elsewhere (for example TCD) only partially compensate. A more proactive strategy needs to be considered on the part of the Library to anticipate and engage the School's ongoing research needs if the School is to maintain its research visibility.
- E.6 The early career academics are clearly struggling to find time to write grant proposals and produce the early body of published work essential to their later careers and reputations at UCD, promotions and general sense of intellectual wellbeing. The sabbatical system is under strain, due to the pressure of administrative work and the demands of the teaching curriculum. A clearer sabbatical strategy, one foregrounding and protecting the needs of the early career academics, needs to be developed at both School and College levels. More could be done to encourage collaboration and co-operation between schools in sustaining and funding their research efforts.
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about promotions, encouragement and support for grant proposals, providing backing for interdisciplinary projects.

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- E.11 Overall, there is a need for newer staff to be offered clearer guidance and support in developing their research careers. Again, this feels like something that should originate at College level rather than devolving to the School.
- E.12 While the quality and quantity of research is clearly excellent, it would be beneficial to articulate a research 'narrative' which binds together the individual strands of work and allows the School to convey a sense of concerted effort and shared purpose across all its research.

## **F. Management of Quality and Enhancement**

### Commendations

- F.1 There is a good take up of the standard feedback mechanisms and this was reflected in student feedback, which, from the evidence provided, is very positive.
- F.2 The BA and BMus curriculum review (2010) and the MMus curriculum review (2011) were very welcome and thoroughgoing initiatives.

### Recommendation

- F.3 The goodwill and loyalty of good students could be used more in the promotion of the undergraduate and graduate programmes: good feedback is a highly effective marketing tool.

## **G. Support Services**

### Commendations

- G.1 While resources are limited and services have been diminishing on many fronts, the School has managed to retain its high standards while maintaining good relations with support services.

- G.2 The School has a good relationship with, and receives good support from, many support units in the University, including, *inter alia*, the College Programme Office, College Finance Manager, UCD Teaching & Learning, UCD Finance/Bursar's Office, and UCD Registry.

### Recommendations

- G.3 The College could be more pro-active in considering the needs of schools and explore ways to provide additional support to schools. Externally facilitated focus groups, perhaps by UCD Human Resources, could be particularly helpful.
- G.4 The Review Group acknowledges the good work and efforts of Library staff to provide supports in adverse circumstances, however, the provision for music needs to be seriously improved. The Review Group recommends that the College and University need to advocate for the improvement of the Music collection and to support the appointment of a Subject Librarian with relevant expertise. Specialised knowledge is required to augment and development the Library's current holdings if it is to overcome its current inadequacies in relation to research and graduate taught programmes.
- G.5 The School, as with all schools in the University, has faced a significant reduction in its budget since the economic downturn with cuts to University budgets over progressive years, and further cuts anticipated in the future. This poses significant problems for all schools within the University, but in particular for a small school such as this. The School itself is happy that its budget is made earlier in the academic year, as this helps with their planning for the forthcoming academic year. The Review Group recommends more transparency from the College Finance Manager and College Principal as to how school budgets are determined and more strategic thinking about how best they be deployed.
- G.6 The Review Group recommends that Buildings and Services Development Plans should include opportunity for direct engagement of school staff, including consideration of the School of Music's needs in the Newman-Joyce Precinct Development (see Recommendation 3.10).
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## **H. External Relations**

### Commendations

- H.1 Performance ensembles on campus (the Symphony Orchestra, the choirs, and the Ad Astra scholars) provide UCD with a rich resource with which to forge relations across campus, and with the city and the country as a whole.
- H.2 The Ad Astra programme serves as a vehicle for forging strong links between UCD and the city; relations between the Ad Astra programme and the School of Music appear to be strong and productive.
- H.3 The School of Music's plans to host more international conferences, in conjunction with other international research activity, will ensure strong and ongoing visibility in the international research field.

### Recommendations

- H.4 There is more to be celebrated and communicated than is being realised at the moment. The Review Group recommends that the School seek advice from UCD University Relations to support the development of both internal and external (national and international) communication and marketing plans. Such plans, especially in respect of marketing the MMus and PhD offerings to the US market, would require development of the School's website.
- H.5 Staging events could support the Schools marketing, nationally and internationally, especially in respect of the US market.
- H.6 The University could engage with the School to highlight the impressive performance ensembles and concurrently better promote the School's offerings. As discussed in section 3, music has the potential to become a more central part of the University landscape. Initiatives such as gamelan performances, free lunchtime concerts could allow University staff and students to engage informally with music at UCD.
- H.7 With the support of the University and the College, the School needs to cultivate UCD alumni with a view to increasing their profile, and opening up possible funding streams and other supports to help their development. The School should seek assistance from UCD Alumni Relations to help them engage with alumni.

## **APPENDIX 1**

### **UCD School of Music Response to the Review Group Report**

The UCD School of Music welcomes the Review Group Report. It has been circulated and given due consideration by the School Self-assessment Co-ordinating Committee and the UCD School of Music. The School is happy to confirm approval of the Report. 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 activities for the next strategic period.



## APPENDIX 2



### Quality Review Site Visit Timetable

UCD School of Music

18-21 February 2013

#### Monday, 18 February 2013

##### Pre-Visit Briefing Meeting

- |             |  |
|-------------|--|
| 17.00-18.45 | RG meet in the hotel to review preliminary issues and to confirm work schedule and assignment of tasks |
| 19.30       | Dinner for the RG, hosted by the UCD Registrar and Deputy President                                    |

#### Day 1: Tuesday, 19 February 2013

##### Venue: J307, Newman Building

- |             |  |
|-------------|--|
| 09.00–09.30 | Private meeting of Review Group (RG)   |
| 09.30–10.15 | RG meet with <b>Head of School</b>   |
| 10.15–10.30 | Break  |
| 10.45–11.15 | RG meet with <b>Principal, UCD College of Arts &amp; Celtic Studies</b>  |
| 11.15–11.30 | Tea/coffee break   |
| 11.30–12.15 | RG meet with <b>SAR Coordinating Committee</b>   |
| 12.15–12.45 | Break – RG review key observations   |
| 12.45–13.30 | Lunch – Review Group only  |
| 13.30-14.00 | RG review key observations and prepare for afternoon meetings  |
| 14.00-15.15 | RG meet with <b>representative group of academic staff</b> – primary focus on Teaching and Learning, and Curriculum issues |

15.15-15.30	RG tea/coffee break
16.30-16.00	RG meet with Directors of Performing Ensembles
16.00-16.15	Break
16.15-16.45	RG meet <b>UCD Dean of Arts</b>
16.45-17.00	Break
17.00-18.15	<b>Tour of facilities: Newman Building, UCD Library, UCD Student Centre (Astra Hall), UCD Richview (Memorial Hall)</b>
18.30	RG depart

## **Day 2: Wednesday, 20 February 2013**

**Venue: J307, Newman Building**

08.45-09.15	Private meeting of the RG
09.15-09.55	RG meet e.g. <b>Head of Academic Services, UCD Library</b>
09.55-10.10	Break
10.10-10.35	RG meet with a representative group of <b>postgraduate students</b> (taught and research)
10.40-11.05	RG meet with a representative group of <b>recent graduates</b> (PG and UG)
11.00-11.15	RG tea/coffee break
11.15-12.15	RG meet with the representative group of academic staff – primary focus on Research issues
12.15-12.30	Break - RG review key observations
12.30-13.15	Lunch – Review Group only
13.15-14.00	RG meet with <b>representative group of undergraduate students</b>
14.00-14.15	RG private meeting - review key observations
14.15-14.45	RG meet with <b>College Finance Manager</b> and <b>Head of School</b> to outline School's financial situation

14.45-15.15	Break
15.15-15.45	RG meet with School Administrator to discuss administrative issues
15.50-16.20	RG meet with <b>recently appointed members of staff</b>
16.20-16.30	Break
16.30-16.50	RG meet with <b>representative of Ad Astra Programme</b>
16.50-17.10	RG private meeting – review key observations/findings
17.15	RG depart

### **Day 3: Thursday, 21 February 2013**

**Venue: J307, Newman Building**

08.45-09.30	Private meeting of RG
09.30-10.00	RG meet with <b>representatives of UCD Buildings &amp; Services and the Newman Joyce Development Project</b>
10.00-10.15	Break
10.15-10.45	RG meet with <b>Graduate School Director</b> , UCD College of Arts & Celtic Studies
10.45-11.00	Break
11.00-12.30	RG prepare draft RG Report and feedback commendations/recommendations
12.30-13.15	Lunch
13.15-15.15	RG finalise first draft of RG Report and feedback commendations/recommendations
15.15-15.30	Break
15.30-15.45	RG meet with <b>Head of School</b> to feedback initial outline commendations and recommendations
15.45	<b>Exit presentation</b> to <u>all available staff of the unit</u> – made by the extern members of the Review Group summarising the principal commendations/recommendations of the RG
16.15	Review Group depart